

MINUTES OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING JUNE 3, 2014

Chairman Smith called the meeting to order in the Senior Center at 6 PM with Mrs. Walter and Mr. Hevy also present.

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MAY 27, 2014

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF JUNE 2, 2014

Mr. Smith asked that approval of these minutes be deferred until next week.

IA. APPROVAL OF SCHOOL WARRANT #1062 FOR \$179,206.17 APPROVAL OF GENERAL WARRANT #1063 FOR \$219,591.93 APPROVAL OF PAYROLL WARRANT #25 FOR \$370,414.31

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

II. OLD BUSINESS

A. REVIEW AND SIGN JUNE 20TH STM WARRANT

Mrs. Walter reviewed the warrant for the June 20th Special Town Meeting. (Attachment #1) Mr. Smith explained that there is only one article, to transfer available funds to buy a truck for the Cemetery Department. Mr. Smith noted that the Selectmen are actively looking for a suitable truck. Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Hevy seconded, a motion to approve and post the warrant. So voted.

III. NEW BUSINESS

A. WATER DEPARTMENT APPOINTMENT

Water Superintendent Steve Jones and Water Commission Chairman John Thomasian were present to ask the Selectmen to appoint their new administrative assistant. (Attachment #2) Mr. Thomasian reported that there were 10 well-qualified applicants that were interviewed by the Water Commissioners, and the Commission is recommending Erika Rivers. Ms. Rivers has financial, software and municipal experience. Mr. Smith moved, and Mr. Hevy seconded, a motion to appoint Ms. Rivers. So voted.

Mr. Thomasian also told the Board that they have been approached by an Eagle Scout candidate who would like to construct a fishing deck at Doan's pond. The platform would be handicapped accessible. The Water Commissioners voted to approve the project, but it will be long process requiring foundations and support structures with Conservation Commission and Building Inspector approvals. The Water Commissioners advised the young man that he should speak with the Board of Selectmen and then the Conservation Commission. Mr. Smith requested that the Water Department forward the information regarding this to the Selectmen, and then all of the involved parties can sit down to discuss it.

B. MEMO FROM ASSESSORS RE: PILOT AGREEMENTS

Mr. Smith stated that he spoke with Sheila Buzzell about this; this is informational for the Selectmen. (Attachment #3) The memo will be sent to Town Counsel and then the Assessors will send it out to the owners of the two solar projects. Mrs. Walter noted that Roy Bishop was very helpful in refining the PILOT agreements.

C. FUEL BIDS @ 6:30

Highway Department Administrative Assistant Kim Kort was present on behalf of the Highway Superintendent to present the Board with four bids for gasoline and diesel fuel. Bids were received from Fountain and Sons of Warren, Radio Oil of Worcester, R. J. McDonald of Barre, and Peterson Oil of Worcester. Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Hevy seconded, a motion to take the bids under advisement for review by the Highway Superintendent. So voted.

D. HIGHWAY REQUEST TO TRANSFER FUNDS

Mr. Smith reviewed a request from the Highway Department to transfer the sum of \$3,200.00 from the Highway Salary Account to the Highway Road Materials Account. (Attachment #4) Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Hevy seconded, a motion to approve the transfer. So voted.

E. AMBULANCE CONTRACT REQUEST

Mr. Smith reviewed a memo from the North Brookfield Emergency Squad (NBEMS) asking to amend the contract with the Town to include an additional \$68,000.00 for ALS coverage. (Attachment #5) He explained that this may open up the possibility of grant funds for the new service. Mrs. Walter noted that a Community Innovation Challenge (CIC) Grant would be a good fit for this, although salary money is not always available with grant funds. Mr. Smith noted that the Selectmen and Finance Committee are in agreement that this proposal is a priority in the FY2015 budget.

Mr. Smith then proceeded to presented two options for the FY15 budget. (Attachment #6) Option #1 would leave a \$117,482.75 deficit, and Option #2 would leave a

\$190,482.75 deficit. Mrs. Walter noted that neither of these options include raises for non-union town employees.

Mr. Smith stated that he would like to present these two options to the Finance Committee when they meet on Wednesday night. He would prefer to go with Option #2. Mrs. Walter and Mr. Hevy agreed that they also prefer Option #2.

F. CONSERVATION COMMISSION BEAVER POLICY

Trevor Bruso from the Conservation Commission was present to review a proposed policy on beaver control. (Attachment #7) Mr. Bruso noted that the Conservation Commission is the body appointed to protect wetlands and shorelines. Mr. Bruso explained that this policy spells out who is responsible for beavers and beaver dams. He stated that the Commission worked closely with Board of Health member John Alphin and Highway Superintendent Gary Jean to develop these policies and procedures. The goal is to property damage and to prevent roads from washing out. The Commission can be proactive in an emergency situation; if heavy rain is forecast the Commission can press down on the dam to allow water to flow over it.

According to Mr. Bruso the Board of Health has a key role in this process. Any landowner can ask the Board of health for permission to trap and remove beavers. The Board of Health will then issue a permit that is good for 10 days. The Conservation Commission will issue permission for 30 days, but they do try to coordinate with the Board of health timeline.

