

MINUTES OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING SEPTEMBER 16, 2014

Chairman Smith called the meeting to order in the Senior Center at 6:05 PM with Mrs. Walter and Mr. Hevy also present. He informed those in attendance that the meeting was being audio taped.

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 8, 2014

Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Hevy seconded, a motion to approve the minutes of September 8, 2014 as written. So voted.

II. OLD BUSINESS

A. USE OF SURPLUS VEHICLE BY NBEMA

Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Hevy seconded, a motion to transfer use of the former Fire Department SUV to the North Brookfield Emergency Management Agency (NBEMA) with the stipulation that it remain in Town except when in use, preferably at the Police Station. So voted.

B. TECO-BLOC TIF

Mrs. Walter reported that she spoke with Rosemary Scrivens of the Massachusetts Office of Business Development about the state's Economic Assistance Coordinating Council (EACC) decertification of the Techo-Bloc Corporation. This was due to the company's request to voluntarily withdraw their project from Certified Project Status.

According to EACC Board policy, the Town no longer has an obligation to Techo-Bloc because "the project no longer fulfills the terms and conditions of the municipal action authorizing the host community to enter into the TIF agreement."

According to Ms. Scrivens the Town does not have to do anything further regarding this project, but we will reiterate her advice to her just to confirm in a letter to be copied to Techo-Bloc.

C. CABLE TV ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Hevy seconded, a motion to amend the name of this committee to the Cable Advisory Committee. So voted.

Present before the board were Chuck Marshall, Peter Barstow, and Peter Rouette. The three men all presented letters expressing their interest in serving on this committee. Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Hevy seconded, a motion to appoint the three to the Cable Advisory Committee. So voted. Mr. Smith noted that the Selectmen created the

committee to have five members, along with a member of the Local Public Access Channel (LPAC) as an ex-officio member. In addition, a member of the Finance Committee would also serve in an ex-officio capacity if needed.

D. MASSWORKS DEADLINE EXTENSION REQUEST

The Selectmen reviewed a Change Order request from Fuss and O'Neill for the Murphy Road Bridge MassWorks project. (Attachment #1) Mrs. Walter noted that this is a result of state rules on when work may be performed in or near a cold water stream. The Town must obtain a Category 2 registration from the Army Corps of Engineers instead of the Category 1 registration that was previously specified. Mrs. Walter explained that with a Category 1 registration we would only be allowed to work from July 1st to September 30th, with the Category 2 registration work may begin May 15th.

In addition, because of these limits on when work may be performed, the Town needs to request an amendment extending the contract through June 30, 2015 instead of December 31, 2014.

Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Hevy seconded, a motion to approve Change Order #1 for up to \$6,000.00 for the Murphy Road project. So voted.

Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Hevy seconded, a motion to request a contract extension to June 30, 2015. So voted.

E. FY15 BUDGET UPDATE/POSSIBLE SPENDING FREEZE

Mr. Smith noted that the Selectmen met with the Finance Committee last night to discuss the Town's budget deficit, which is now approximately \$450,000.00. They plan to meet again next Monday to continue this discussion. Most of the upward change in the deficit has been caused by changes in School Choice funds for students leaving the district.

Mr. Smith went on to say that at the last meeting he mentioned the possibility of instituting a spending freeze for discretionary spending.

Water Superintendent Steve Jones asked if this freeze would affect items already approved and ordered but not paid for? Mr. Smith said that the freeze would not apply to something that has already been approved.

Mrs. Walter asked about using the blue sheets that are currently used for discretionary spending over \$250.00? Mr. Smith suggested that any discretionary purchase over \$100.00 require approval by the Selectmen.

Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Hevy seconded, a motion to institute a spending freeze on discretionary spending over \$100.00, using the spending guidelines and definitions that were used in FY09. So voted.

Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Hevy seconded, a motion to respectfully request that the School Committee consider a spending freeze on discretionary expenditures pending the outcome of our attempts to balance the FY15 budget. So voted.

III. NEW BUSINESS

A. WATER DEPARTMENT NEW HIRE

Water Commissioner John Thomasian told the Selectmen that the Board of Water Commissioners met last night and unanimously voted to hire Richard Kennan as the Water Operator. Mr. Kennan previously worked for the North Brookfield Water Department for nine years. He understands the system and is fully licensed.

Mrs. Walter noted that Mr. Kennan is a perfect candidate, and she stated that the Selectmen should accept the Water Department recommendation to hire him, but there are no promises made as to future promotional opportunities at this time. Mr. Smith said that he is in agreement with that.

Mrs. Walter asked about Mr. Kennan's starting salary, and was informed that he would be paid \$24.87 per hour, the same as the operator who is leaving.

Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Hevy seconded, a motion to hire Mr. Kennan as the Water Department Operator at a rate of \$24.87 per hour. So voted.

Mr. Thomasian then noted that the company that provides school buses in town has asked permission to install an antenna at the Water Treatment Plant for two-way radio communication. This is a safety issue because there are areas of town where the radios do not currently work.

Jim Wilson, who provides two-way radios for area schools and fire departments, is the person requesting permission to install the antenna on the same mast as the NBEMA antenna. He noted that the Water Department or the Town could recoup a nominal charge to be reimbursed for the small amount of electricity that would be used.

The Selectmen asked Mr. Wilson for a formal proposal that includes a description of the equipment to be installed and how Mr. Wilson will ensure that there will be no interference with the existing equipment.

B. HIGHWAY TRUCK PROPOSAL

Mr. Smith reviewed information from Highway Superintendent Gary Jean about a truck that could be purchased using Chapter 90 money. (Attachment #2) According to Mr. Jean, this truck would replace a 1995 sander truck and a 1976 catch basin truck. Mr. Smith noted that this is informational only, it will be an agenda item sometime in the future.

C. BUDGET TIMELINE

Mrs. Walter presented a timeline for the FY2016 budget process. (Attachment #3) In October the Selectmen will need to establish budget policies and guidelines. In November we will need to request budgets from the various departments. Mr. Smith asked that this be put on the next agenda for discussion.

D. REVIEW STM ARTICLE REQUESTS

The Selectmen reviewed eight articles that were submitted for the October 24th Special Town Meeting. (Available in the Selectmen's office) The deadline to submit articles is not until the end of this week, so there may be more article requests coming. This will be on the agenda again next week.

E. NEW AGENDA FORMAT FROM MR. HEVY

Mr. Hevy presented a new format for the Selectmen's agenda that he would like to see implemented. (Attachment #4) It was agreed to put this on the agenda for discussion at the next meeting.

IV. ANNOUNCEMENTS

A. 150TH TOWN HOUSE ANNIVERSARY

Mr. Smith read an announcement for this event to be held on September 20th. It is being sponsored by the Friends of the Town House and the 200th Anniversary Committee.

B. REGIONAL HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE DAY

Mr. Hevy read this announcement from the Board of Health regarding this September 27th event.

C. HYDRANT FLUSHING

Mr. Smith reviewed a notice from the Water Department that they will be flushing hydrants in town from September 15th to October 10th. Daily schedules are posted on the department's Facebook page.

V. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

POLICE CHIEF SEARCH COMMITTEE

BEAVER ISSUES

TOWN HOUSE PROJECT

FINANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION RE: TOWN MANAGER

MURPHY ROAD BRIDGE

SOLTERRA AGREEMENT

CDBG INFRASTRUCTURE STUDY

NBDDP

There being no further business, at 7:50 PM Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Hevy seconded, a motion to adjourn. So voted.

Respectfully submitted,

Leslie Scott Burton
Administrative Assistant