



TOWN OF TEWKSBURY

TOWN HALL
1009 MAIN ST
TEWKSBURY, MASSACHUSETTS 01876

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Thomas L. Cooke, Chairman
David Aznavoorian, Vice Chair
Damin Sutherby, Clerk
Ralph Ford
Raymond Lisiecki
David McGinness
Kelly Brooks

Meeting Minutes for August 15, 2013

1) Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by David Aznavoorian, Chairman, at the Tewksbury Police Headquarters. Present were Thomas Cooke, Damin Sutherby, Raymond Lisiecki, and David McGinness. Also present were Richard Montuori, Town Manager, Karen Kucala, Finance Director, and Melissa Johnson, Recording Secretary.

Kelly Brooks was not in attendance.

A reporter from the Boston Globe was also present.

2) Warrant Articles Public Hearing August 20, 2013 Special Town Meeting

Mr. Cooke provided the members with a copy of a resolution he intends to offer whether or not the article is adopted at town meeting. Mr. Cooke noted that the warrant article is a zoning article and does not mention funds, revenues, etc. Mr. Aznavoorian explained that the Finance Committee Bylaws state that the Committee should make a recommendation on all articles whether financial or zoning; the Committee is not required to defer to any particular board for non financial articles.

MOTION: Mr. Cooke made the motion to adopt Article 1; seconded by Mr. Sutherby and the motion carried 4-1 by a roll call vote. Mr. Lisiecki was opposed.

Mr. Lisiecki noted that he is disappointed with the State for the deadline position and feels that as Tewksbury is being asked to vote on zoning for an industry that does not exist within the Commonwealth and there are no written regulations. Mr. Lisiecki noted that there is no site plan and what will be included in the complex remains a work in progress. The overlay also includes 100 and 200 Ames Drive. Mr. Lisiecki discussed some of the impacts this project could have on traffic, current and future businesses infrastructure, public safety, State Aid, etc. Mr. Lisiecki is disappointed that all of the comparison communities are cities with much larger public safety resources. In the case of Bangor, ME, there was a preexisting racing facility and a raceway in Kansas City. The infrastructure already supported a destination industry. Mr. Lisiecki noted that he watched the presentation that was given by Mass Gaming to Andover concerning the

process and surrounding communities and the representative specifically stated that there would be a greater burden on the host community to apply for mitigation funds since the host community had the opportunity with the agreement. Mr. Lisiecki noted that he also received a mailing to support this project promising to lower taxes and this is not true. Mr. Lisiecki feels the Committee is not being allowed sufficient time to look beyond the revenue to understand the impact and resulting value.

Mr. Montuori explained that he has done due diligence with four of the other communities in which Penn National Gaming operates casinos: Joilet, IL, Kansas City, KS, Bangor, ME, and Toledo, OH. Each community were asked a variety of questions and all of the communities stated the following: there has been no negative impact on property values for both commercial and residential properties and in some cases property values increased, there has been no negative impact on existing businesses and in some cases there was an increase in local business, there have been no impacts on traffic as Penn has provided the mitigation as needed, there have been no significant increases in crime or impact to the fire departments, and there was no need for additional public safety staff, but some communities hired additional public safety anyways as Penn provided funds to them for that purpose. Mr. Montuori noted that he received positive responses from all four of the communities and all said that there have been no stigmas attached to their communities as a result of the casinos. Mr. Aznavoorian noted that most of the communities also stated that Penn has been active within their communities on other matters as well.

Mr. Montuori provided the members with a copy of the revenue projections for this project as well as a copy of a summary of Chapter 194 of the Session Laws of 2011; an act establishing expanded gaming in the Commonwealth.

Mr. Sutherby noted that he visited a casino in Oxford, ME recently to observe its' impacts on the community, etc. This casino is not owned or operated by Penn National. Mr. Sutherby's observations were as follows: there were no issues with traffic and there was only a single lane roadway, there were several new businesses just before the casino and all the surrounding businesses were open, there were approximately 500 patrons and not a great deal of alcohol consumption. Mr. Sutherby noted that he also spoke with some of the employees and they all appeared to be happy.

Mr. Montuori noted that the Police Chief and Fire Chief also did their own research. The Police Chief is a graduate of the FBI Academy and reached out to some of his constituents nationwide and none had heard of any issues with crime.

Mr. Lisiecki noted that he is concerned with the impact to local businesses and whether this proposal is worth it in the long run. Mr. Lisiecki feels another business will come along that would be a better fit for Tewksbury and will offer the same incentives. Discussion took place on the difficulties the town has in bringing in new businesses and offering incentives as they do not own the land.

Mr. Cooke discussed the Biotech Industry and the problems for Tewksbury that lie therein including Tewksbury not having access to the Federal funds that urban communities do and their desire to be located close to educational institutes.

Discussion took place on the host community agreement and whether it can be amended. Mr. Montuori noted that the host community agreement is consistent with all of the other communities in which Penn operates and likely cannot be amended at this point.

Mr. Cooke read his resolution aloud and noted that it has been worded in such a manner that if the article is not approved by a 2/3 vote there will be no election.

MOTION: Mr. Sutherby made the motion to include the resolution with the Finance Committee's recommendation; seconded by Mr. Lisiecki and the motion carried 5-0.

MOTION: Mr. McGinness made the motion to correspond in writing with the Board of Selection expressing the Finance Committee's concerns with the host community agreement and request that they re discuss the agreement for any further negotiations; seconded by Mr. Cooke and the motion carried 4-1. Mr. Aznavoorian was opposed.

Mr. Aznavoorian thanked the Committee members and Mr. Montuori for all of their hard work on this matter.

3) Approval of Payment of Recording Secretary Timesheet June 2013

MOTION: Mr. Lisiecki made the motion to approve the Recording Secretary's time sheet in the amount of \$58.52; seconded by Mr. Sutherby and the motion carried 5-0.

4) Future Meeting Dates

Tuesday, August 20, 2013	Special Town Meeting – Zoning Bylaw Change
Thursday, September 12, 2013	7pm Regular Business Meeting
Wednesday, September 18, 2013	Public Hearing for October STM Warrant
Thursday, September 26, 2013	7pm Regular Business Meeting
Thursday, October 1, 2013	October Special Town Meeting – TBD by BOS
Thursday, October 17, 2013	7pm Regular Business Meeting
Thursday, November 7, 2013	7pm Regular Business Meeting
Thursday, December 5, 2013	7pm Regular Business Meeting

Adjourn.

MOTION: Mr. Sutherby made the motion to adjourn at 8:36 p.m.; seconded by Mr. McGinness and the motion carried 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Approved: _____
Damin Sutherby, Clerk

Date

**Documents Presented and/or Discussed
August 15, 2013**

- 1) Special Town Meeting Warrant
A copy can be found at the Town Manager's Office, Town Clerk's Office, or the Recording Secretary
- 2) Resolution prepared by Thomas Cooke
A copy can be found with the Finance Committee, Town Clerk's Office, or the Recording Secretary
- 3) Penn Revenue Projections
A copy can be found at the Town Manager's office or with the Recording Secretary
- 4) Chapter 194 of the Sessions Laws of 2011
A copy can be found at the Town Manager's office or with the Recording Secretary
- 5) Recording Secretary Time Sheet
A copy can be found in the Finance Department or with the Recording Secretary