

**TOWN OF LAKEVILLE**  
**Board of Selectmen Meeting Minutes**  
**August 31, 2016 – 9:00 AM**

On August 31, 2016, the Selectmen held a Special Meeting at the Lakeville Senior Center. Chairman Hollenbeck called the meeting to order at 9:05 AM. Selectmen present: Selectman Hollenbeck, Selectman Powderly and Selectmen Burke. Also present was Town Administrator Rita Garbitt. LakeCAM started recording the meeting at 9:40 AM.

**Discuss Interviews for the Payroll and Benefits Processor/HR Assistant**

The Board discussed the employment applications received for the Payroll and Benefits Processor HR/Assistant position. It was determined that one (1) applicant would be interviewed. Chairman Hollenbeck suggested to the Board they might need to revise the Job Description to include additional duties and responsibilities and increase the pay rate. The position would have to be re-advertised.

At 9:18 AM, the Board took a recess until Secretary Ash arrived. At 9:40 AM, the Selectmen's meeting was re-convened.

**Meet with Secretary Jay Ash and Local Legislators to discuss Economic Plans for Lakeville**

*Housing and Economic Development Secretary Jay Ash, Senator Michael Rodrigues, and Representative Keiko Orrall were present for the discussion.*

Chairman Hollenbeck stated that the Town recently had a meeting on the Route 105 SRPEDD study about what sort of zoning would be beneficial in the former Lakeville Hospital area. The cost for cleanup and what it would cost to develop the site per acre would be approximately \$200,000, which makes it prohibitive to build. That means that the Hospital Site will just sit there. The owners are paying \$50,000 in taxes each year and are selling it for \$7 million. The clean-up will cost approximately \$4 to \$5 million. That means a \$12 million undertaking before anything could be done in terms of Commercial Development. It may not be feasible for anyone to come to this site. The Town has this large property, which may be ideal for the right company. Sysco was interested in purchasing and developing the site. When it went to Town Meeting, it was voted down. The area may be ideal for Industrial business, but the Town does not want to support that type of business. It is felt that it does not fit in with the rural character of Lakeville. We have discussed the Community Compact with Representative Orrall and what sort of economic benefits might be available to Lakeville.

Secretary Ash noted that the impediments for the site have been listed. What is the maximum build out on the property, and the kind of uses that the Town would allow or allow by zoning? Selectman Powderly stated that the zoning would have to be changed to allow the site to be a viable industrial site. The Town's Industrial Park today has distributors such as food services; a freezer company, a builder and the second largest and largest tax payers in Town have tremendous freezer production facilities. Secretary Ash agreed that there is a lot of manufacturing going on. Selectman Powderly stated that the bio-tech industry and other quiet industries, such as research development would be good for the area. If there were to be a

distribution facility, there would be a fair amount of truck traffic. It may only be that bio-tech and soft industries would be acceptable in this area. However, there is still the cost prohibitive aspect. Secretary Ash stated that there is always another program at the local, state, or federal level to look at. Though there does not seem to be a solution at this time, there may be other possibilities at some point. Secretary Ash stated that he has spoken with both Senator Rodrigues and Representative Orrall to identify the assets of the site. It does contain over 60 acres, and it is in a great location. Before the Governor took office, he was looking for 50 acres for development. It was thought that there must be a lot of those around the State; however, after looking, there were actually very few to be found. It was an international bio-tech industry that he was looking to put in. Lakeville has over 60 acres and interstate access within one (1) mile, which is all an advantage. What other assets does the site have? Ms. Garbitt said that the commuter rail station is located approximately ¼ mile away. Chairman Hollenbeck stated that there is the dove tailing with South Coast Rail, which may or may not happen. Is it possible to work with a private developer to put the site on a priority list?

Selectman Burke had met with the owners of the property to discuss what they would like to see, and it was felt that the matter is at a crossroads. It is privately owned and more of a liability to the Town. SRPEDD looked at the site for what sort of zoning they would recommend. How much can Towns work with private owners? Secretary Ash stated that he will offer opinions. There are plenty of ways to get a development done. He was a City Manager for the City of Chelsea for 14 years and did 33 major projects. Businesses and developers used to come to him and ask to help them get a development done, though he has never done that himself. It is important for the Town to know its role and what the limitations and assets are. It is being asked how the Town can get involved and do something. The way Secretary Ash has been able to accomplish this is through empowering the entire development community, letting them know that if they can come up with something to develop on the land, the municipality will work with them to get it developed. So this would not be the Town sitting with the owner. The Town does have the power to change the zoning, give tax relief and legislators can be consulted to help secure grants. The Town can be the conduit for a developer who has done 100's of these deals. The developer can go in and work with the owner to help them make the project whole on the development side. The most recent example is how General Electric (GE) was brought to Massachusetts. The State's role was not to go out and find GE homes. If GE finds a home, and they were provided with several locations, the State would then help make it financially feasible for GE. It was not known what GE wanted for a development site and what their relationships were, but the State empowered them with its willingness to partner with them. They negotiated to purchase a parcel of land from Gillette in Boston, which no one else was able to purchase. They either got lucky, or utilized their contacts to have them negotiate to sell. Maybe the approach is to establish what the zoning possibilities are, talk to Legislators about incentive packages and then tell the development community what the Town is interested in doing. Maybe it is industrial, maybe a stadium on the property, maybe hotels, it is not known. The Town wants to let developers know that Lakeville is a place to do business and is open to help facilitate good business.

