

MINUTES OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING JANUARY 14, 2014

Chairman Walter called the meeting to order in the Senior Center at 6:05 PM with Mr. Smith also present. Mr. Chabot was present via cell phone.

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF DECEMBER 27, 2013

Mr. Smith moved, and Mrs. Walter seconded, a motion to approve the minutes of December 27, 2013 as written. So voted, with Mr. Chabot abstaining because he was not present at that meeting.

IA. APPROVAL OF WATER WARRANT #1033 FOR \$41,875.57 APPROVAL OF SCHOOL WARRANT #1034 FOR \$67,899.12 APPROVAL OF GENERAL WARRANT #1035 FOR \$157,671.22 APPROVAL OF PAYROLL WARRANT #15 FOR \$271,540.43

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

II. NEW BUSINESS

A. NEW COMMON VIC LICENSE FOR MARLA'S PLACE

Marla Lyons was present to request a Common Victualler's license for her new restaurant located at 37 Grove Street. (Attachment #1) She noted that she will be serving breakfast and lunch from 6 AM to 2 PM, and breakfast on the weekends from 7 AM to noon. Mr. Smith moved, and Mr. Chabot seconded, a motion to approve the license for Ms. Lyons. So voted.

III. OLD BUSINESS

A. K-9 GRANT

- **WRITTEN RECOMMENDATION FROM POLICE CHIEF**
- **SUSTAINABILITY**

Mrs. Walter noted that the Selectmen discussed this item at the December 17th meeting that was not televised. The grant covers the cost of a K-9 dog for three years, but the Town would have to commit to keeping the dog for another two years after that. Mr. Smith noted that on the surface the grant is very appealing and there are times that a dog could be very useful, but he would like clarification regarding the 14 weeks of required training and the ongoing costs when the grant goes away. There are also some questions as to how this would impact collective bargaining. Mr. Smith suggested meeting with Chief Thomasian to discuss these concerns.

Mr. Chabot stated that he is concerned about the amount of time away required for an officer to be trained and to care for the dog. He questioned how often North Brookfield would use the dog, and suggested that perhaps this would be better for a regional group of several towns.

Mrs. Walter said that she would like to know how and when in the past a dog would have been useful. She noted that a dog needs to have enough activity to keep up his skill level. She would like confirmation from the Chief that this is a necessity. The Chief should provide his written recommendation and evidence of sustainability.

B. REVERSE CALLING PROGRAM

Mrs. Walter noted that a recent snowstorm and water main break brought forth the need for a reverse calling system for the town. The School Department currently uses one called OneCall, and they have submitted a quote to do the town for an additional \$3,213.00. (Available in the Selectmen's office) Mr. Smith stated that we should proceed with this and discuss it with the Finance Committee. In the meantime, Mrs. Walter suggested that residents download the Ping4Alert system on their mobile devices.

C. NEED FOR VEHICLES

The Selectmen reviewed an e-mail from Cemetery Commission Chairman Kirk Burnham (Attachment #2) along with older memos from the Police, Fire, and Emergency Management Departments, all asking for new vehicles. Mr. Smith noted that at a previous meeting the Board discussed a plan to purchase new vehicles for police and fire and pass the old Fire Chief vehicle on to Emergency Management. He suggested that the Selectmen investigate leasing vehicles, it may be less expensive. Mrs. Walter stated that this should be pursued during the budget process with the Finance Committee and the Capital Improvement Committee.

D. CONSERVATION REPORTING OF BEAVER DAM BREACH

Mr. Smith reviewed a letter from the Conservation Commission regarding a beaver dam breach at Brickyard Pond, and another letter from DEP to Robert Zaik for breaching the dam. (Available in the Selectmen's office) Mrs. Walter noted that the failure of a flow-control device that was installed by the Conservation Commission at Brickyard Pond has failed and is causing flooding of Brickyard Road. This is a safety issue if the road gets undermined and becomes impassible. Mrs. Walter noted that she has spoken with Trevor Bruso of the Conservation Commission, and told him that the flow control device should be replaced. Malcom Speicher, a beaver specialist, said that a new device would cost under \$2,000.00. The Conservation Commission is supposed to discuss this and get back to the Selectmen. Mrs. Walter also pointed out that this is not a wetlands area, it is a flooding situation in an old clay pit.

E. RECAP OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS
▪ MURPHY ROAD HEARING

Mrs. Walter noted at their December 17th meeting the Selectmen held a public hearing on the possibility of paving Murphy Road. The hearing was well attended by both proponents and opponents of paving. The Selectmen will discuss this again in the spring.

▪ MASSWORKS GRANT ANNOUNCEMENT

Mrs. Walter announced that the Town has received a \$500,000.00 MassWorks grant to replace the bridge on Murphy Road. This should provide much needed relief to residents in that area who have been inconvenienced by the closure of the bridge. Mr. Smith commended Mrs. Walter for her efforts in writing and securing this grant.

▪ TAX CREDIT LETTER

Mrs. Walter reported that the Selectmen wrote a letter in support of the Friends of the Town House's efforts to secure another round of tax credits for the project. She noted that the Friends were successful in securing another \$200,000.00 in tax credits, bringing the total received thus far to \$600,000.00. The Selectmen are very grateful to the Friends.

