

TOWN COUNCIL PUBLIC HEARING - THURSDAY EVENING - NOVEMBER 3, 2011

PRESENT: Marshall, Barboza, Teixeira, Herreshoff (arrived at 7:03 o'clock PM), and Parella

The Council met in special session for the purpose of a public hearing pursuant to Town Charter Section 410, Source of appropriations, being duly advertised, on Thursday evening, November 3, 2011, in the Town Hall, Conference Room beginning at 7:02 o'clock PM, Council Chairman Marshall presiding:

A3

Document(s) Received:

1. Town Treasurer Goucher re availability of funds to support expenditure
2. (Mount Hope Trust) Repayment Schedule

Council Chairman Marshall noted that this public hearing, duly noticed and advertised, is held to consider a special appropriation for the Mount Hope Trust in Bristol.

Speaking in favor of the appropriation was Michael Byrnes, a member of the Citizens for Mount Hope Farm. Mr. Byrnes stated that the Farm is "doing well" and also that its finances are "in the black." He added his advice to the Council that "this is the right time to support the Mount Hope Trust."

John Brandao of 2 Milford Street informed the Council that he supports the appropriation. Mr. Brandao stated that although he enjoys the Farm, he was disappointed that he was asked to leave the premises when he visited the Farm to gather shellfish.

(Councilman Herreshoff arrived at this point in the hearing; 7:03 o'clock PM)

Mr. Brandao stated that he did not believe it was proper that he should be asked to remove himself from the property and also that he was instructed to walk only upon the paved roads, since he supported the acquisition of the property. Mr. Brandao suggested that the Trust should declare a public right of way to the shore and also that a granite marker should be placed to designate this right of way.

Joseph Brito, Jr., President of the Mount Hope Trust, stated that he was pleased to speak to Mr. Brandao about his request but also that it may be difficult to do so at this time. Mr. Brito added that there are issues relating to the Trust's granting of the request of Mr. Brandao in that the roads are not public roads and

also that there may be liability issues to consider. He repeated that he would gladly speak to Mr. Brandao about these issues in addition to discussing his request with him.

Councilman Herreshoff agreed that the Farm should have a public purpose.

Mr. Byrnes agreed with Councilman Herreshoff and stated that the Farm's "waterfront should be for the people of Bristol."

Councilwoman Parella stated that the Council may wish to stipulate toward this end as a condition of the appropriation.

Councilman Barboza noted that there are certain public rights to shoreline access. He added that he understands Mr. Brito's concern for liability, etc.

Councilman Herreshoff noted that the Council may not have the specific authority to provide a right of way but also that he would appreciate knowing the end result.

Mr. Brandao stated that he had access to the shoreline in the past granted to him "by the previous committee." He stated that he understands the private property issue but would have preferred if the Town required the "granite marker" as a condition of its grant to the Trust to acquire the property. Mr. Brandao also noted that a list of public rights of way used to include the shore at the Mount Hope Farm and also that it appears to be omitted from the latest list.

Jerry Dauterive of 4 Liberty Lane a member of the Mount Hope Trust, stated that he was in favor of the appropriation and indicated that the Trust is in need of revenue to operate and that the funds will allow for the continued use/rental of the farm properties.

Georgina Macdonald of Poppasquash Road also a member of the Trust and a member of the Town's Economic Development Commission, stated that she also was in favor of the appropriation since the Farm's events bring event-related business to other local entities.

Maria Prezioso of 24 Cottage Street stated that she was in favor of the appropriation. She noted that the taxpayers have made an investment in the Farm and that the appropriation would protect this investment.

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There was no remonstrance presented in opposition to the appropriation.

The Clerk noted the receipt of the Treasurer's certificate as to the availability of \$53,400 in the General Fund.

Councilman Herreshoff noted that the Town will be providing funds as a loan and not as a "gift."

Barboza/Parella - Voted unanimously to appropriate \$53,000 to the Mount Hope Trust in Bristol subject to repayment per the amortization schedule so provided.

Prior to the vote taken, the Clerk asked for clarification since the Trust indicated in their testimony on October 19, 2011, that it required \$53,400 but the repayment schedule provided at the same time indicates a request for \$53,000. Mr. Brito confirmed that the required amount is per the repayment schedule; \$53,000.

Councilman Herreshoff asked to know if the Mount Hope Trust finds the repayment schedule to be acceptable with Mr. Brito responding that the repayment schedule was acceptable.

Councilwoman Parella stated her acknowledgement that the "Farm has come a long way." She added that she supports Mr. Brandao's assertions regarding shoreline access and asked that the Trust should address this issue.

Councilman Herreshoff noted that he and the Clerk once helped the Boy Scouts fundraise in order to build a "latrine" and that it was sometimes difficult for non-profits to raise money to build the more-mundane necessities. He speculated that it would be difficult for the Trust to promote its septic system as a "naming opportunity."

Councilman Herreshoff also shared Councilwoman Parella's comments and "applauded" the Trust's efforts to date and added that this request for funding appears as a "rescue mission."

Councilman Barboza stated that he supports the request for funding from the Trust and noted that he served previously as a member of the Trust. He offered his congratulations to "all" for their work thus far.

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Councilman Teixeira noted that the expenditure supports the Farm's "sustainability" and added that he hopes that the Trust will begin repayment of its earlier loan from the Town.

Council Chairman Marshall asked to know if Mr. Dauterive considers the Town's loan as a "good investment" with Mr. Dauterive responding affirmatively.

Mr. Brito agreed with Mr. Dauterive and Ms. Macdonald stated that she was of the opinion that the Trust experienced an "enormous financial turn-around."

Mr. Byrnes added that the Trust provides a "significant economic value" to the Town in terms of its use as a special-event venue.

Council Chairman Marshall added that the Council appreciates the Trust providing its honorable body with regular updates of its progress. He suggested that these might be provided semi-annually.

There being no further business, upon a motion by Councilman Barboza, seconded by Councilman Herreshoff and voted unanimously, the Chairman declared this public hearing to be adjourned at 7:20 o'clock PM.

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Louis P. Cirillo, CMC, Council Clerk