

MINUTES OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING SEPTEMBER 8, 2014

Chairman Smith called the meeting to order in the Senior Center at 5:30 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 AUGUST 26, 2014

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

IA. APPROVAL OF GENERAL WARRANT #1012 FOR \$1,012,969.27 APPROVAL OF SCHOOL WARRANT #1013 FOR \$68,388.22 APPROVAL OF GENERAL WARRANT #1014 FOR \$64,934.29 APPROVAL OF PAYROLL WARRANT #6 FOR \$291,645.68

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

II. OLD BUSINESS

A. UPDATE ON CDBG INFRASTRUCTURE STUDY

Mr. Smith stated that the Selectmen met with engineers from Fay, Spofford and Thorndyke last Friday for an update on their infrastructure study of the Town's center. The study is being funded by Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds. Mrs. Walter explained that they completed the survey and have almost completed their drawings. The drainage problem at 61 Gilbert Street was discussed, and the engineer is not prepared to make a recommendation on this yet. The survey has confirmed some things that have long been suspected, and will be valuable information to have. Mr. Smith said that we will now be awaiting the final report.

B. UPDATE ON BUDGET DEFICIT

Mr. Smith stated that last week the Town Accountant issued the final budget numbers for FY2015. (Attachment #1) There were some changes to the Cherry Sheets and the deficit has grown to slightly over \$400,000.00. This is primarily due to changes in School Choice students leaving the district. Former School Superintendent Provost was told that there were 36 students who changed their address to North Brookfield after the October 1st school enrollment report. This \$86,000.00 is considered an appropriation deficit and must be paid off before anything else. The Selectmen are hoping to meet with the Finance Committee this week to discuss this and options available to balance the budget. Mrs. Walter said that in her opinion this is a serious problem and it needs to

be at the top of the Selectmen's priority list. Mr. Smith stated that the Board should consider instituting a spending freeze.

C. ESTIMATE FOR REPAIRS TO 57 AND 61 GILBERT STREET

Mr. Smith noted that the Selectmen discussed this issue at last Friday's meeting with Fay, Spofford and Thorndyke. The engineers believe that piping from Stoddard Court down the street is clogged and broken. The engineers are proposing moving the drainage from residents' back yards into the roadway as a permanent solution. Mr. Jean had prepared an estimate last summer for a "quick fix" that is almost \$14,000.00. (Attachment #2) Mr. Smith also explained that last summer the Town purchased a large pump that is used at this location during heavy rain situations. According to the engineers the problem has existed for decades but has become acute during the last ten years. If the pipes at Stoddard Court could be cleared the situation would be better.

D. TECO-BLOC TIF

Mrs. Walter noted that just when we thought we had this figured out we got a notice from the state Economic Assistance Coordinating Council (EACC) with changes to the rules relating to project decertification. (Attachment #3) Techo-Bloc does not seem to care if the Town continues with the TIF agreement or not. Mr. Smith asked that this be postponed to the next meeting for discussion.

III. NEW BUSINESS

A. BRICKYARD ROAD POLE PETITION @ 6 PM

At 6 PM Mr. Smith opened the public hearing on the application of National Grid to install a new pole on Brickyard Road. (Available in the Selectmen's office) He reviewed the rules for the hearing, and noted that all comments must be directed through him as Chairman. Diane Klaus from National Grid explained that this is for a new home that is being built. As there were no abutters present, Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Hevy seconded, a motion to approve the petition. So voted.

B. RESIGNATION OF ANDREW LALASHIUS

Mr. Smith reviewed a letter of resignation from Andrew Lalashius of the Water Department. (Attachment #4) Mr. Smith reported that the Water Department is currently advertising for a replacement. Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Hevy seconded, a motion to accept the resignation with regret, and to send a letter of thanks. So voted.

C. REQUEST FOR TOWN HOUSE DRAWINGS

Mr. Smith reviewed an e-mail from Kaffee Kang asking for permission to give Tom Hopkins of the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board a copy of her Town House

space needs study that was done several years ago. (Attachment #5) Mrs. Walter reported that she called both Ms. Kang and Mr. Hopkins, and does not believe that Ms. Kang's drawings are what Mr. Hopkins is really looking for.