Mr. Bruso noted that the town's recycling center is a problem. The Conservation Commission is currently working with the Board of Health to address the problem. He pointed out that other areas of concern are listed on the last page of the proposed policy.

Mr. Bruso also stated that the Brickyard Road area is a major problem right now. He presented a map showing where there are beavers located at the southern end of the pond. (Attachment #8) The pipe under the road is now longer flowing, and there is another pipe running north to south on the Zaik's property that is also blocked.

Mrs. Walter asked if Mr. Bruso had visited that site recently, the water is almost over the road. Mr. Bruso said that he had been there, and the problem needs to be addressed as soon as possible. The pipe under the road is crushed and needs to be replaced.

Mr. Hevy questioned how low would the pond be drained? Mr. Bruso stated that in the past private citizens have lowered the water level on their own, but the Conservation Commission wants to prevent any damage to wildlife by draining the level later in the season.

Mr. Smith stated that he was there two weeks ago, and if we get any rain at all the water will be over the road. He questioned where the water goes after the Brickyard Road

pond? Mr. Bruso stated that it goes under the road and over to the Slab City Road area.

Mrs. Walter asked about the emergency permit that the Conservation Commission received recently for Brickyard Road. Mr. Bruso stated that the permit was issued May 15th and was only good for 10 days. He said that the problems in that area have been going on for a long time. The pipes being blocked have affected the hydrology of the area. He believes that if we are judicious in the use of emergency permits the situation can be managed.

Mr. Smith asked how to rid the area of beavers permanently? Mr. Bruso stated that the Selectmen, as the property owners, could apply to the Board of Health for an emergency permit.

Mr. Alphin noted that there is a chronic beaver problem behind the landfill, and the Board of Health does not have the funds to address the issue. He asked if the Highway Department could help out?

Mrs. Walter asked if the area behind the landfill is considered a wetland, and Mr. Bruso stated that it is. She noted that the Conservation Commission has over \$7,000.00 in their wetlands account that could be used to address the beaver problems.

Mr. Hevy asked about the situation behind the landfill. Mr. Alphin stated that there is an abutter back there, and the water flows downhill into the back of the landfill. The Board of Health wants to prevent any damage to the landfill cap. He suggested that the Board of Health, the Board of Selectmen, the Conservation Commission and the Highway Superintendent get together to look at the problem and discuss how to handle it. It was agreed that Mr. Bruso and Mr. Alphin would coordinate this meeting.

After opening the fuel bids, Mrs. Walter stated that she would like to read the beaver policy so that residents would know what was being proposed. She noted that the document should be called guidelines, not policies. She said that the Conservation Commission omitted important information from Massachusetts Wildlife that should be part of the guidelines. Mrs. Walter noted that when a property is in danger of flooding, the situation is beyond being pro-active.

Mr. Smith stated that the document explains the "what" of emergency beaver problems, but not the "how." He stated that he doesn't understand why the Board of Selectmen must initiate the procedure; the Board of Health and Conservation Commission are better equipped to do it. He thinks it would be better to assess the level of concern and figure out what to do before an emergency situation happens. There needs to be more "how" in this document.

Mrs. Walter noted that the Brickyard Road area has always been a problem. Malcolm Speicher the beaver specialist did some work two years ago at Slab City. He suggested that a flow device be installed at the Brickyard Road pond. She gave the information to

the Conservation Commission but nothing happened. The Conservation Commission is calling this area a pond and a wetland, but it wasn't like that in the past.

Mr. Smith stated that all of the interested parties need to meet to revisit this issue, and not wait for an emergency situation. Mrs. Walter agreed that we need a plan.

Mrs. Walter stated that there is an entire law related to beavers that the Conservation Commission did not include in this document.

IV. ANNOUNCEMENTS

A. LAST DAY TO REGISTER TO VOTE FOR JUNE 20TH SPECIAL TOWN MEETING IS TUESDAY, JUNE 10TH IN THE TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE

Mr. Smith announced that the last day to register to vote at the June 20th Special Town Meeting is next Tuesday, June 10th in the Town Clerk's office.

B. DOG LICENSES ARE NOW OVERDUE

Mr. Hevy reminded residents that dog licenses are now overdue. There is now a \$5 late fee, which will increase to \$25 after September 1st.

Mrs. Walter asked that a memo from Highway Superintendent Gary Jean be read. (Attachment #9) Mr. Jean noted that he has reviewed the three engineering proposals for the Murphy Road bridge project, and he recommends that the contract be awarded to Fuss and O'Neill. Mr. Hevy moved, and Mrs. Walter seconded, a motion to approve Mr. Jean's recommendation and award the contract to Fuss and O'Neill, subject to the approval of the state contract. So voted.

V. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

A. FY15 BUDGET

B. ANNUAL APPOINTMENTS

C. MEETING RE: BEAVER POLICIES

D. EXECUTIVE SESSION WITH TOWN ACCOUNTANT

There being no further business, at 7:55 PM Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Hevy seconded, a motion to adjourn. So voted.

Respectfully submitted,

Leslie Scott Burton
Administrative Assistant