Chairman Hollenbeck said that Lakeville needs to work with the Town of Middleborough for the sewer and the City of Taunton for the water. Secretary Ash said that would be a limitation then. Chairman Hollenbeck said that Sysco was going to put in their own sewer treatment plan

and work with the Town of Middleborough for water. There is potential access, but we have only talked with Middleborough briefly and have not sat down to discuss getting the water to the site through an Intermunicipal Agreement (IMA). Secretary Ash asked if Lakeville and Middleborough have IMA's on any other parcels. Selectman Powderly responded that there is with Twin Coach Estates and a few houses for water hookups with preexisting conditions. Chairman Hollenbeck stated that Lakeville also has water IMA's with the Cities of New Bedford and Taunton. Selectman Powderly mentioned that in the past, Middleborough was unwilling to do a sewer hook up and escalated the price enough so that someone would not be interested. The water issue is resolved, but the sewer matter is not. If the State funded the sewer hookup and sewage treatment for Middleborough, can the State then help Lakeville, since they have already helped out Middleborough?

Secretary Ash said that the short answer is no. No one can force anything. Having said that, he would be happy to be part of a mutually beneficial discussion. Developers can chase after deals anywhere. They are looking for the path of least resistance or greatest return. Generally speaking, it is the path to least resistance. Understanding the assets and the liabilities is important. Mitigating the liabilities, like water and sewer, ahead of time, would be a prerequisite to someone getting serious about the opportunity of developing the site. A developer will not come in to negotiate with two (2) communities, which could take forever, or not happen at all. Selectman Burke stated that sewer hookup for the size of that site would require Town Meeting approval in Middleborough. That alone is a huge political variable that no one has control over. It is not just sitting down with the Middleborough Board of Selectmen. A resident may feel why put sewer in Lakeville, when they don't have it where they live in Middleborough. Middleborough also requires a specific project to propose to the Town for them to vote on at Town Meeting. Secretary Ash stated developers will not assemble all the property or fight through a process. The point is, if you have a project that needs help, you need to short circuit that and engage a consultant to study the property, perhaps with the owner. The Town of Lakeville would be maximizing the property for them, if the sewer availability is taken care of. During discussions with a neighboring community, it is beneficial to let them know what is mutually favorable to each Town, explaining that it is creating jobs for the region and perhaps other things.

Chairman Hollenbeck mentioned that there is also another concern with the rotary project in Middleborough. Lakeville had a proposal from Market Basket about coming in on Route 44. Lakeville was told that MassDOT was going to ask them to add a lane to Route 44, so that is why they didn't do the project. MassDOT's proposed design did include the additional lane, so when a developer came in, they would have to do that, even though it was part of MassDOT's plan anyway. That is a State impediment to economic development that Lakeville cannot do anything about. It is a 44 acre parcel. Everyone wants the easy way and no impediments, but the State is tying our hands. Representative Orrall stated that water and sewer is not an issue at the 44 acre site. It is transportation for Route 495 and the Complete Streets Program. Secretary Ash asked if the cost was known for that. Chairman Hollenbeck stated that the Building Commissioner would know.

Secretary Ash stated that when he leaves today he will be going to a neighboring community to talk about a Market Basket, which also requires lane widening and signalization, so this is not

unusual for Mass DOT. If the State is going to create a problem or add to a problem, it needs to be resolved for the developer, and the permits need to have taken place. There are ways of overcoming limitations with the neighboring community by asking for a State grant to solve the State problem. This may be something that the Town may want to entertain. Legislators just gave new authorization to spend State grant money for creating economic development in the amount of \$75 million this year. There will probably be about \$300 million of requests from cities and towns, so it is not a guarantee. The project is judged by the local economic development investment from the private sector, the amount of jobs it will create, local revenue and other factors. Market Basket is a good company, and Secretary Ash has had experience with them. The Town needs to determine what it can do locally. More than half of the 33 projects completed in Chelsea got tax relief. Chelsea had been against that before. When Secretary Ash left Chelsea, they had \$18 million in Free Cash. They were generating revenue all over the place, once the tax reliefs burned off. Tax relief was given on four (4) hotel projects. Each of them generated more revenue than was given away in tax relief, so it was worth their while. There is an ability on the local level to look for extraordinary costs. The Town and the State can give tax relief. When the State sees the community extending itself to promote development when a Town applies for a grant, they are looked upon more favorably, when considerations are made.

