

MINUTES OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING JANUARY 17, 2017

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

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- **January 10, 2017**

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

- **January 10, 2017 Executive Session**

Mr. Kiley asked that these minutes be amended to reflect that the Selectmen asked for a response by Thursday, January 12th. Mr. Hevy moved, and Mr. Kiley seconded, a motion to approve these minutes as amended. So voted.

Mrs. Walter noted that Mr. Benoit had called sometime over the long weekend and she returned his call this morning. He stated that he was under the impression that he and the Selectmen were in negotiations. She said that perhaps the Selectmen rushed to make the January 17th start date so he could work with the outgoing Superintendent. Mrs. Walter believes that Mr. Benoit is fully qualified for the job, and the Selectmen should negotiate with him.

Mr. Kiley said that while he agrees that Mr. Benoit is qualified, he feels that Mr. Benoit is "playing games" with the Selectmen. Mr. Benoit said that the Screening Committee told him a March start date, which Mr. Kiley stated they never did. Mr. Kiley believes that this is an indication of how Mr. Benoit will be as a department head dealing with the Selectmen. In Mr. Kiley's opinion, Mr. Benoit did not respond by the deadline, and the offer should be withdrawn.

Mrs. Walter stated that Mr. Benoit deserves a chance and the Selectmen should negotiate with him.

Mr. Hevy moved, and Mrs. Walter seconded, a motion to schedule one more meeting with Mr. Benoit in Executive Session. So voted, with Mr. Kiley voting no.

II. APPROVAL OF WARRANTS

There were no warrants.

III. FINANCIAL ITEMS

A. FY18 Budgets

Mrs. Walter noted that the Finance Committee has picked up their copies of the FY18 budget requests. The Selectmen plan to have a draft budget to the FinCom by February 15th.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

A. Highway Superintendent report

Highway Superintendent Gary Jean was present with his report for the month of December. (Attachment #1) Mr. Kiley asked if there were problems with some vehicles during the last big storm, and Mr. Jean said that there were, but those problems have been fixed. The issues were from normal wear and tear, and not from any misuse. Mr. Kiley asked about the recent pay hike for part-time snow plow drivers to \$18 per hour, and Mr. Jean noted that he has trouble attracting drivers for the town's trucks because this is what area towns are paying. Mr. Kiley also asked about a recent bill from Lester Bullock for \$62 per hour, and Mr. Jean explained that Mr. Bullock uses his own equipment to clear the dirt roads down by the lake, which are too small for the town's trucks. Mr. Jean noted that Mr. Bullock is the only subcontractor that is used for plowing, the other drivers use the town's trucks. Mr. Hevy asked if the Summer Street drainage project has been completed, and Mr. Jean said that it has.

V. NEW BUSINESS

A. NBEMA appointments

Sarah Risotti attended the meeting to present her application for membership to NBEMA. (Attachment #2) Ms. Risotti noted that her father got her interested in this back when he was the Civil Defense Director in Spencer when she was young. Mr. Hevy moved, and Mr. Kiley seconded, a motion to appoint Ms. Risotti. So voted.

Mrs. Walter noted that Raeann Caron is also interested in being appointed, and her application is here. (Attachment #3) Ms. Caron had planned to attend this evening but sent word that she is not feeling well. Mr. Hevy moved, and Mr. Kiley seconded, a motion to appoint Ms. Caron. So voted.

B. Appointment of Senior Center Program Assistant

Mrs. Walter reviewed an e-mail from Senior Center Director Diane Nichols asking to hire Diane Hopkins for 6 hours per week at \$11 per hour on a temporary basis. (Attachment #4) Ms. Nichols noted that she has assumed some of the outreach duties and Ms. Hopkins has made that transition easier. Mr. Hevy moved, and Mr. Kiley seconded, a motion to hire Ms. Hopkins on a temporary basis. So voted.

Ms. Nichols thanked the volunteers and workers from the Sheriff's Department for their recent efforts in repainting the Senior Center at no cost to the Town.

C. Appointment of Environmental Certifying Officer

Mrs. Walter reviewed an e-mail from Chris Dunphy of Pioneer Valley Planning Commission regarding the need to appoint an Environmental Certifying Officer for the town's FY17 CDBG application. (Attachment #5) Mr. Hevy moved, and Mr. Kiley seconded, a motion to appoint Administrative Assistant Leslie Burton to the position. So voted.

