

MINUTES OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING MARCH 24, 2015

Chairman Smith called the meeting to order in the Senior Center at 6 PM with Mrs. Walter and Mr. Hevy also present. Mr. Smith noted that the meeting would be both audio and video taped.

Mr. Smith offered the Board's congratulations to LPAC volunteer Jake Anderson, who was awarded the rank of Eagle Scout this past weekend.

Also, the Selectmen have been asked to endorse an Eagle Scout project by Chris Tillotson. (Attachment #1) Mr. Tillotson plans to build a handicapped accessible fishing deck at Doane Pond. He will need to get approval from the Building Inspector and the Conservation Commission, in addition to raising the necessary funds. Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Hevy seconded, a motion to sign the project proposal. So voted.

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- **March 10, 2015 minutes**

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

- **March 10, 2015 Executive Session minutes**

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

II. APPROVAL OF WARRANTS

- **School Warrant #1047 for \$292,828.92**
- **General Warrant #1048 for \$123,488.01**
- **Payroll Warrant #19 for \$276,296.80**

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

III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mr. Smith announced that anyone in attendance would have the opportunity to comment on any of tonight's agenda items.

IV. FINANCIAL REPORTS

- A. Highway Department**
- B. Fire Department**
- C. Police Department**
- D. Council on Aging**

The Selectmen reviewed the budgets of these four departments. (Attachment #2) Mr. Smith noted that the current Snow and Ice deficit is approximately \$141,000.00. In addition, the Council on Aging budget is very low, with only 21% of the yearly budget remaining. This needs to be addressed as soon as possible. It was agreed to invite the Finance Committee to attend the April 7th meeting to discuss the FY16 budget.

V. OLD BUSINESS

A. Project updates

- **Murphy Road Bridge update**

Mrs. Walter noted that this project is on schedule. The contract between the town and MAS Building and Bridge is here to be signed. (Available in the Selectmen's office) Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Hevy seconded, a motion to sign the contract. So voted.

- **Town House Advisory Committee update**

Mr. Hevy noted that GDA has submitted preliminary drawings and cost estimates. (Available in the Selectmen's office) We are waiting to hear back from the AAB about the Cease and Desist order. Mr. Smith asked if there are any artificial wood pieces specified, and Mrs. Walter asked if there were copper or aluminum gutters specified? The THAC will review these issues.

- **Tax Title auction**

Mr. Smith noted that last week the Selectmen voted to authorize Treasurer Anne Jannette to enter into an agreement to sell up to nine parcels of town-owned land. Mrs. Walter stated that some of those parcels are abutting the railroad, and may be valuable in the future. It was agreed to go to the town offices later in the evening to look at the Assessor's maps in order to see the locations more clearly.

B. Accept donations to Police Vehicle Gift Fund

Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Hevy seconded, a motion to accept a donation of \$50 from Mearl and Paulette Adams for the Police Vehicle Gift Fund. So voted. Mr. Smith noted that the current balance in the account is \$12,614.88.

C. Discussion re: CORI policy and hiring policy

Mrs. Walter explained that these issues came up at the last meeting. She suggested a new personnel policy that requires new hires to have a CORI check. Leslie will bring sample policies to be discussed next time.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. Set 05/08 date for Special Town Meeting

Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Hevy seconded, a motion to set Friday, May 8th at 7 PM as the date and time for a Special Town Meeting. So voted.

B. Town Forest proposal from Ross Hubacz

Ross Hubacz, a forester with Hull Forest Products, was present to ask if the Selectmen would be interested in having a Forest Stewardship Plan developed for 14 acres of town-owned land on Smith Hanson Road. The land was taken by the town for back taxes in 1941, and designated as Town Forest land. There would be no cost to the town for this, and it would not limit any future uses of the property. Mr. Hubacz suggested a commercial thinning of the trees now in order to maximize the financial return in the future.

Mrs. Walter noted that the parcels that Mr. Hubacz has already done this for on West Brookfield Road and for the Water Department look great.

Mr. Hevy suggested that some of the funds that are generated by selling the lumber be given to the Town Park Committee so that they may complete the Town Park on West Brookfield Road.

Mr. Hubacz stated that he would have a proposal to the Selectmen within the next two months, he will then mark the trees, which can be harvested this fall.

Resident Claudette Marshall asked how close this land is to the West Brookfield Registered Scenic Area? Mrs. Walter did not think that it was close enough to complicate access to that area. Mr. Hubacz noted that a Forest Stewardship Plan has the preservation of historic areas as one of its priorities, and the area will be thoroughly investigated.

Mr. Smith asked that Mr. Hubacz work up a proposal for the Selectmen as soon as possible. Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Hevy seconded, a motion to endorse the Forest Stewardship Plan to be prepared by Mr. Hubacz. So voted.

C. Resignation of Jason Petraitis

Mr. Smith reviewed an e-mail from Jason Petraitis resigning from the Town House Advisory Committee. (Attachment #3) Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Hevy seconded, a motion to accept the resignation with regret. So voted.

