

**Selectmen Present:** Gary Vanderweil  
Edwin Carr  
Frederick Koed  
Paul Carlson

**Selectman Absent:** Ralph Dormitzer

**Others Present:** William R. Griffin, Town Manager  
Jennifer Oram, Recording Secretary

Chairman Gary Vanderweil called the meeting to order at 7:00PM.

**Town Manager’s Report**

Town Manager, William Griffin, asked the Board to set the percentage rate for betterments for the Newtonville drainage improvement project. The Board has to set the interest rate for those betterment assessments that are apportioned by the property owner. He stated that Finance Director, Michael Buckley, recommended the rate be 4%. **Selectman Edwin Carr moved that the percentage rate for the Newtonville betterment assessment be set at 4%. Selectman Paul Carlson seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous.**

Mr. Griffin asked the Board to review the Designer Selection Policy that had been given to them in their packets. He stated that he would schedule on the agenda for the May 21, 2007 meeting. In addition, Mr. Griffin asked that the Board review the two draft Requests for Proposals for cell tower locations in Town. He stated he would schedule this for discussion on the May 21<sup>st</sup> agenda as well.

**Selectmen Comment Period**

Selectman Carlson stated that a story in the April 27<sup>th</sup> Mariner reported that Cohasset had three times the amount of crime this year. The Town however, does not have any of the major crimes, so he feels the reporting facts may be incorrect. Mr. Griffin said he would look in to it.

**Minutes - Selectman Frederick Koed moved to approve the minutes of March 5, 2007 as amended. Selectman Carr seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous amongst Chairman Vanderweil, Selectman Koed and Selectman Carr. Selectman Carlson could not participate in the vote.**

**Cohasset Common Historic District Commission Appointment** – Virginia Norman, of 26 Atlantic addressed the Board and explained her interest in becoming the Representative member of the Cohasset Historical Society to the Cohasset Common Historic District Commission. After reviewing Ms. Norman’s background, it was agreed by the Board that she would be a great addition to the Commission. **Selectman Koed moved to approve the appointment of Ms. Norman to the Cohasset Common Historic District Commission. Selectman Carr seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous.**

**Planning Board Appointment** – Planning Board members Alfred Moore, Robert Sturdy, Michael Westcott and Stuart Ivimey addressed the Board to ask that an interim member be added to the Board. The Board is presently running one member short, and needs a full Board as there are many large projects coming before the Town in the next year. Planning Board member, Peter Pratt, resigned his position, and Mr. William Good expressed interest in filling the seat until the election in April 2008. Chairman of the Planning Board, Al Moore, explained that Mr. Good has served two previous terms on the Board, and is experienced enough to come immediately on the Board and help with these large projects. Mr. Moore also explained that Mr. Good is not interested in running come the spring election. Selectman Koed stated that he had received a call from a citizen expressing concern about this being a conflict of interest as Mr. Good is a realtor. Mr. Moore said that Mr. Good had served before, and would most definitely recuse himself on any hearing he thought would be considered a conflict, a practice all of the members of the Planning Board follow now. There was then a discussion in regard to the fact that the members was filled and not advertised. Mr. Sturdy stated that at the most recent election, the positions that were up for reelection on the Planning Board had run unopposed. He stated the Planning Board needs someone that has experience and can help the Board through the next few, very busy months. Mr. Moore also stated, for the record, that Mr. Pratt was a gentleman to relinquish his position, and the Board hopes he will run again in the spring. **Selectman Carr moved to appoint William Good as an interim member of the Planning Board until the election in the spring of 2008. Planning Board Chairman, Al Moore, seconded the motion. Planning Board members: Chairman Moore – aye, Mr. Sturdy – aye, Mr. Westcott – aye, Mr. Ivimey – aye. Board of Selectman – Chairman Vanderweil – aye, Selectman Koed – aye, Selectman Carr – aye and Selectman Carlson – aye. The vote was unanimous.**

