

VINEYARD GAZETTE

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Four Issues to Face Aquinnah Voters

By JACK SHEA

Aquinnah selectmen will seek permission to issue one-day liquor licenses for events held on town-owned property, as well as authority to set policy related to the sale of town-owned land. The two proposals are contained in a four-article warrant being prepared for a special town meeting next month.

Residents again will be asked to vote on an energy district bylaw article they narrowly defeated at the annual town meeting last month, and they will be asked for permission to construct a wind turbine on town property.

The warrant will be reviewed by town counsel before being advertised ahead of the Thursday, August 7 meeting, scheduled for 7 p.m. at the old town hall.

Selectman Camille Rose said this week that the town needs to set policy for the sale of town-owned land.

At the May annual town meeting, voters authorized selectmen to sell a town-owned 3.6 acre lot for a minimum of \$600,000. As a result of the vote, Ms. Rose said, "we now need to set policy and conditions, such as selling town land only to abutters, and setting of deed restrictions on the property we sell.

The town owns perhaps 10 to 15 other parcels that could be sold for profit, most taken for taxes over several decades, assistant assessor Angela Cywinski estimated this week.

"Town counsel advises us that we can auction rather than ask for bids to sell town land, and that's what we intend to do," Ms. Rose said.

Selectmen are proposing one-day liquor licenses for events on town-owned property, after annual town meeting voters took the final step in allowing the sale of beer and wine licenses for restaurants with more than 30 seats.

Selectmen have noted in recent months that the renovation of old town hall has made it a popular event site with civic and family groups who often want to serve beer and wine.

Events at town-owned beaches also would be included in the warrant article, they said.

There is an urgency to dealing with the energy district bylaw because defeat of the proposed bylaw in May also triggered a complete moratorium on building that will remain in place until the town accepts the energy bylaw or rescinds the Martha's Vineyard Commission's designation of Aquinnah as an energy district of critical planning concern last December.

Passage of the energy district bylaw would have allowed construction of windmills by homeowners and regulated use of energy-saving devices.

In other matters before selectmen:

- Cheryl Andrews-Maltais, the new chairman of the Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head (Aquinnah) attended to update selectmen on several changes made to improve communication.

Tobias Vanderhoop, new tribal administrator, is responsible for departmental communications within the tribe and as a press contact. Bettina Washington, tribal historic preservation officer, will handle historic, regulatory and governmental affairs for the tribe.

Noting that the tribe recently facilitated acquisition of a new ambulance for Tri Town Ambulance service at no cost through a federal Native American program and has offered to help the town in staffing a new town assistant to the harbor master job, Ms. Maltais said "We want to be more communicative, to be more open and available."

- A request by resident Carlos Pena for a music concert at the Aquinnah circle was tabled pending an appearance by Mr. Pena to detail the proposed August event. "We are learning a lot from the Aquinnah Music Festival and we can offer some insight to event planners," selectman Spencer Booker said.

- A meeting was set for July 29 at 5 p.m. with representatives of Gorda Realty Trust which has a long standing state Superior Court suit over use of wetlands it owns. Members of the board of selectmen, board of health, planning board and the building inspector must attend.