

**Volunteer Coordinating Committee Meeting
First Floor Conference Room
Town Hall
Friday, November 16, 2012 – 9:30 a.m.**

Present: Carol Amick, Chair, Patricia Carluccio, Joseph Piantedosi

Also Present: Selectmen Liaison Margot Fleischman and Administrative Assistant Patricia Hurd

The meeting was called to order at 9:32 a.m.

Minutes

Ms. Carluccio made a motion to accept the Minutes of September 5, 2012, as corrected. Mr. Piantedosi seconded the motion, and it passed, 3-0-0.

Old Business

- (a) Reports on contacts made to potential appointees and review of Vacancy Worksheet with possible recommendations to the Selectmen for filling various vacancies

Ms. Amick expressed her delight that the Volunteer Coordinating Committee (VCC) has filled so many vacancies over the last year and noted that several Selectmen have commented favorably on the VCC's efforts. She thanked Ms. Carluccio and Mr. Piantedosi for recruiting so many volunteers.

Affordable Housing (AHC): Ms. Carluccio noted that Terri Kramer was more interested in the Housing Partnership and would like to serve where she is most needed. The VCC will add her name to all three housing committees.

Ms. Carluccio said that both Jane Patterson and Nancy Barnes are interested in serving on a housing committee, and planned to attend the December 6, 2012 Bedford Housing Partnership (BHP) meeting.

Arbor Resources: Ms. Amick reported that Melinda Chamberlin Dietrich is very interested in Arbor Resources and is a member of the Bedford Garden Club. She indicated that she will attend their Nov. 20, 2012 meeting.

Bicycle Advisory: Ms. Carluccio noted that Clem Larson is not interested in serving after all, but Ted Heller is. Ms. Amick met Peter Barck at Special Town

Meeting, and he may be interested as well. With the exception of applicant Jan van Steenwijk, the other candidates have not yet submitted questionnaires.

Capital Expenditures (CapEx): Ms. Amick thought that Shane O'Neil's background and experience made him a good candidate for this committee and contacted him to determine his interest. Ms. Fleischmann noted that Alicia Tillman's experience would make her a good CapEx member, but because she was recently appointed to the Cable TV Committee, her name should be kept on file for a future CapEx opening. Mr. Piantedosi had two people in mind but will check with them first before he releases any names. He noted the extensive time commitment involved for this particular committee. Mr. Piantedosi offered to contact Brian Bartkus to let him know that, if he were to be appointed to CapEx, he would not be able to serve on any other committee. Ms. Amick noted that she spoke with Myles McDonough and he is still interested.

The VCC members agreed to hold a short meeting on November 20, 2012 to discuss any additional CapEx questionnaires so that they can send names to the appointing authority in a timely manner.

Council on Aging: Ms. Amick heard from the COA Chair that there may be two new vacancies – one due to a death and the other to occur after a non-participating COA member is asked to resign her position. Ms. Hurd will follow up with Lori Wittner, COA Director, to determine the status.

Historic District: There is one alternate position for this commission. Ms. Amick will continue to contact Messrs. Asbedian and Smythe to encourage them.

Historic Preservation: With the recent appointment of Arthur Ellis on Nov. 5, there are now two vacancies. Ms. Amick noted that Jane Blasi is currently unavailable to serve due to a personal situation. She also contacted Richard LeSchack to see if he may be interested, and he is.

Housing Partnership (BHP): The committee added the names of Nancy Barnes, Jane Patterson and Terri Kramer as possibilities. Suzanne Harrison is unable to commit at this time.

Patriotic Holiday: Mr. Piantedosi noted that he completed rewriting the charge for the Patriotic Holiday Committee and it was unanimously adopted by the committee, but needs Selectmen approval. He indicated that, under the new committee charge, there would be one position available. The Veterans Agent and the Hanscom delegate would both be considered liaisons, rather than voting members. The members want this committee to become a permanent committee rather than an ad hoc committee and allow a non-Bedford resident, who is a member of both the VFW and the American Legion, to serve on it.

Sign Bylaw Review: Ms. Amick reported that Ken Gordon, whose application for this committee has been on hold with the VCC since before the State Election, has decided not to pursue this appointment because of his success in winning the State Representative seat. Ms. Amick noted that she called Jeffrey Cohen, who indicated that the committee is almost finished with its work, and therefore won't need to fill the open seat. Ms. Amick stated that she had previously tried to contact Peggy Martinez for this committee, but the email had bounced. She will telephone her instead.

Ms. Hurd was asked to check previous emails to see if she had mentioned that Clem Larson may be interested in the Recreation Commission besides the Bicycle Advisory Committee, and report back.

(b) Continuing discussion: Possible consolidation of three housing committees

Ms. Amick noted that since the last meeting, she conducted further research on the housing committee consolidation. Expanding on the presentation made by Assistant Town Manager Jessica Porter at the last VCC meeting, Ms. Amick said the Fair Housing Committee (FHC) was established in 1979 and the Fair Housing Plan was adopted by the Selectmen in 1983 and again in March, 1992. She also noted that there is no specific section in the Town's Charter or Bylaws establishing the FHC, but the committee is mentioned in Article 22 – AHC and Article 23 -- BHP.