D. Bridge Inspections

Mrs. Walter reviewed two bridge inspection reports, one for Cider Mill Road and one for West Brookfield Road. (Available in the Selectmen's office) She noted that both bridges qualify for possible grant funding. Fuss and O'Neill will complete the engineering estimates at no cost to the town, unless the grant funds are received.

Mrs. Walter stated that Fuss and O'Neill looked at Tucker Road, and will put it on a preliminary list to be eventually funded. There is a brook there that supports fish and wildlife, after a study is done we can apply for grant funds.

E. School Department re: Debt Exclusion votes

School Superintendent Marilyn Tencza, School Committee Chairman Mike Kiszka, School Committee member Meg Cloutier, and grant writer Jay Mooney joined the Selectmen to discuss the school's request for a debt exclusion vote for a roof replacement at the elementary school.

Superintendent Tencza noted that the school applied for a competitive grant and much to their surprise were funded the first time. Town Meeting voted to fund \$60,000.00 for engineering last July. The architect and the Owner's Project Manager (OPM) have looked at the project and given two options.

Mr. Mooney explained that a PVC roof like the one that is currently in place would require snow guards, which would require a reinforced roof to support the added weight of the snow, and could cost as much as \$700,000.00 more than the other option.

A "modified bit" roof is safer and less money because the snow won't slide, and won't require snow guards and reinforcement.

Mrs. Walter noted that back in July Mr. Mooney presented numbers estimating the project cost at \$2 million, and the latest estimate is \$3.9 million. The Selectmen and School Committee need to be accountable to the voters on how the project cost has almost doubled.

Superintendent Tencza stated that the numbers that were presented in July were only estimates, and construction costs have risen since then. She noted that \$3.9 million is the most that the project could cost, it could be less.

Mr. Mooney noted that if the project is approved in February, the town will be "first in line" to receive bids before the busy spring bidding season.

Mrs. Walter said that she would like to go back to MSBA and figure out if there is a way to reduce the cost of the project

Mr. Kiley asked if the roof replacement is critical, and Mr. Mooney said that it isn't critical yet, but we have gotten 26 years out of a roof that was supposed to last 20.

The Selectmen recommended that Mrs. Tencza and the School Committee speak with the Finance Committee about the project as soon as possible.

VI. ANNOUNCEMENTS

A. Election update

Mr. Hevy reviewed a memo from the Town Clerk listing the incumbents and offices up for election at the May 1st Annual Town Election. The last day to submit nomination papers is Monday, March 13th.

B. Tyler Wolanin office hours

Mr. Kiley announced that Tyler Wolanin, District Aide to Senator Gobi, will be in North Brookfield on Tuesday, January 31st from 11 AM to noon at the Senior Center.

C. Hearts for Heat spaghetti dinner and movie night

Mrs. Walter reminded residents that Hearts for Heat will hold their annual spaghetti dinner and movie night on Saturday, January 28th starting with a movie at 3 PM and dinner from 5 PM to 7 PM. The cost is \$8 per person, with a cap of \$25 for a family of 4 or more.

VII. PENDING/FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- See attached list

VIII. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mrs. Walter announced that the public has the opportunity to briefly comment through the Chairman, with a two-minute limit.

IX. EXECUTIVE SESSION

There was no Executive Session scheduled.

There being no further business, at 7:35 PM Mr. Hevy moved, and Mr. Kiley seconded, a motion to adjourn. So voted.

Respectfully submitted,

Leslie Scott Burton
Administrative Assistant

PROJECT STATUS AND PENDING/FUTURE SELECTMEN'S AGENDA ITEMS

PROJECT

NBDDP/Aztec

Solar contracts on Municipal Property

STATUS

Planning Final Remediation

Negotiating leases

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|--|----------------------------|
| Purchase Orders | pending |
| Creation of Financial Advisory Committee | pending |
| Personnel policies | Sub-committee to start Jan |
| 5 | |
| 98 Shore Road | pending |
| Electric aggregation | pending |
| Community Compact projects | Final reports delivered |
| IT Grant | in progress |
| Town House restoration project | FOTH Capital Campaign |
| | launched 050917 |
| Efficiency and Regionalization grant | due Feb 1 st |
| Bates Observatory | pending |