Mr. Smith asked why Mr. Hopkins did not come directly to the Town, and Mrs. Walter stated that Mr. Hopkins told her that he had been following the project in the newspapers for some time.

Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Hevy seconded, a motion to give Ms. Kang a response asking her not to give the study to Mr. Hopkins, and if it is important to him he should contact the Selectmen directly. So voted.

D. REQUEST TO USE TOWN OFFICES FOR TOWN HOUSE 150TH ANNIVERSARY BLOCK PARTY

Mr. Hevy read an e-mail from Trish Miller on behalf of the Friends of the Town House asking several questions regarding the 150th Town House Anniversary Party on September 20th. (Attachment #6) In regards to ringing the bell 150 times, Mr. Smith stated that the bell is not able to be rung, but Jeff Samuelson is willing to go up and strike the bell. But in his opinion 150 times is a lot, and would take a lot of time. Mrs. Walter stated that she is concerned about damage to the bell striking it that much. Simone Trela, who was in the audience, stated that they had not thought about the length of time, but wanted to ring the bell as the opening to the block party.

On the question of using electrical outlets on the outside of the Town House building, the Selectmen agreed that they do not know if the outlets are working, but if they are the Friends may use them.

The issue of access to the Town Offices for an art show and to use the restrooms is a security issue, Mr. Smith and Mrs. Walter stated. Mr. Smith asked if other alternatives had been considered, and agreed to come up with an answer by next Tuesday.

E. REQUEST TO BEGIN USING SNOW AND ICE ACCOUNT

Mr. Smith reviewed a letter from Highway Superintendent Gary Jean asking for permission to begin accessing the Snow and Ice account in October this year to mix 400 yards of sand and salt. (Attachment #7) This is about one month earlier than usual. Mr. Smith stated that he tried to speak with Mr. Jean about this request but was unable to, but in his opinion this should be left to Mr. Jean's discretion. Mrs. Walter pointed out that a few years ago we had a major snowstorm in October. Mrs. Walter suggested qualifying this permission by stressing that no payroll or overtime is to be charged to the account, only the 400 yards of material. Mrs. Walter so moved, and Mr. Hevy seconded. So voted.

IV. ANNOUNCEMENTS

A. TOWN HOUSE 150TH ANNIVERSARY BLOCK PARTY

Mr. Hevy reviewed a flyer announcing the festivities scheduled for the September 20th Town House 150th anniversary celebration. Dennis Trela of the Friends of the Town House noted that a member of the band “Class Reunion” actually played at a dance in the Town House in 1964 or 1965. Mr. Trela asked if tables from the building could be used that day, and was told to make a list of how many tables he will need.

B. NBEMS SUBSCRIPTION DRIVE

Mr. Smith encouraged residents to support the North Brookfield Ambulance’s annual Subscription Drive. He noted that everyone should have received information in the mail about this. It is a very important service offered to residents of North Brookfield for a nominal cost.

C. REGIONAL HAZARDOUS WASTE DAY

Mrs. Walter reviewed information from the Board of Health regarding their Hazardous Waste Collection Day to be held on September 27th. Residents from North Brookfield, East Brookfield, West Brookfield, Brookfield and Spencer may bring up to 9 gallons or 9 pounds of household hazardous waste at no charge. There will be charges for higher amounts.

D. HYDRANT FLUSHING

Mr. Hevy read an announcement from the Water Department that they will be performing hydrant flushing beginning September 15th through October 10th. The daily flushing schedule listing which streets will be done is posted on the Water Department’s Facebook page.

Mr. Smith noted that the Sewer Department is apologizing for putting the wrong due date on its latest bill. The bills are actually due and payable on October 1st, but were erroneously listed as being due September 1st.

V. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

POLICE CHIEF RETIREMENT

BEAVER ISSUES

TOWN HOUSE PROJECT INCLUDING GUTTERS AND PARKING

FINANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION RE: TOWN MANAGER

SOLTERRA AGREEMENT

MURPHY ROAD BRIDGE

NBDDP

REQUEST FOR SIGNAGE ON GILBERT STREET

There being no further business, Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Hevy seconded, a motion to adjourn at 6:50 PM. So voted.

Respectfully submitted,

Leslie Scott Burton
Administrative Assistant