Ms. Amick noted that Sections 7, 8 and 9 are missing from the version of the Fair Housing Plan given to the VCC, and asked Ms. Hurd if she could locate a complete plan. She then summarized the charge of the FHC. Ms. Amick also noted that the table of contents in the Fair Housing Plan references a section on a Fair Housing Coordinator, but she did not know who is assigned that function, since that section of her copy was missing.

Ms. Amick said that, based on the Housing Plan given to the VCC, there are 9 members of the FHC, not 7 as earlier reported by Ms. Porter. The membership is comprised of 7 individuals appointed by the Selectmen for 5-year terms, one from the Planning Board, and one from the Housing Authority. Ms. Amick spent hours researching Massachusetts statutes, but could not find anything that requires the FHC to be a stand-alone committee. Ms. Amick noted that she will confirm this fact with the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) before the BHP's meeting on December 6th.

Ms. Amick said the AHC was established in 1988 to manage some affordable units at Shawsheen Ridge after the project developer approached the Town and offered to sell some Shawsheen Ridge condos as "affordable" if Bedford would allow a higher density development than allowed by its zoning bylaws. The Town accepted the deal and it was approved by Town Meeting. Town Meeting then voted to create the AHC for the sole purpose of selling those units. Mr.

Piantedosi said that he remembered former Selectmen Bill King was involved with the Shawsheen Ridge development and offered to talk to him about it.

There was discussion about the responsibilities of the AHC, the FHC, the BHP, and the Regional Housing Services Office (RHSO), an inter-municipal collaboration between seven towns, including Bedford, which monitors public housing-related activities. Questions were raised about the AHC's role in relation to the activities of the RHSO.

Ms. Amick opined that there are overlapping responsibilities among these three committees which do not have their full complement of members. She read from the General Bylaws, Section 22.2 of Article 22 - AHC regarding the committee's composition: 5 members at-large, one member from the FHC, one member from the Housing Authority, and one ex-officio member from the Planning Board, all for three-year terms. She noted that the ex-officio Planning Board member of the committee votes at committee meetings, making the membership total 8, not 7 as Ms. Porter had stated at the previous meeting.

Ms. Amick also read Article 23, which establishes the BHP, and noted that its membership includes all the members of the Affordable Housing and Fair Housing Committees, and 8 at-large members appointed by the Selectmen for three year terms, for a total membership of 24 people.

Ms. Amick reiterated that she researched MA General Laws and various state regulations to confirm that no requirement exists that a Fair Housing Committee must be a stand-alone committee, as Ms. Porter had told the VCC at its last meeting. She said the only MA law she found that was close to such a requirement was one relating to the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (MCAD). Ch. 151B, §3, Paragraph 8 allows the MCAD to create local advisory boards to assist and effectuate the law. Ms. Amick explained that this statute allows communities the choice to have such a committee or not. Ms. Fleischman commented that, after the VCC recommends some sort of consolidation of the three committees, Town Counsel can review state law and provide advice on the committee's proposal.

Ms. Amick first wants to confirm with the DHCD that no requirement exists for Towns to have a Fair Housing Committee. If none exists, she recommends consolidating the Fair Housing and Affordable Housing Committees under the Bedford Housing Partnership, and suggested presenting this idea at the BHP's next meeting with Mr. Piantedosi. She believes that BHP members should comment on the VCC proposal, since they are the individuals actively working on housing issues for the Town. Ms. Fleischman noted that if the same nine people are doing all this work, that seems like plenty of members for a consolidated committee.

Ms. Amick noted that the BHP was created in 1991 upon the recommendation of both the AHC and the FHC, which decided to meet together that year.

Ms. Fleischman recommended including affordable housing monitoring as one of the consolidated committee's new tasks. She noted that the only committee of the three that meets is the BHP. Mr. Piantedosi recommended that it would be to the VCC's advantage to get Town Counsel to concur that this can be done legally. The committee discussed whether or not they had enough time to be able to submit its recommendation to the Selectmen and get this proposal on the warrant for Annual Town Meeting. Ms. Fleischman suggested that the VCC contact Town Counsel to review this proposal, as he may be able to respond very quickly.

Ms. Amick will draft a consolidation proposal and send it to the other members for review before she presents it to the BHP on December 6th.

Ms. Amick also suggested that, at the VCC's December meeting, the committee discuss the concept of allowing resident aliens, who are not registered voters, to be allowed to serve on certain ad hoc committees that are not financial or judicial in nature. Mr. Piantedosi offered to prepare a list of committees that he feels will be amenable to membership by resident aliens, as well as those committees that will not. The VCC agreed that, once it decides upon this list, it can submit its recommendation to the Selectmen for review by the next Charter & Bylaw Review Committee.

(c) New Business

VCC members discussed a possible arrangement with high school officials that would enable high school students to volunteer as baby sitters for parents with young children who want to attend town meetings, giving the students credits toward graduation.

Next Meeting Date

The VCC scheduled a short meeting on November 20, 2012 at 2:00 p.m. and a regular meeting on December 13, 2012 at 9:30 a.m.

Mr. Piantedosi made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Carluccio seconded the motion, which passed 3-0-0. The meeting adjourned at 11:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Hurd
Recording Secretary

Minutes approved: December 13, 2012

Record Copy