

MINUTES OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING SEPTEMBER 22, 2015

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

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- **September 8, 2015**
- **September 8, 2015 Exec Session #1**
- **September 8, 2015 Exec Session #2**

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

II. APPROVAL OF WARRANTS

- **School Warrant #1012 for \$134,294.74**
- **General Warrant #1013 for \$108,200.02**
- **Payroll Warrant #6 for \$278,117.40**

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

III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

- **The public has the opportunity to briefly comment on agenda items through the Chairman**

Mr. Hevy announced that anyone wishing to comment on any of this evening's agenda items would have the opportunity to do so.

IV. FINANCIAL REPORTS

A. Amortization of Snow and Ice

Mr. Hevy introduced a form (Attachment #1) presented by the Town Accountant for signature by the Selectmen the purpose of which is to allow the Town to pay the expenses incurred in FY 2015 due to extraordinary snow fall over a period of up to three years. At the end of the fiscal year the Town appropriated \$65,000 to reduce the snow and Ice deficit. The Selectmen had not seen this form previously and had an extensive discussion on the process of amortizing the remaining amount of the FY 2015 snow and ice deficit. The form must be processed and submitted before the State will allow the tax rate to be set.

Since there were issues in the understanding of the form, the Selectmen agreed to discuss the process with the Town Accountant. A separate meeting will be held if necessary to allow the form to be processed timely.

V. OLD BUSINESS

A. Senior Center letter

A letter (Attachment #2) from Senior Center Director Diane Nichols was read by Chairman Hevy. Mrs. Nichols proposed, due to the complicated process of obtaining Senior Discounts from Charter for cable service, that she would support having a meeting at the Senior Center and invite seniors from surrounding Towns as well, if Charter would have a representative come to assist with the application process. She stated that more seniors could apply and not have to travel to Worcester to complete some of the requirements of the application. The Board agreed with the suggestion that the process was difficult for most seniors due to transportation, health and documentation issues.

Mr. Smith said that he had contacted Tom Cohan of Charter Communications to make arrangements for October 7, 14, or 21 to visit the Senior Center with another Charter resource to help seniors get through the sign-up process. Mr. Smith reiterated that there are many provisions in obtaining the 10% discount that are cumbersome in the Charter contract. Mr. Smith stated that he would contact the Senior Center Director to advise her that we would make arrangements for an initial meeting for the purpose of signing up as many seniors as possible. Publicity would be circulated through multiple media and means to attract as many senior Charter subscribers as possible.

Chairman Hevy introduced a discussion on the new Charter contract, which to date had been reviewed twice. Chairman Hevy stated that there was a need to have a final meeting to assure that the document was complete and edited appropriately based on the lengthy discussions. A meeting was scheduled for October 1st at 4PM.

B. Vacancies on town boards

The Selectmen discussed vacancies on the following Boards (Attachment #3) and asked for volunteers to fill these important positions emphasizing that the Town cannot run smoothly without support from the public at large. Finance Committee (1 member, 2 at-large members), Conservation Commission (1 member) Capital Improvement Planning Committee (2 at-large members), and Cable Advisory Committee (2 members). Chairman Hevy stated that interested candidates send a letter to the Selectmen's Office.

C. Cemetery - Bell Street

Mrs. Walter reported that this section of Bell Street would not be paved year due to a shortage of Chapter 90 funding based on the cost of roads completed for this year.

D. Process for citizen complaints

Mr. Smith reviewed a written policy for a clear process for processing complaints to the Selectmen (Attachment #4). He summarized that when a complaint or request was received it would be immediately acknowledged by the Selectmen's office in writing by either acting on it, if it is the Board's responsibility or by immediately referring the complaint or request to the responsible Department with the Department reporting back to the Board how the complaint or request would be handled, and when it could be

expected to be resolved. Mrs. Walter stated that the complaint or request should be directed to a responsible Department allowing for the Departments to act immediately on the request or complaint. In the event that the complaint or request is not handled satisfactorily by the Department the complaint can then be referred to the Selectmen. Mr. Hevy suggested deferring a decision on the process for another week to incorporate additional steps.

E. E-mail from BOH re: benefits

Mrs. Walter read an email (Attachment #5) from the Board of Health regarding the final resignation of the Board of Health clerk, and the urgency of filling the position. On the night of a Board of Health meeting Mr. Alphin stopped to speak with Mrs. Walter about the hiring process and the terms upon which a replacement would be hired. Mrs. Walter stated that Mr. Alphin said that he had the opportunity to interview two candidates that would be able to work according to the guidelines preferred by the Selectmen.

F. Set meeting with Gobi and Berthiaume

Chairman Hevy stated that he had received a request from Finance Committee Chairman Chet Lubelczk to hold a meeting with Senator Gobi and Representative Berthiaume to discuss issues regarding the schools and in particular the Chapter 70 formula. Mr. Smith suggested that we let the Senator and Representative know our particular circumstance regarding the impact of the Chapter 70 formula on small towns. He said he thought that our representatives should know exactly the impact on our Town. Chairman Hevy stated that he would contact Senator Gobi and Representative Berthiaume to obtain dates for their availability.

V. NEW BUSINESS

A. Letter from Highway Superintendent re: curb cut bonds

Mr. Hevy read a letter (Attachment #6) from the Highway Superintendent regarding curb cut bonds that are outstanding in the permit account from 2009-2011 in the amount of \$18,000.00 asking for advice on how the Town will proceed in this matter.

Curb cut work is required to be completed within twelve months of the issuance date of the permit and the bonds listed have not been claimed. Mr. Smith stated that the matter cannot be resolved at this time and needs to be researched further. Chairman Hevy said that he would do the research on the permits to facilitate a decision by the Selectmen. Mrs. Walter suggested that Town Counsel also be consulted in this matter.

B. Town Beach plans

Mr. Smith received a call from a beach committee formed in East Brookfield asking to discuss some plans for improvements and repairs to the Town beach infrastructure. He further stated that their comments were similar to those expressed by a group of people from North Brookfield who are interested in revitalizing the North Brookfield Beach Committee. Mrs. Walter stated that it would be nice for both Towns to form one Committee. Mr. Smith will follow up on the subject.

C. Request to work at home

A letter (Attachment #7) was read by the Highway Clerk regarding the need to work from home temporarily while recovering from foot surgery. Mrs. Walter stated that this information was presented prior to the surgery, but at present the employee is back to work. Mr. Smith proposed that we vote this retroactively. Mr. Hevy called for a motion to approve the work at home request retroactively. Mrs Walter moved and Mr. Smith seconded the motion. So voted unanimously.

VI. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Town Forest informational woods walk (Attachment #8)
- Cultural Council applications due October 15th (Attachment #9)
- Dog license reminder (Attachment #10)

VII. PENDING/FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- See attached list

VIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

- None

PENDING/FUTURE SELECTMEN'S ITEMS

Solterra Agreement
NBDDP/Aztec
Gilbert Street Stormwater issues
Purchase Orders
Creation of Financial Advisory Committee
Personnel policies
Meeting with Gobi and Berthiaume
Fees for one-day liquor licenses