

MINUTES OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING NOVEMBER 18, 2008

Mrs. Walter called the meeting to order in the Senior Center at 7 PM with Mr. Petraitis also present. Mr. Foyle was away on business.

I. Mr. Petraitis moved, and Mrs. Walter seconded, a motion to defer the approval of the minutes of November 10th until next week, when a quorum of the board that was at the meeting will be present. So voted.

II. OLD BUSINESS

A. Mrs. Walter announced that there will be a Special Town Meeting this Friday, November 21st, at 7 PM at the elementary school auditorium.

B. Mr. Petraitis read a letter from Police Chief Thomasian asking that the selectmen better define essential services. Mr. Petraitis stated that in his opinion, an officer on duty on any given shift is essential, paper or office supplies are non-essential. Mrs. Walter stated that it is certainly not the intent of the selectmen to reduce services to an unsafe level. Mrs. Walter added that the selectmen would take this under advisement and work on a list to indicate which services are essential and report back to the various town departments.

C. Mr. Foyle submitted an e-mail asking for Mr. Petraitis and Mrs. Walter to discuss three items. They were:

1. A freeze on overtime effective December 1st, except for emergency services and snow and ice removal. Mr. Petraitis stated that this has been the general understanding anyway, and was put forth as part of the spending freeze. Mrs. Walter wanted to reiterate, that effective December 1st, there is a freeze on overtime with the exception of emergency services and snow and ice removal.

2. Mr. Foyle stated that some budgets are showing as much as 75% remaining in their appropriation. Mr. Foyle wants these funds to be considered as part of that department's 5% -10% cut. Mr. Petraitis stated that there may be reasons that some departments have not spent these funds, and the board needs to examine each one further before making any decisions. Mrs. Walter concurred.

3. Mr. Foyle asked that a memo be sent to town departments telling them to prepare for 5% and 10% reductions in this year's budgets. Mrs. Walter noted that the selectmen and finance committee met with the town's financial stakeholders on October 23rd to emphasize that the town's financial problems are real, and to ask town departments to better define essential vs.

non-essential services. The selectmen and finance committee are trying to anticipate potential deficits in all revenue streams.

III. NEW BUSINESS

A. Mr. Petraitis read a letter from Ray Hebert asking to be appointed to the 200th Anniversary Committee. Mr. Petraitis moved, and Mrs. Walter seconded, a motion to appoint Mr. Hebert. So voted.

B. The selectmen opened bids from seven bidders for several pieces of surplus equipment available from the town. They were:

From BMF Industries:	H3	\$202.00
	H21	21.00
	H22	12.00

From Roy Chase:	H2	\$160.00
	H3	210.00
	H4	310.00
	H19	160.00

From Richard Barnes:	H3	\$200.00
	H6	45.00
	H8	60.00
	H10	40.00
	H14	25.00
	H18	20.00
	H19	50.00
	H21	20.00
	H22	10.00
	H23	25.00
	H26	20.00
	H27	20.00

From Robert Barnes:	H6	\$21.00
	H7	2.00
	H8	27.50
	H14	11.00
	H15	12.00
	H18	6.00
	H20	6.00
	H23	2.00
	H24	3.00
	H26	11.00
	H19	65.00

	H10	22.00
	H11	12.00
	H28	10.00
From Richard Bouley:	H3	\$251.00
	H8	31.00
	H21	20.00
	H22	5.00
From Richard Ayer	H8	\$53.00
	H18	25.00
	H26	10.00
From Peter Fullam	W25	\$5.00

Mrs. Walter announced that the bids would be taken under advisement for review by the Highway Superintendent, and will be awarded at next week's selectmen's meeting.

C. Mrs. Walter read a letter from the Town of Brookfield asking to be given the drill press that was listed as H13 on the surplus equipment list if no bids were received for it. There were no bids received, but there was a \$300 reserve price put on it by the Highway Superintendent. Mr. Petraitis moved, and Mrs. Walter seconded, a motion to refer the letter to Superintendent Jean, and allow him to make a reasonable exchange if he is interested. So voted.

At 7:30 PM Mr. Petraitis moved, and Mrs. Walter seconded, a motion to adjourn the selectmen's meeting. So voted.

D. At 7:30 PM Mrs. Walter opened the public hearing on the plowing and maintenance of public roads. Mrs. Walter stated that this was to be a public hearing to share information on both sides. There will be no votes taken this evening. The town wants to begin the process of being in compliance with MGL Chapter 40, Sections 5F, 6C, 6D, and 6N, which prohibit the spending of public funds to plow and maintain private roads.

When someone complains that the town is using public funds for private use, the selectmen must investigate. The town has been providing plowing and maintenance, but because there have been complaints made about that level of service, there must be an understanding of both the town's and property owners' responsibilities.

In response to a question on what defines a public or private road, Mrs. Walter noted that a public road has been accepted by a vote of the town, and a private road is owned by the abutting property owners. Steve Cummings of the Planning

Board added that public roads that must be accepted by a 2/3 vote at a town meeting, and recorded with the state as a public road.

Several residents of the private roads near Lake Lashaway questioned why this is being brought up now, after so many years of having their roads plowed and maintained by the town. Richard Baranoski pointed out that all of the property owners on private roads pay taxes to the town, and those owners want these services to continue, so that emergency vehicles may have access. Mr. Baranoski noted that he has 213 signatures on a petition asking for the town to continue to provide snow plowing to private roads.

Other residents asked about the private roads leading to the public town beach, the town's right to access water lines on private roads, and whether or not the post office has an official listing of roads for mail delivery.

Matt Flandreau of River Road asked if the property owners and the town could work together to resolve this issue. There would only need to be one vote that would cover all of the private roads in town.

Mrs. Walter told the group that a list of private roads in town could be obtained from the Board of Assessors, and Mr. Cummings pledged the assistance of the Planning Board in drawing up the necessary by-law amendments.

There being no further business, at 8:40 PM Mr. Haddock moved, and Mr. Baranoski seconded, a motion to adjourn the public hearing. So voted.

Respectfully submitted,

Leslie Scott Burton
Administrative Assistant