



## BOXBOROUGH COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

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### MINUTES

February 26, 2015 / Grange Meeting Room / Town Hall

#### **Members present (9/9):**

Hugh Fortmiller

Mitzi Garcia-Weil

Rita Gibes Grossman

Owen Neville

John Neyland

Dennis Reip

Alan Rohwer

John Rosamond

Ron Vogel

#### **Others:**

Adam Duchesneau, Town Planner

Selina Shaw, Town Administrator

Les Fox, (interim) Board of Selectman Liaison

Jennifer Barrett, Town Accountant

David Koonce, Conservation Commission

Bruce Hager, Steele Farm Advisory Committee

Jeanne S. Kangas, Steele Farm Advisory Committee

Ed Whitcomb, Steele Farm Advisory Committee

#### **Guests:**

Stuart Saginor, Executive Director, Community Preservation Coalition

Hilliary Kozloski, Communications Director, Community Preservation Coalition

7:03 Meeting called to order by Owen Neville

**Minutes** of January 29, 2015 reviewed. John R. moved, Ron V. seconded that minutes be approved. Vote unanimous.

#### **Training by Community Preservation Coalition (CPCoalition)**

Rita introduced presenter Stuart Saginor. (PDF of the presentation provided to the CPCoalition.)

Boxborough and CPCoalition :

- Stuart noted that Boxborough CPC is ahead-of-the-curve for having just adopted the legislation.
- He gave an overview of CPCoalition and a step-by-step presentation for implementing the CPA in Boxborough.
- Boxborough has free first year membership to the CPCoalition. Next year, optional membership fee would be \$875 and that can be paid with CP administrative funds. 99% of CPA communities are members; CPCoalition is a non-profit organization.
- CPA is a *local* program. There is no state infrastructure that oversees CPA. The Department of Revenue oversees the CPA Trust Fund for the Commonwealth and does issue rules accordingly on CPA issues.

- Most CPA communities take a year to get organized before recommending projects to Town Meeting (TM). There are exceptions which were reviewed.
- See technical assistance page on CPCoalition web site for CPA plan examples, project application forms, grants to Housing Trust Funds, and myriad of other resources.

#### CPA Process:

- CPCCommittee has two *main* jobs: prepare CPA budget for TM and make recommendations.
- Develop an annual schedule for all steps. Start with a CPA Plan.
- Law requires two activities from CPCCommittee: do an annual needs study and conduct an annual public hearing for public input; Owen asked whether these need to happen before recommending articles to TM; not required; public hearing (2 week notice) usually held at the beginning of annual planning process.
- Les noted BoS is anticipating a TM this fall. Would provide time to organize CPA process.
- Town employees are expected to work on CPA as they would work on other town activities.
- Stuart recommended a two-step process for CPA project consideration. First, a screening application to determine if the project is eligible. A full project application would be done if project is eligible. See: Building a Better Application Process on CPCoalition web site.

#### Funds and CPA budget:

- Cannot supplant town budget with CPA funds. No exceptions.
- CPCCommittee has to recommend the budget for FY2016, and each year thereafter, and the CPCCommittee has to vote on it.
- Towns that have 2 TM per year, often do CPA in the fall TM separate from town budget.
- CPA budget has to be approved at a TM before the tax rate is set.
- Boxborough will have FY2015 monies from surcharge only this fall. FY 2015 state match will be received late fall of 2016 (Nov).
- Technical details of accounting discussed as they relate to the timing and setting of tax rate and fund management: 10% of funds to each three areas; 5% for administration; 65% of CPA monies put into a Budgeted Reserve Account annually. Then get transferred into Fund Balance Account so that town can have access to these funds for CPA projects.
- DOR has one time only rules for CPA accounting for implementation year. See memo 2002-12B DOR bulletin and CPCoalition web site under technical assistance tab for links to DOR memos and bulletins concerning accounting management of CPA funds.
- Stuart recommended being conservative with CPA budget.
- If money appropriated at fall TM after books are closed, Town will have FY2016 and FY2015 money to use.
- NOTE: regarding the 5% optional administrative account allowed. Budget every year. Unused portion rolls over into CPA fund.
- Specific questions raised about local non-profit organization requests
- Questions about asset purchases (e.g. land interests, historic preservation restrictions) and noted some due diligence costs are covered. Issue of land acquisitions under Right of First Refusal process brought up: if land price in the right of first refusal notice to the Town exceeds the appraised value, cannot use CPA funds to acquire outright.
- Can bond projects out to 30 years if the Town can afford to repay using local surcharge monies for the project, and if the project meets CPA criteria for funding.

- Projects allowable according to CPA law hand out distributed (attached).
- Discussed use of CPA funds being used for either Housing Trust Fund or Conservation Fund. These should be considered grants and a grant agreement should be done for each award with controls to assure money spent on CPA allowable use.
- Stuart provided two copies of the CPA and Affordable Housing Manual clerk and Ron V., and, distributed flow chart for determining eligibility of historic preservation requests.
- Stuart asked members to contact state senator and representative to support additional CPA funding from State surplus as projected State match for this year estimated to be about 20% based on current low Registry of Deeds real estate transaction activity (funding source for State CPA Trust Fund).

#### Specific questions regarding urgent CPA issues in Boxborough

- Projection for state match to be distributed on November 2015 is based on the Boxborough actual FY2015 surcharge collection. The funds received in November 2015 can be used to fund FY2016 projects.
- Les asked about when FY2015 CPA money will be available: as soon as town closes books on FY2015 (which should be by the end of September).
- If Boxborough CPCCommittee recommends an article for this ATM (May 2015), in preparing the warrant article, the CPCCommittee should make a motion to vote on the draft of the article with best estimates and empower the chair to clarify the final wording with the Town Administrator.
- Specific line items from the last ATM (May 2014) were removed from their warrant articles (#22 Capital and Infrastructure and #23 Studies and Initiatives) in anticipation of CPA passing at the fall ballot were discussed vis a vis this coming ATM. Owen suggested that we hear from the stakeholders to determine the urgency level.
- Mitzi W. noted Recreation Commission will wait until process established.
- Bruce H. spoke for the Steele Farm Advisory Committee (SFAC) regarding the restoration work for the Steele Farm barn which was vetted, estimated and submitted for funding at last ATM as being urgent and needing to be done this summer. SFAC invited to come to next meeting with a proposal. Stuart gave example of Town of Dunstable: accelerated their CPA process for an urgent (land acquisition) project shortly after passing CPA.
- Les asked if a feasibility study for outdoor recreation on existing Town-owned municipal land would qualify. It would as creating new outdoor recreation, or restoring or rehabilitating existing outdoor recreation.

#### **Other business:**

- Meeting schedule adjustment: The following meetings were scheduled: March 5<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup>; April 30<sup>th</sup> and May 7<sup>th</sup>.
- Les Fox noted that Susan Bak will be the BoS liaison to CPCCommittee.

#### **Web site review**

- Brief discussion of other CPA town CPCCommittee web sites. Will address at future meeting.
- Hugh reported on Harvard; Mitzi shared the Project Submission Sheet from Bedford.

10:05P Dennis R. moved, John R. seconded a motion to adjourn; vote unanimous.