▪ BAY PATH ANNUAL REPORT

Mr. Smith summarized the Annual Report of the Bay Path Regional Vocational School for 2013, which reported that there are currently 40 students from North Brookfield in attendance. (Attachment #3)

IV. NEW BUSINESS

A. RESIGNATION OF OFFICER KENDALL PERRAULT

Mrs. Walter reviewed a letter from Police Officer Kendall Perrault resigning from the North Brookfield Police Department effective January 23, 2014. (Attachment #4) Mr. Smith noted that the Selectmen wish him well, and Mrs. Walter noted that it is always difficult to lose a young officer. Mr. Smith moved, and Mr. Chabot seconded, a motion to accept the resignation with regret and to send a letter of thanks. So voted.

B. NEW WIRING FEES

Mrs. Walter reviewed the new schedule of wiring fees as submitted by Wiring Inspector Don Doe. (Attachment #5) Mr. Smith moved, and Mr. Chabot seconded, a motion to approve the new fees. So voted.

C. NBEMA APPOINTMENT

Mrs. Walter reviewed an application for appointment to the North Brookfield Emergency Management Agency from Cheyenne Chenevert. (Attachment #6) Mr. Smith moved, and Mr. Chabot seconded, a motion to appoint Ms. Chenevert. So voted.

D. CHIEF GANNON WITH FIRE DEPARTMENT 2013 REPORT

Fire Chief Gannon was unable to attend the meeting, so Mr. Smith reviewed the Fire Department statistics for the year 2013. (Attachment #7) The department had 162 calls and issued 341 permits for the year. Mr. Smith moved, and Mr. Chabot seconded, a motion to accept the report. So voted.

E. DECEMBER POLICE REPORT

Mrs. Walter reviewed the Police Department report for the month of December as submitted by Chief Thomasian. (Attachment #8) The Chief reported 18 incidents and 17 arrest/summons for the month. Mr. Smith moved, and Mr. Chabot seconded, a motion to accept the report. So voted.

F. DISCUSS NEED FOR BAY PATH DEBT EXCLUSION VOTE

Mr. Smith reviewed an e-mail from Treasurer Ann Jannette (Attachment #9) reminding the Selectmen of the need to exclude a little over \$1 million in debt from the Bay Path Vocational School renovation project from Proposition 2½. Mr. Smith moved, and Mr. Chabot seconded, a motion to forward this to the Finance Committee with the full support of the Board of Selectmen. So voted.

G. FEDLER LETTER RE: WAITE CORNER ROAD

Mr. Smith reviewed a letter from Donald Fedler regarding a parcel of land he owns on Waite Corner Road. (Attachment #10) There is an old road through his land that is now closed, and he would like to clean up the property. He would like permission to remove the tar, cut the dead trees and brush, and replace with grass. Mrs. Walter explained that the road name can't be cancelled because the land would then belong to Mr. Fedler, but it is not unfair of Mr. Fedler to ask if he could improve the appearance of the land. Mr. Smith moved, and Mr. Chabot seconded, a motion to give permission to Mr. Fedler to make these improvements. So voted.

H. PROPOSAL TO MOVE TOWN WEBSITE

Mrs. Walter reviewed a proposal from Newtek Web Services to move the Town's website to a new platform. (Available in the Selectmen's office) The price for this would be \$1,870.00. Mrs. Walter said that we should consider doing this if we have enough money. Mr. Smith stated that this is not a luxury; the website is a public service that is used by a lot of people. It was agreed to discuss this again in a few months.

V. ANNOUNCEMENTS

A. TOWN HOUSE BOOK AVAILABLE

Mr. Smith showed the book "George M. Cohan was here," and said that it is fascinating reading. The book was put together by Marilyn Borst. The cost is only \$10, and proceeds will benefit the Town House restoration.

B. TOWN HOUSE CATS MEOW PIECES AVAILABLE

Mrs. Walter showed the Cat's Meow replica Town House that is available in the Town Clerk's office for \$20. All proceeds will benefit the Town House restoration. Mrs. Walter also showed off a DVD called "Ward Hollow" that was produced by local filmmaker Tyler Nickerson, and is available for \$10.

C. HEARTS FOR HEAT SPAGHETTI DINNER JANUARY 25TH

Mr. Smith announced that the Hearts for Heat 6th Annual Spaghetti Dinner and Movie Night will be held on Saturday, January 25th from 5 PM to 7 PM in the Elementary School. The cost is \$7 per person, or \$20 for a family of 4 or more. Mr. Smith noted that all of the money raised will go to help North Brookfield residents with their heating bills.

D. VISIT BY COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION

Mr. Smith congratulated the School Department for their efforts in turning around the schools, he believes that we are beginning to see results. According to Mr. Smith there have been four new students enrolled this week. He also mentioned that the Commissioner of Education recently visited North Brookfield, and was very impressed with what he saw. Mr. Smith complemented Jim Metcalf and the TREP\$ program, which acquaints 4th through 8th graders about business.

VI. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

A. JOB DESCRIPTIONS

B. FY15 BUDGET

Mr. Smith asked that the beaver issue and the debt exclusion be added to Future Agenda Items.

At 7:50 PM Mr. Smith moved, and Mr. Chabot seconded, a motion to enter Executive Session to discuss strategy related to collective bargaining with the North Brookfield Police Officers. Roll call: Walter, yes; Smith, yes; Chabot, yes. So voted. Mrs. Walter announced that the Board would exit Executive Session only to adjourn.

At 8:05 PM the Board came out of Executive Session. Mr. Smith moved, and Mr. Chabot seconded, a motion to adjourn. So voted.

Respectfully submitted,

Leslie Scott Burton
Administrative Assistant