D. Appointment of Jennifer DiPalato to LPAC

Mr. Smith asked Jennifer DiPalato, who was working to video tape the meeting, to introduce herself. Ms. DiPalato noted that she has been working in video production for many years, and in fact went to school for it. She has worked for both the Southbridge and Worcester local access channels. Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Hevy seconded, a motion to appoint Ms. DiPalato as an LPAC videographer. So voted.

E. LSP proposal from David Foss

Mrs. Walter explained that David Foss is a Licensed Site Professional (LSP) who formerly worked for Fuss and O'Neill, and oversaw the petroleum remediation at the Town House. He is now with a new company, and has submitted a proposal for additional LSP services at the Town House. (Attachment #4) She suggested that we respond that we have reviewed his proposal, and will keep it for future reference, especially for the Town House project.

F. Waite Corner Road pole petition @ 6:15

At 6:15 PM Mr. Smith opened the public hearing on the petition of Verizon and National Grid to place a new pole on Waite Corner Road. (Available in the Selectmen's office) A representative of Verizon was present, and stated that the new pole will be a support pole across the street from an existing pole. There were no abutters present. Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Hevy seconded, a motion to approve the request of Verizon and

National Grid to place one new pole on Waite Corner Road. So voted. Mr. Smith closed the public hearing at 6:20 PM.

G. February Police Report

Mr. Hevy reviewed the police report for the month of February as submitted by Police Chief Aram Thomasian, Jr. (Attachment #5) Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Hevy seconded, a motion to accept the report. So voted.

H. Fire Department ground repeater at Water Dept

Mr. Hevy presented information regarding a VHF ground repeater system for the Fire Department. (Attachment #6) According to Mr. Hevy, there are areas of town where the department's radios do not work. A similar repeater was recently installed on Water Department property by the company that owns the school buses to prevent the "dead spots" where there is no radio service. The Selectmen agreed that this is a worthy cause and will try to find money in the budget for this.

Mr. Hevy also presented estimates for small generators and submersible pumps that can be used to pump water from basements in the event of flooding. (Attachment #7) During heavy rainstorms there can be dozens of residents requiring this service. Leslie noted that there may be an opportunity to purchase some of this small equipment through a new MIIA grant program.

I. Discussion re: Cemetery Road

Mrs. Walter proposed adding Cemetery Road to the list of private roads that are maintained by the town. She noted that the road is owned by the Catholic Diocese. The diocese is looking for records, and then she will come back with a proposal to accept the road.

J. Question on vacation policy

This item was deferred to the next meeting since we have not heard back from legal counsel.

K. OML Quorum definition

It was agreed to ask the Finance Committee to attend the April 7th Selectmen's meeting to discuss their questions about and problems obtaining a quorum.

VII. ANNOUNCEMENTS

A. Election update

Mrs. Walter reviewed a memo from the Town Clerk listing all of the offices and candidates for the May 4th Annual Town Election. (Attachment #8) The last day to register to vote is Tuesday, April 14th.

B. Rabies Clinic

Mr. Smith announced that there will be a rabies clinic on Saturday, April 25th at the Second Chance Animal Shelter at 271 North Main Street. The Town Clerk will be in attendance for dog licensing.

C. Tyler Wolanin from Senator Gobi's office will hold office hours in North Brookfield at the Town Offices on Wednesday, March 25th from 12 PM to 1 PM

Mr. Smith announced that a representative from Senator Gobi's office will be holding office hours at the Town Offices on Wednesday, March 25th.

D. Representative Donald Berthiaume will hold office hours on April 7th

Mr. Smith noted that Representative Donald Berthiaume will be holding office hours on April 7th at the Town Offices at 5 PM, and then will attend the Selectmen's meeting at 6 PM.

D. Color Fest 2015

Brandon Avery was present to discuss this, and the Selectmen asked him to attend the next meeting with more information.

VIII. PENDING/FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

It was agreed to discuss the FY16 budget with the Finance Committee when they meet with the Selectmen.

Mr. Smith asked to review the Highway and Senior Center budgets at the next meeting.

IX. EXECUTIVE SESSION

There was no Executive Session scheduled.

At 7:50 PM it was agreed to recess to the Town Offices to inspect the Assessors' maps to view the locations of potential properties for a tax-title auction.

The Selectmen reviewed the maps, and agreed to withdraw two parcels from auction because they abut the railroad, 30 Bullard Road and 48 Brickyard Road. The land at 98 Shore Road was added to the list of properties to be auctioned.

There being no further business, Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Hevy seconded, a motion to adjourn at 8:30 PM. So voted.

Respectfully submitted,

Leslie Scott Burton
Administrative Assistant

PENDING/FUTURE SELECTMEN'S ITEMS

**Wendemuth Meadow
School sign property
Solterra Agreement
NBDDP/Aztec
Gilbert Street Stormwater issues
Town Offices server recommendations
Cable license renewal Oct 2015
Purchase Orders
Vacancies on town boards
Creation of Financial Advisory Committee
School sign property**