Senator Rodrigues asked if Lakeville has entered into TIFs for commercial development. Selectman Burke responded that a TIF did pass for the Sysco project; however, the zoning change failed. Selectman Powderly stated that the Town of Lakeville would have to give it away as an incentive, since the tax rate is only \$14 per thousand. Secretary Ash noted that at a tax rate of \$14.00, sometimes it is more about the dollars, and sometimes it is about the offer to be a partner. The strategy that Secretary Ash has employed is to make sure that the businesses coming in felt that they had a true partner with the Town. Once a reputation is developed, then the Town can find people that believe in what you are trying to do for your community. The hotel people become an integral part of the community in Chelsea. Selectman Powderly said that the Town has to do its own zoning change to allow certain industries in, which are otherwise not allowed. Regarding water, a soft industry about 600,000 square feet does not use a lot of water or sewer. A distribution facility would work; however, the neighbors were not willing to go there in terms of industrial zoning, so it has been restrictive. The Town needs to solve the local zoning and the water/sewer issues. Selectman Burke stated that the current zoning mirrors what the developer wanted at that time. The developer was working with the property owner National Development for retail and housing development that they wanted at the site. Secretary Ash noted that may be what the Town will attract, so it may already have the zoning needed. The Town can work together with Secretary Ash and get the Economic Bill passed into law. 125 communities in the past 18-19 months have an appreciation for their Industrial and Business Parks. Chelsea had the ability to go vertical. As you get further away from Boston, Route 128, and Route 495, you come to appreciate the value of local economy and business parks. Your legislators have had the foresight to approve new programs. This area is a nice place to live, which is an asset. Creating an Industrial Business Park where people want to live is nice to have in a community. It gives a symbiotic relationship with the employer and having their employees live in the community.

Chairman Hollenbeck said that the Town of Lakeville has an approximate population of 11,000. What does Secretary Ash see as the economic arm for development? The Town does not have an Economic Development Office, but does have a Director of Inspectional Services and Permits. The Town is also looking into redoing its personnel as part of the Strategic Plan. Who would do the grants? Secretary Ash stated that it is more the personalities, as opposed to a particular role, which he has seen in towns. The Town can look at what internal strengths it has with its staff and fill in where a need is seen. There are ways to put Regional Cooperative Agreements in place. Community Compacts are a great way to get help to figure that out. Property owners and developers want to know who they're working with, what voice they have, who they can speak to for help. If they don't have that, if they just see a diffused power structure, then they don't want to spend their time. It needs to be determined who the voice is and allow them to speak. The Town needs to figure that out internally, who it wants to empower.

Secretary Ash stated that he was impressed with the level of questions, since it seems that there has been some deep thought on this. The Board may be the best advocate, but they have day jobs too. The State could help with the Community Compact and a Regional Planning Agency in figuring that out. Representative Rodrigues asked about the 43D-Priority Development and if that was still a growing part of the component. If communities accept 43D and designate a priority development area, with a good developable piece of property, would Secretary Ash's Office accept it and help market it? Is that type of program still available? Chairman Hollenbeck stated that the Town already has Expedited Permitting for the site. Secretary Ash stated that he did not have time to finish his research on the Town, but where is the Town financially? Is it the growth that the Town is trying to generate new revenue from or is it needing to fill jobs, or cleaning up vacant properties? Where would the Town prioritize? Chairman Hollenbeck stated that the finances of the Town are stable, except with the Schools. They are 60% of the budget. Lakeville is part of a Regional School District, which lends to some challenges trying to be sustainable. Other Post Employee Benefits is also a huge concern; Pavement Management Program is a huge concern and keeping up with the Town's infrastructure. We want to try and have sustainable economic growth that is not coming from the residents. The Town has the 2.5% increase every year. The Town also has a distinct aging population. There are zoning issues; the minimum lot residential lot size is 1.6 acres. The Town is trying to get up to 10% for affordable housing. The people that grow up here are not able to come back due to the costs. People come in with young families, but they add to the schools. The Town is 85% residential and 15% commercial, so the burden is on the residents. The Town wants to build a Police Station and be sustainable in the future.

Selectman Burke stated that the former Hospital Property is the gateway into Town and from a community pride stance, people want to see it developed. With the train and the highway access, it is the cornerstone of the Town. Senator Rodrigues noted that in another town, they take the property by eminent domain. The Town then created an urban renewal plan, and as a municipality, the Town was able to get grants and find an anchor tenant. That is another thought. It is a big reach taking that property into the hands of the Town. Selectman Powderly stated that the Board is not in the real estate business, but wants to clean up the brownfield site and put something there that deserves to be there. However, there are the zoning and water issues that need to be resolved. Secretary Ash stated that economic development can be exciting, but

frustrating. If a member of the Board sees a gateway development in another town, possibly they can research and identify who it is, how they were able to settle in, and ask if they would consider coming to Lakeville and replicating the same type of business.

Chairman Hollenbeck thanked Secretary Ash for attending the meeting.

### **New Business**

There was no new business presented for discussion.

### **Old Business**

There was no old business presented for discussion.

### **Any other business that may properly come before the meeting**

There was no other business presented for discussion.

### **Adjournment**

Upon a motion made by Selectman Burke; seconded by Selectman Powderly it was:

VOTED: To adjourn the Selectmen's Meeting at 10:30 AM.  
Unanimous in favor.