

MINUTES OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING JANUARY 17, 2012

Chairman Walter called the meeting to order in the Senior Center at 7:05 PM with Mr. Chabot and Mr. Petraitis also present. Mrs. Walter reminded those in attendance that the meeting was being both audio and video taped.

I. Mr. Petraitis moved, and Mrs. Walter seconded, a motion to approve the minutes of January 3, 2012 as written. So voted, with Mr. Chabot abstaining because he was not present at that meeting. Mr. Petraitis moved, and Mrs. Walter seconded, a motion to approve the Executive Session minutes of January 3, 2012 as written. So voted, with Mr. Chabot abstaining.

IA. Mr. Petraitis moved, and Mr. Chabot seconded, a motion to approve School Warrant #1038 for \$227,990.72, General Warrant #1039 for \$236,235.49, and Payroll Warrant #15 for \$263,791.37. So voted.

IB. There was no one present for the Public Comment period.

II. OLD BUSINESS

A. Mr. Ken Elstein from the Hampshire Council of Governments was present to speak about electric aggregation. The Town currently obtains electricity through Hampshire Power at a lower cost, and aggregation would allow residents and small businesses to share in the savings.

Mr. Elstein reported that last June twenty-two towns filed an application with the state Department of Public Utilities that would allow Hampshire Power to become their default provider for electricity. Most likely Hampshire Power will file an amended petition in February with several additional towns. The Town of Brookfield recently approved a resolution approving aggregation, and will become the 23rd town to join the petition. If North Brookfield approves this resolution at the February 3rd Special Town Meeting, North Brookfield would be added to the petition. Mr. Elstein stated that this will not cost the Town of North Brookfield or its residents one cent. People can opt out of this change if they choose.

Mr. Chabot stated that he has changed providers for his small business, and he receives two bills. He asked if this would be the case if Hampshire Power were allowed to become the default provider? Mr. Elstein reported that Hampshire Power's portion of the bill would appear on the National Grid bills, so residents will get only one bill.

The Board thanked Mr. Elstein for his time. Mr. Elstein stated that he will be in attendance at the February 3rd Special Town Meeting to answer questions from residents.

B. Mrs. Walter reported that she has asked Donna Gauthier, the bookkeeper for the North Brookfield Emergency Squad, for information on how much money is outstanding from the insurance companies. Mrs. Gauthier said that she should be receiving her monthly report from the billing company soon, and she will provide the Selectmen with a copy. Hopefully the Selectmen will be able to address this at the next meeting.

C. Mrs. Walter reviewed an e-mail that was sent to Megan DiPrete of Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission (CMRPC) asking for help with the final steps to achieve regulatory closure on soil contamination at the Town House. (Attachment #1) Mrs. Walter reported that CMRPC voted last week to continue their assistance to the Town on this project. Mrs. Walter noted that this is great news for the Town, and at no cost.

III. NEW BUSINESS

A. Fire Chief Brad Gannon was present to give the Selectmen a report on the department's activities for the month of December, and the totals for all of 2011. (Attachment #2) The Chief reported that there was a total of 148 calls, 333 permits given, and 45 false alarms for the year. In addition, three new members of the department attended the Massachusetts Fire Academy. Mr. Chabot moved, and Mr. Petraitis seconded, a motion to accept the report. So voted.

B. Mr. Petraitis read an e-mail from Linda Grace asking to be appointed to the 200th Anniversary Committee. (Available in the Selectmen's office) Mrs. Grace has already attended two meetings of the committee, and is in the process of gathering materials to create a comprehensive commemorative brochure. Mr. Petraitis moved, and Mr. Chabot seconded, a motion to appoint Mrs. Grace. So voted.

C. Mrs. Walter noted that two members of the Finance Committee wanted to study alternative energy options for the Town. She suggested forming a committee to do this, starting with the two interested Finance Committee members. Mr. Petraitis moved, and Mr. Chabot seconded, a motion to appoint Chet Lubelczyk and Bob Locatelli to the new committee. So voted. The Selectmen agreed that the committee should have five members total, with perhaps one alternate member.

D. Mr. Chabot reviewed the police report for the month of December, as submitted by Chief Thomasian. (Available in the Selectmen's office) The Chief reported 26 incidents and 21 arrest/summons for the month. Mr. Chabot moved, and Mr. Petraitis seconded, a motion to accept the report. So voted.

E. Mrs. Walter reviewed the warrant for the March 6th State Primary Election to be held at the Senior Center from 7 AM to 8 PM. (Attachment #3) Mr.

Petraitis moved, and Mr. Chabot seconded, a motion to sign and post the warrant. So voted.

F. The Selectmen reviewed articles submitted for the February 3rd Special Town Meeting. (Available in the Selectmen's office) Mr. Petraitis asked that a provision that the School Committee chairman notify the Board of Selectmen chairman 48 hours in advance of any negotiating session be added to Article #18, along with wording allowing the Chairman of the Board of Selectmen to appoint a designee. Mr. Petraitis moved, and Mr. Chabot seconded, a motion to approve all 18 articles. So voted.

IV. ANNOUNCEMENTS

A. Mrs. Walter read an announcement from the 200th Anniversary Committee (Attachment #4) asking that organizations that would like to be involved in the upcoming celebration contact committee members.

B. Mr. Petraitis announced that Burning Permits are available at the Fire Station Saturday and Sunday from 8 AM to noon during the burning season, which runs from January 15th to April 30th. The cost is \$20.

C. Mr. Chabot reminded residents that there will be a Special Town Meeting on February 3rd at 7 PM in the elementary school.

D. Mrs. Walter announced that Hearts for Heat will be hosting a spaghetti supper on January 28th from 5 PM to 8 PM at the elementary school. The cost is \$7, or \$20 for a family of four. Mrs. Walter noted that this is a very worthy organization that provides essential services to North Brookfield residents in need.

E. Mr. Petraitis announced that Bicentennial Calendars have arrived, and are available at the Town Clerk's office at a cost of \$10.

F. Mr. Chabot announced that the cost of fishing permits for Horse Pond will be increasing from \$5 to \$10 effective July 1st.

V. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

A. Mrs. Walter noted that there will be a joint meeting of the Selectmen, Finance Committee and School Committee on Monday, January 23rd at 6:30 PM in the Senior Center. Representatives from Bay Path Vocational School will be present regarding their plans for a major building renovation project, which will require approval from all ten towns in the district.

B. Mr. Petraitis noted that North Brookfield will officially turn 200 years old on February 28th, which is a Selectmen's meeting night.

C. Mr. Petraitis noted that the Selectmen will discuss the issues with NBEMS again in two weeks. By then the information from the billing company should be available.

D. Mr. Petraitis stated that he would like to hear from Tom Cohen of Charter Communications about the status of efforts to bring cable to residents of West Brookfield and Wigwam Roads.

At 7:55 PM Mr. Petraitis moved, and Mr. Chabot seconded, a motion to enter Executive Session for the purpose of discussing strategy related to litigation, because an open session may have a detrimental effect on the Town's negotiating position. Roll call: Walter, yes; Petraitis, yes; Chabot, yes. So voted. Mrs. Walter announced that the Board would exit Executive Session only to adjourn.

At 8:30 PM the Board came out of Executive Session. Mr. Petraitis moved, and Mr. Chabot seconded, a motion to adjourn. So voted.

Respectfully submitted,

Leslie Scott Burton
Administrative Assistant