

## **MINUTES OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING MAY 27, 2014**

Chairman Smith called the meeting to order in the Senior Center at 6 PM with Mrs. Walter and Mr. Hevy also present. Mr. Smith reminded those in attendance that the meeting would be both audio and video taped.

### **I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MAY 20, 2014 APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MAY 21, 2014**

Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Hevy seconded, a motion to approve the aforementioned minutes as written. So voted.

### **II. OLD BUSINESS**

#### **A. CYNTHIA HENSHAW RE: WENDMUTH MEADOW L.A.N.D. GRANT**

Cynthia Henshaw, Executive Director of the East Quabbin Land Trust (EQLT) was present to ask the Selectmen to approve and sign the L. A. N. D. grant application and associated paperwork for a grant for the Wendemuth Meadow Property. (Attachment #1) Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Hevy seconded, a motion to approve the paperwork subject to approval by the Conservation Commission. So voted.

#### **B. SIGN NOTICE OF AWARD FOR CDBG ENGINEERING PLAN**

Mrs. Walter noted that she attended the meeting of the Community Development Advisory Committee when the firm of Fay, Spofford, and Thorndike was chosen for the East Side Infrastructure Planning project. There had been a tie vote on the committee, but Highway Superintendent Gary Jean broke the tie, choosing Fay, Spofford, and Thorndike because they had more experience that was similar to our project. Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Hevy seconded, a motion to award the contract for infrastructure planning for the East Side Neighborhood. (Attachment #2) So voted.

#### **C. FY15 BUDGET**

Mr. Smith noted that the Selectmen and the Finance Committee last week, and had a productive meeting. He has asked the Town Accountant for updated budget numbers, after which both committees will examine the deficit in locally generated revenues. He suggested that the Selectmen think about the budget over the weekend, and meet next Monday to discuss ideas. Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Hevy seconded, a motion to schedule a meeting for Monday, June 2<sup>nd</sup> at 6 PM in the Selectmen's office. So voted.

### **III. NEW BUSINESS**

#### **A. SEWER TRANSFER REQUEST**

Mr. Smith reviewed a request from the Sewer Department to transfer \$1,100.00 from the Sewer: Other Charges Account to the Sewer: Other Salary Account. (Attachment #3) Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Hevy seconded, a motion to approve the transfer. So voted.

#### **B. POLICE CHIEF THOMASIAN RE: PAY RATES**

Police Chief Aram Thomasian, Jr. was present to direct the Board's attention to some issues that he is experiencing. The Chief submitted a page showing the pay rate for part-time officers in surrounding towns that shows that North Brookfield's part-timers are seriously underpaid. (Attachment #4) Chief Thomasian stated that he has lost some part-timers to other towns because of the pay issue. He asked permission to raise the pay rate by .50 per hour as of July 1<sup>st</sup>, and another .50 per hour on January 1<sup>st</sup>. He stated that he can manage this increase within his current budget.

Mr. Smith noted that the Selectmen and Finance Committee are in the middle of the budget process and are trying to close a \$400,000.00 deficit. The Selectmen have had a couple of requests for pay increases, but they must be deferred until the town's financial situation is known.

Chief Thomasian stated that he has come before the Selectmen many times over the years asking to raise this part-time pay rate, and he continually gets this same answer. He said that he is down to only 5 part-time officers instead of 10. Two of the five are full-time officers in other towns. There are only 2 who only work for North Brookfield. He is filling the extra hours with overtime pay for the full-timers, which is impacting his budget. If he is able to raise the rate the officers will be more likely to stay.

The Chief's second proposal involves the pay for Police Department's secretarial staff. According to Chief Thomasian's survey, this pay is low compared to other towns as well. He suggested raising the pay \$1 per hour as of July 1<sup>st</sup> and another \$1 per hour January 1<sup>st</sup>. Mr. Smith noted that this cannot be approved tonight. Mr. Hevy noted that this is good information for the Selectmen to have, we just need to plan for the raises.

Chief Thomasian also asked the Selectmen to keep in mind that the four police cruisers are getting very high mileage on them, and they will need to be replaced sometime in the future.

#### **C. RESIGNATION OF MR. HEVY**

Mr. Smith reviewed a letter from Mr. Hevy resigning from the Finance Committee. (Attachment #5) According to Mr. Hevy, it is a lot of work when coupled with his new duties as a selectman. He wants to put his focus on the selectman's position. Mrs.

Walter questioned why he is resigning now instead of after the budget is completed? Mr. Hevy stated that he will still be involved in the budget process, just as a selectman. Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Hevy seconded, a motion to accept the resignation with thanks. So voted.

#### **D. MEMO FROM HIGHWAY SUPERINTENDENT**

Mr. Smith reviewed a memo from Highway Superintendent Gary Jean noting that they will need to open bids for road materials on Wednesday, June 18<sup>th</sup>. (Attachment #6) He asked that the Selectmen schedule a special meeting that day for 10 AM. Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Hevy seconded, a motion to schedule a meeting for Wednesday, June 18<sup>th</sup> at 10 AM in the Selectmen's office. So voted.

### **IV. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

#### **A. DOG LICENSES ARE NOW DUE**

Mr. Hevy announced that dog licenses are now due. The cost for spayed and neutered dogs is \$6, and \$10 for those that are not. There will be a \$5 late fee after June 1<sup>st</sup>.

### **V. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

#### **A. FY15 BUDGET**

Mrs. Walter asked that the Selectmen discuss the landfill cap. In her opinion it should be under the Selectmen, not the Board of Health. She believes that trees are endangering the cap.

Mr. Smith stated that he would like to talk about the beavers at the Brickyard Road pond, and was informed that the Conservation Commission is already scheduled to come next week to discuss beaver problems.

Mrs. Walter and Mr. Smith noted that they will examine all requests for encumbrances.

There being no further business, Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Hevy seconded, a motion to adjourn at 7:20 PM. So voted.

Respectfully submitted,

Leslie Scott Burton  
Administrative Assistant