

MINUTES OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING MAY 13, 2014

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

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MAY 6, 2014

Mr. Smith stated that he would like to defer the approval of these minutes until the next meeting.

II. OLD BUSINESS

A. WATER DEPARTMENT SALARY PROPOSAL

Mr. Smith noted that last week the Selectmen were approached by the Board of Water Commissioners about increasing the pay rate for their Administrative Assistant position. (Attachment #1) Mrs. Walter stated that there is now talk between the Water and Sewer Departments of combining their Administrative Assistants into one position that would serve both departments. She suggested making this a recommendation to the Water Department before any discussions around salary. The Water Department did advertise and received 13 applications. Mr. Smith agreed that the Selectmen should support this line of thinking to combine the administrative duties of both departments. The proposal last week to raise the pay rate involves many other people and causes other problems. Mrs. Walter and Leslie will draft a response to the Water Department.

B. BOH RESPONSE RE: REVOLVING FUND

Mr. Hevy explained the Finance Committee's response to a May 7th e-mail from the Board of Health regarding a revolving fund to purchase trash bags. (Attachment #2) According to Mr. Hevy the Finance Committee does not support this because they would like to fund this as a line item in the Board of Health budget instead of a revolving fund. Mr. Hevy said that he still needs to get a firm number from the Board of Health about how much money they need to purchase bags. The Finance Committee feels that the Board of Health can fall back on the Recycle/Revolve Account for any shortages if necessary.

Mrs. Walter noted that the maximum amount of money to be deposited into this proposed account is \$15,000.00. When that maximum is reached no more money will be taken from the sale of bags. The Board of Health e-mail points out that the Recycle/Revolve Account has gone from a high of more than \$58,000.00 in 2006 to just over \$13,000.00 now. Taking money from that account is no longer an option for the Board of Health.

Mr. Smith pointed out that the Selectmen were not aware of the Finance Committee's issues with this request until the week of town meeting. He is concerned that if money to fund the revolving fund is pulled from the "income" side of the town's ledger we may end up in a bad situation.

Mrs. Walter wondered how anyone could guarantee that without the revolving account there would be funds available to purchase bags when needed?

Mr. Smith stated that in his opinion funding the bag purchase through a line item in the budget is cleaner and makes more sense. The Finance Committee and Selectmen will try to meet with the Board of Health again to discuss this.

III. NEW BUSINESS

A. HIGHWAY VEHICLE REPAIRS

Mr. Smith reviewed a letter from Highway Superintendent Gary Jean informing them that the 1 ton truck, which is the primary work vehicle for the Highway Department, has a bad transmission. Mr. Smith asked that this item be put on next week's agenda so that he can speak with Mr. Jean.

B. CEMETERY VEHICLE CONDITION

Cemetery Commissioner Kirk Burnham was present to speak with the Board about the problems with their 40 year old pickup truck. (Attachment #4) According to Mr. Burnham, the truck needs a transmission, clutch, and a starter. The truck is not worth spending any money on. Mr. Burnham stated that the department is still able to do burials, but it is difficult without a truck, and the backhoe that was used caused additional traffic and cost. He stated that a full-size pickup truck with a dump insert would be ideal. He believes a used one could be purchased for \$10,000.00 to \$15,000.00.

Mr. Hevy stated that he has spoken with Peter Shipman of the School Department, and Mr. Shipman stated that he would allow the use of the school's truck if needed. The truck is a little bit too big for the cemetery roads, but it would do in an emergency situation. Mr. Burnham agreed that this could be a good short-term solution.

Mrs. Walter stated that the CIP committee is thinking that the vehicle needs of many departments could possibly be taken care of with a capital exclusion.

C. HIGHWAY REQUEST FOR FUNDS

Mr. Smith reviewed a request for \$3,122.49 from the Highway Department. Mr. Smith noted that until the budgets are reviewed to see which departments have funds remaining.

