

MINUTES OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING OCTOBER 20, 2015

Chairman Hevy called the meeting to order in the Senior Center at 6:05 PM with Mrs. Walter and Mr. Smith also present. He reminded those in attendance that the meeting would be both audio and video taped.

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- **September 17, 2015**
- **September 22, 2015**

Mr. Hevy noted that the approval of these two meetings will be deferred until next time.

- **October 6, 2015**

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

II. APPROVAL OF WARRANTS

- **School Warrant #1018 for \$74,377.72**
- **General Warrant #1019 for \$199,878.88**
- **Payroll Warrant #8 for \$302,998.05**

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

III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

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

Mr. Hevy noted that those in attendance would be able to comment on any of tonight's agenda items by going through himself as chair.

IV. FINANCIAL REPORTS

- **Tax title auction update**

Mr. Hevy reported that the tax-title auction has been scheduled for Wednesday, November 18th at the Police Station. There are five parcels up for auction, three on Ryan Road, one on Orchard Road, and one on East Brookfield Road. More information will be announced soon. This will be posted on the town's website, as well as on the local public access channel. (LPAC)

V. OLD BUSINESS

A. Amortization of Snow and Ice deficit

Mr. Smith noted that the deficit in the FY2015 Snow and Ice Account is \$127,314.93. (Attachment #1) The Town will be receiving \$14,498.53 in FEMA reimbursement funds, which leaves a total deficit of \$112,816.40. The state will allow the town to spread the deficit over three years, with a minimum payment this year of \$37,605.00. Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Smith seconded, a motion to approve a payment of \$37,605.00 over three fiscal years. So voted. Mr. Smith thanked the Town's financial team for their efforts.

B. Curb Cut returns

Mr. Smith reviewed a memo from the Highway Department asking for the Selectmen to vote to return \$18,000.00 in curb cut deposits to the general fund. (Attachment #2) Mr. Smith noted that the Town Accountant has been unable to verify this amount, and it could be a little as \$13,000.00. Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Smith seconded, a motion to approve up to \$18,000.00 from fiscal years 2009 to 2011 to the general fund, subject to review by the Town Accountant. So voted.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. Presentation by Albert Rex and Kirk Associates

Albert Rex of MacRostie Historic Advisors introduced Brett Pelletier of Kirk and Company. Kirk and Company has prepared a mixed use market study for the Town House. (Available in the Selectmen's office) Mr. Pelletier reviewed his report, and explained the methods used to develop the report. He explained that one of the first things they do, after verifying ownership and the size of the lot and building, is to study the traffic going through the intersection of Main Street, Summer Street, and Grove Street. According to Mr. Pelletier, the vehicle traffic is substantial, approximately 9,700 cars per day travel through this area. Mr. Smith stated that he is surprised by that number; the center of Spencer has 15,000 cars per day, not a lot more than North Brookfield.

Mr. Pelletier's report reviewed other statistics, including a review of the regional economy, population and income demographics of the area, and office and retail rents in the area. It seems that the main floor of the Town House would be best suited for office or retail. Mr. Pelletier also noted that there is the potential for the upstairs of the building to be used a function space for meetings, concerts, or weddings.

Mr. Rex stated that he is really pleased with this marketing study. He presented a timeline for the future (Attachment #3) that he said is very much possible. Having the recent tower and roof work done is important. He does not see the need for any additional town investment.

Mrs. Walter noted that Mr. Pelletier's presentation included the need for high-speed internet connections to make the building attractive to tenants. She said that the state says that North Brookfield already has this, but it is not true. Mr. Pelletier noted that there is a big difference between what is acceptable for residential use and what is acceptable for businesses.

Mr. Rex said that the market study shows that there is a need in North Brookfield for something like this, and that it could be feasible. The Friends of the Town House have already secured historic tax credits, and now with the market study, this will make the project attractive to tenants. By taking the construction budget and deducting the tax credits, they will be able to determine how much money will need to be raised. The goal is to have tenants in the building by June of 2017.

