

Minutes of the Open Space Committee for September 29, 2015

The Open Space Committee met on September 29, 2015, At 8:15 am, in the Judge Welsh Meeting Room

Members present: April Baggins, Dave Hale, Rebecca Matarazzi, and Dennis Minsky (recording)

Also present: David Gardner, Assistant Town Manager

Hale moved, and Matarazzi seconded, to approve the minutes of March 20, 2015.

The motion passed, 4-0-0

Minsky moved, and Hale seconded, to make public the minutes of both the general and executive session meetings of March 2, 2015.

There had been a request from the Town Clerk's office for these minutes, and the committee agreed that there was no business contained therein that would interfere with the Town's negotiating position in the future.

The motion passed, 4-0-0

Minsky moved, and Hale seconded, to pay the sum of \$1,300.00 to the Compact of Cape Cod Conservation Trusts, Inc. for work performed under a contract dated February 18, 2014 and invoiced on September 30, 2015 (invoice # 1600).

Discussion followed. Minsky mentioned that the invoice was actually for \$1,350, but that Mark Robinson (Executive Director of the Compact) stated in an accompanying letter that the Compact had actually exceeded the maximum amount of the contract (\$2,500) by \$50.00. (There had been a previous payment.) The original contract would have to be amended to be exceeded; he will communicate this to Robinson. Minsky explained, and the invoice outlined, that the service provided involved outreach and negotiations for the Hall property (2 hours) and the Coastal Acres property (14.75 hours), as well as general counsel and advice to the committee (1.25 hours), at the rate of \$75.00 per hour. Matarazzi remarked that the invoice could have been more detailed, that is Robinson could have included the details of what work in particular took place during those hours. Minsky said that he would communicate this sentiment to Robinson.

The motion passed, 4-0-0

Minsky suggested that the Open Space Committee would certainly need further assistance from the Compact and that a new contract proposal should be elicited. There was no official vote on this point, but the consensus was that the Compact should submit a new proposal for future work. Gardner reminded the committee that the proposal should go to the Town Manager; Minsky rejoined that contracts were always signed by the Town Manager.

There followed a discussion of the Coastal Acres Campground. Minsky reported that a few of his queries over the summer to both Jamie Veara (representing Coastal Acres) and Jennifer Dubois (representing The Trustees of the Reservations {TTOR}) did not get much of a response, the feeling being that the campground was being operated and there was no time for negotiations. Dubois did at one point mention that TTOR would require an analysis of a business model of the campground, and asked

whether the Open Space Committee would assist in paying for such a model, but that question was never followed up. Just a week or so ago, however, the campground was publicly listed for sale (at \$4.5 million), and that has ratcheted up the activity by both TTOR and the committee. Dubois asked Minsky (and Gardner and the new Town Manager David Panagore) whether the committee would underwrite or help to underwrite the previously mentioned business model analysis; Minsky explained that she should send a proposal as soon as possible and that the committee would consider it. Dubois did send a narrative that contained a request for assistance, but Minsky thought that it was too vague and imprecise and requested from her a more direct and succinct proposal that could be more easily voted up or down; Dubois answered that such a proposal would require prior approval from the TTOR hierarchy, and that that could take up to 2 weeks.

The committee discussed all of the above. The consensus was that the committee was not comfortable with the open-ended and vague request for funds, and that a more solid and direct proposal should be delivered, even if it takes time. Minsky remarked that Spring Town Meeting was far away, but a number of people reminded him that time was of the essence. Gardner mentioned that we need to more clearly define what we are looking for; Minsky replied that it was TTOR that has the obligation to define their needs, clearly and succinctly, so that the committee can decide whether to assist (and Gardner reminded us again that the Town Manager is the final arbiter). Gardner also briefly discussed his investigation of Staves Consulting, in Montana, which is the firm that Dubois mentioned in her request. There was also agreement that TTOR should clearly define a time line for the committee.

In a separate but related matter, Matarazzi made a plea for a template to be applied to this and any other land acquisition project, which should include:

- an identification of the property
- the sale price and the portion of that that would or could be covered by town funds
- the purpose of the acquisition
- the identification of the managing body or bodies
- a description of the time frame for the process
- a delineation of possible supporters and opponents of the project

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00.

Dennis Minsky, chair