The Selectmen reviewed three other transfer requests, one to transfer \$748.00 from the General Insurance into the Technology budget, another one to transfer \$315.32 from General Insurance into Technology, and a third to transfer \$46.20 from the Selectmen's Advertising account into the Selectmen's Office Supplies account. Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Hevy seconded, a motion to sign and approve these three transfers. So voted.

D. REVIEW FY15 BUDGET

Mr. Smith noted that last week the Selectmen talked about meeting weekly to discuss the FY15 budget. The Finance Committee does the same thing. It would seem smarter to hold joint meetings. Mr. Hevy stated that he would speak with the Finance Committee at their meeting tomorrow and get back to the Selectmen about joint meetings.

Mr. Smith noted that when he reviewed the draft FY15 budget he can only come up with a \$317,000.00 deficit, and not the \$407,000.00 that the accountant and Finance Committee estimated. Mrs. Walter asked if raises for non-union employees were included in that budget, along with the additional ambulance expense?

Mrs. Walter said that she would like to examine which departments generate revenue and compare the amounts to the past few years. Mr. Smith agreed that he would like to review the FY15 revenue projections.

It was agreed that Mr. Hevy will try to set up a joint meeting for next Wednesday.

E. TOWN HOUSE TIMELINE

Mr. Smith presented a draft of a timeline of events leading up to this weekend's installation of the bell tower onto the Town House. (Attachment #5) Mr. Smith noted that he met with Jeff Samuelson and Police Chief Thomasian on Monday to discuss this. The installation is tentatively scheduled for Saturday morning, but there is heavy rain in the weather forecast, so it will probably happen on Sunday instead. Mr. Smith reported that the police department, the fire department, the ambulance squad, the highway department and emergency management have all seen this timeline.

According to Mr. Smith, the police chief would like to see the tower sitting on Main Street in front of the Town House from Thursday until it is installed, rather than on a side street, because of security concerns.

Leslie will contact MIIA, the Town's insurance company, to advise them of the plan to reinstall the tower this weekend, and ask if there is any other information that they need from us.

Mrs. Walter stated that a memo should be sent to downtown area businesses and residents informing them of the street closings and traffic detours. Leslie will draft a letter to be sent. The area churches should be notified if the reinstallation happens on Sunday.

Mrs. Walter wondered if there would be problems with wires along the route from Mr. Samuelson's house to downtown? There were problems with trees on Chase Road when the tower was brought to Mr. Samuelson's house.

IV. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- A. Mr. Smith reminded everyone that the Bell Tower is scheduled to be returned to the Town House on Saturday, weather permitting. Sunday is the rain date.
- B. Mr. Smith noted that the Quaboag Choral Society will be presenting a concert to commemorate the tower reinstallation on Saturday, May 24th at 7 PM at the Congregational Church. The concert will feature a tribute to George M. Cohan.
- C. Mr. Hevy announced that the annual Town-wide yard sale will be held on May 24th rain or shine. The registration fee is \$20.
- D. Mrs. Walter read an announcement from the Water Department that they will be flushing hydrants from now until May 23rd. Residents are advised to refrain from doing laundry if discoloration of the water exists.
- E. Mr. Smith read an announcement from Frank Potter advising that the VFW will be conducting their annual poppy drive during the week before Memorial Day.
- F. Mr. Hevy reminded everyone dog licenses are now due. The cost is \$6, or \$10 for dogs that are spayed or neutered. There will be a \$5 late fee after June 1st.
- G. Mrs. Walter reminded everyone that the Quabaug Corporation will be celebrating a 50 year partnership with Vibram USA on Friday, May 16th.
- H. Mr. Smith noted that the Council on Aging will be hosting their Anniversary Dinner Dance on Friday evening, May 16th.

V. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

MASSWORKS PROPOSALS

BUDGET MEETING WITH FINANCE COMMITTEE

There being no further business, Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Hevy seconded, a motion to adjourn at 7:54 PM. So voted.

Respectfully submitted,

Leslie Scott Burton
Administrative Assistant