B. Request for appointment to Board of Assessors

Assessors Sheila Buzzell and Priscilla Johnson were present with Lisa Kularski to ask that Mrs. Kularski be appointed to the Board of Assessors. (Attachment #4) According to Mrs. Buzzell, Mrs. Kularski would be appointed until the May 2016 town election, at which time Mrs. Kularski would have to run for the remaining two year term that was left vacant after the passing of Reedy J. Nealer, Jr. last month.

Mrs. Kularski noted that she previously worked as the clerk for the Assessors for nine years, before her current position as senior loan servicing representative at North Brookfield Savings Bank. Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Smith seconded, a motion to appoint Mrs. Kularski to the Board of Assessors until the May 2016 Annual Town Election. So voted.

C. Review and approve Nov 6th STM warrant

The Selectmen reviewed a draft of the November 6th Special Town Meeting warrant. (Attachment #5) It was agreed to not include articles for the purchase of some AEDs for the Police Department and a new fire truck. A resident in attendance asked that if a new police cruiser is purchased that it be lettered instead of unmarked.

D. Option to Purchase – 98 Shore Road

Mr. Smith reviewed a letter from Jenner Renewable Holdings asking for the Selectmen to consider optioning the property at 98 Shore Road. (Attachment #6) He noted that this piece of property was removed from the list of parcels to be auctioned this fall at the request of the Finance Committee, who believe that there is gravel on the site. Mrs. Walter noted that she has walked the property with several people in that business, and they all agree there is no gravel there. Mr. Hevy said that is not convinced. It was agreed to postpone action on this.

E. Letter from Brookfield re: Cooley Hill Reservoir

Mr. Hevy reviewed a letter from the Brookfield Board of Selectmen asking the North Brookfield Selectmen to waive their right of first refusal to purchase a piece of property that is owned by Brookfield but located in North Brookfield. (Attachment #7) Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Smith seconded, a motion to waive the town's right of first refusal. So voted.

F. Senior Center appointments

Mr. Hevy reviewed a list of members of the Council on Aging. (Attachment #8) Because of the changing director position the Selectmen had asked COA members to stay on through their June 30th term expiration until a new director was appointed. Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Smith seconded, a motion to appoint the COA members as listed. So voted.

G. Letter re: Electric Aggregation

Mrs. Walter reviewed a letter from Hampshire Power noting that they are withdrawing from the electric aggregation business, and recommending that the Town speak with

Colonial Power Group instead. (Attachment #9) Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Smith seconded, a motion to contact Colonial. So voted.

VII. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **Trick or Treat hours**

Mr. Hevy read a memo from Police Chief Mark Smith announcing that Trick or Treat will be observed on Saturday, October 31st from 5:30 to 6:30 PM.

- **Meeting with Gobi and Berthiaume**

Mr. Hevy announced that Senator Gobi and Representative Berthiaume will be in North Brookfield next Monday evening at 7 PM to meet with the Selectmen, Finance Committee and School Committee to discuss issues related to Chapter 70 and School Choice.

- **Vacancies on Town Boards**

Mr. Smith announced that there are currently vacancies on the Finance Committee, Conservation Commission, Capital Planning Committee, and the Cable Advisory Committee. Anyone interested should contact the Selectmen's office.

- **Water main flushing**

Mr. Hevy reminded residents that the Water Department would be flushing hydrants in town from October 20th to November 7th.

- **Last day to register to vote at Nov 6th STM is Oct 27th**

Mrs. Walter reminded everyone that the last day to register to vote at the November 6th Special Town Meeting is next Tuesday, October 27th from 9 AM to 8 PM in the Town Clerk's office.

VIII. PENDING/FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- **See attached list**

IX. EXECUTIVE SESSION

- **None**

There being no further business, at 9:15 PM Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Smith seconded, a motion to adjourn. So voted.

Respectfully submitted,

Leslie Scott Burton
Administrative Assistant

PENDING/FUTURE SELECTMEN'S ITEMS

Solterra Agreement
NBDDP/Aztec
Cable license renewal
Purchase Orders
Vacancies on town boards
Creation of Financial Advisory Committee
Personnel policies
Cemetery Road
Bids on health insurance
Solar Bid opening October 21
FY17 Budget policy, guidelines and calendar