**Discussion on Jacobs Meadow Flood Control Status** – Chairman Vanderweil began this discussion by reviewing recent events that have affected the Town, as well as what steps are being taken to begin to address the many flood, and other issues in Town. Chairman Vanderweil stated that on March 16, 2007, there was a very heavy rain which caused the Waste Water Treatment Plant to overflow. This is one problem in the area of the Meadow, and the issue is being addressed. As for Jacobs Meadow, and flooding issues, he stated that although some systems are in place in the Jacobs Meadow area, as in the tide gates, the Town needs to, and is, looking at other ways to address the flooding in that area (as well as others). For example, Chairman Vanderweil stated that the following is being done: The Town has applied for a FEMA/MEMA grant to start working on and opening up the bottle neck at the end of Jacobs Meadow. This would allow floodwater to drain out of the meadow in fewer tidal cycles. The Town is also hoping to put out a Request for Proposals for a flood control master plan, the first step being to start an engineering study after the fall town meeting. The Board is also working with the Stormwater Committee to come up with regulations for new construction as the covering of land with impervious surfaces is also contributing to the flooding in the Meadow, and many other areas in Town. Chairman Vanderweil also reviewed the many issues at the treatment plant, and what the plans are for when the 600 homes are added during the expansion. The plan is to add a great deal more capacity to the treatment plant, thus alleviating the threat of more overflows in to the meadow. Chairman Vanderweil also stated that although the train is coming through Town, the MBTA denies that the rail has caused any additional flooding in Town. As for the Post Office area, studies need to be done to see if when the drainage was done there, it didn't re-route the water to the meadow. No one knows that answer for sure, and it will take time and studies to figure that out.

Chairman Vanderweil then asked the two residents with major flooding issues, Mrs. Cathy Witkos and Ms. Kathy Crosby, to come up and address the Board. Mrs. Cathy Witkos, of 69 Elm Street, addressed the first addressed the Board. She explained that she purchased her home in 2003 and that at the time her home, which directly abuts Jacobs Meadow, did not get any water on her land, or in her basement. By the next year, the middle of 2004, she not only had water in her basement, but she had what she describes as ponds with ducks swimming in it in her back yard. She states that she now has four sub pumps in her basement. She is also concerned about the fact that the water in her yard was contaminated by the plant overflow; water her children were playing in. She feels that when the drainage job was done at the Post Office, the water was forced to the meadow, and now her home, and others, is being flooded as the water needs somewhere to go. Mrs. Witkos also feels that when the Town was given mitigation money from the MBTA, the engineers that were hired to look at the drainage issues in the area near the rail and the Post Office, all suggested a retention wall be built at what is called the “wiggles”, and this step was not done. She feels that this could have alleviated some of the flooding problems. Her main concern however, and why she is before the Board, is that the water is now causing major structural damage to her home. She wants to know what can be done in the immediate future by the Town to help her.

Ms. Kathy Crosby, of 75 Elm Street, then addressed the Board. She stated that she is the “angry one”. She submitted a letter and evidence packet to each member of the Board. In her presentation to the Board, she stated that she has a document from Coughlin Environmental referring to her yard as “water storage”. She states that her home too is damaged. She has a dirt basement, and the structure is actually shifting. She rents out the other side of her home, and due to the house shifting; she can’t keep up with the maintenance for her tenants. She also is very upset about the fact that the Waste Water Treatment Plant overflowed, and that none of the abutters were notified. Chairman Vanderweil explained that procedures have now been put in place to notify anyone should this happen again. He added that he had just reviewed all the plans the Town is working on to address these issues, but all of this can take time. Ms. Crosby stated that the fact that raw sewerage was in her yard is unforgivable. There was then a lengthy exchange between Ms. Crosby and members of the Sewer commission. Chairman Vanderweil stated that by 2008, the issues with plant overflow etc. should be fixed. Ms. Crosby and Mrs. Witkos then both requested that there be some immediacy with help from the Town, as they need help now. Chairman Vanderweil agreed that the problems need to be addressed quickly. Mrs. Witkos said that she would like to sit down and figure out what to do. Chairman Vanderweil explained that due to budget cuts, the Town had to eliminate a proposed allowance for engineering consulting for FY ‘07, but as of July 1<sup>st</sup>, the Town will have more funds for engineering and this could be utilized to start addressing the flooding issues at both properties. He explained that an RFP would need to be requested from consulting engineers. Ms. Crosby asked if she needed to sue the Town and who would buy her house if it is falling down? Chairman Vanderweil asked if she wanted the Town to purchase her home? She replied she did. The Board thanked both Mrs. Witkos and Ms. Crosby for their time and information, and assured them that these issues would be addressed in the immediate future.

**Selectman Carr moved to adjourn the meeting. Selectman Carlson seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous. Meeting adjourned at 8:40PM**

Respectfully submitted,  
Gary Vanderweil  
Chairman