

## MINUTES OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING SEPTEMBER 30, 2008

Mr. Foyle called the meeting to order in the Senior Center at 7 PM with all members present.

I. Mr. Foyle moved, and Mr. Petraitis seconded, a motion to nominate Mrs. Walter as vice-chairman. So voted. Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Foyle seconded, a motion to nominate Mr. Petraitis as clerk. So voted. Mrs. Walter and Mr. Petraitis accepted their respective positions.

IA. Mrs. Walter noted that there is no longer a quorum of the board that was present at the September 16<sup>th</sup> selectmen's meeting. Therefore, since Mr. Foyle and Mr. Petraitis have read the minutes, and Mrs. Walter will attest to the accuracy of those minutes, Mr. Foyle moved, and Mrs. Walter seconded, a motion to accept the minutes as written. So voted.

Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Petraitis seconded, a motion to approve the minutes of September 23, 2008 as amended by Mrs. Walter. So voted.

### II. OLD BUSINESS

A. Mrs. Walter reported that the Finance Committee has recommended the draft FY2010 Budget Policy. Mr. Foyle made one minor change in language that makes it clear that the selectmen are primarily responsible for the budget, with assistance from the Finance Committee. Mr. Petraitis moved, and Mrs. Walter seconded, a motion to approve the draft budget policy to include the change by Mr. Foyle. So voted.

B. The selectmen reviewed a hiring and termination policy that was proposed by town counsel. The policy states that hiring and firing can only be done by the Board of Selectmen unless otherwise provided by law. Mr. Petraitis asked if the policy should include language that addresses discipline? Mrs. Walter and Mr. Foyle feel that this is only a hiring and termination policy, and a discipline policy would be separate. Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Petraitis seconded, a motion to adopt the hiring and termination policy as presented by Kopelman and Paige. So voted.

C. Mr. Foyle stated that he would like to change the name of the Town House Building Committee to the Town House Renovation Committee. Mr. Petraitis moved, and Mrs. Walter seconded, a motion to change the name. So voted. Mr. Foyle announced that the committee needs more members, and anyone interested should send a letter or e-mail to the selectmen's office. Mr. Foyle noted that the committee plans to send out a survey with the annual census asking what residents want to do with the building.

D. Mrs. Walter read a letter from Julie McCarthy asking that the selectmen create a committee to oversee the town's 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration in 2012. This committee was created at the September 16<sup>th</sup> selectmen's meeting. Anyone interested should contact the selectmen.

E. Mrs. Walter noted that she and Mr. Petraitis discussed this item at the last meeting. She would like to see all selectmen's meeting televised, not just every other week as is currently done. Mr. Petraitis expressed concern that some people may not want to be on television with their problems, and how could this be addressed? Mr. Foyle stated that he could see the merit of both points of view, but agreed that the board should offer more transparency. Mrs. Walter stated that she has spoken with Mike Tillotson and Steve Caputo of LPAC, and they said that they would accommodate the weekly meetings as best they can.

### III. NEW BUSINESS

I. Tim Hansen of CMRPC was present to update everyone on the status of the \$44,900 EDF grant that the town received from DHCD and used to fund a marketability study of the Downtown Development site. There is \$500 remaining in the grant, which will be used to offset the town's legal fees.

Mr. Hansen noted that he had hoped to have more information available this evening regarding the FY09 Block Grants, but DHCD has not released the information yet. The grant application will probably be due in February of 2009, and it must meet one of the national objectives of benefit to persons of low to moderate income, the prevention of slum and blight, or an urgent need.

Over the past summer Mr. Hansen had some college interns who did a housing inventory for parts of the downtown area to see if the town would qualify for the prevention of slum and blight national objective. He believes that because a number of downtown properties are in fair to poor condition, and there are a large number of foreclosures, North Brookfield might meet this objective.

Mr. Hansen hopes to apply for a housing rehab grant for the Nash building on Main Street, and also include one smaller infrastructure project like the Maple Street water line replacement.

Mr. Hansen will keep the selectmen up to date on the status of any grant applications when he gets more information from DHCD.

P. Attorney Brian Riley of Kopelman and Paige came in to introduce himself to the board, since Mrs. Walter and Mr. Petraitis are both new and have not previously met him. Mr. Riley is the town's new contact at Kopelman and Paige, replacing Kathleen Connolly, who left to go to another firm. Mr. Riley has

been at K&P for 19 years. The Board of Selectmen thanked Mr. Riley for coming.

M. Police Sergeant Ryan Daley came in to discuss his request that the selectmen sign a Memorandum of Understanding regarding police details. This MOU needs to be signed by October 3<sup>rd</sup>, before Governor Patrick signs legislation that will allow flagmen to be used on some road details.

Mr. Foyle stated that he would like more time to research the facts of the new law, and to consider the impact on the town's weak financial position.

Mrs. Walter noted that the 10% administrative fee that the town receives is to offset the cost of town officials processing the necessary paperwork for road details.

Chief Thomasian noted that signing the MOU by the October 3<sup>rd</sup> deadline would allow the unions to fight the governor's plan. He noted that the new law only affects road with speeds under 50mph, so it really just affects local roads and local police, not the state police that were originally targeted.

Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Petraitis seconded, a motion to table the issue for further consideration.

N. Mr. Foyle moved, and Mrs. Walter seconded, a motion to sign a statement that the town will not object to the representation of the town's police officers by the New England Police Benevolent Association. So voted and signed.

A. Mr. Foyle announced that the paperwork has arrived for the town's second \$200,000 EPA Cleanup Grant. These funds will be used toward soil remediation at the NBDD site. In addition, Mr. Foyle also said that the town will soon apply for a third \$200,000 grant.

B. Mr. Petraitis read a letter from Chester Lubelczyk asking to be appointed to the Finance Committee. Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Petraitis seconded, a motion to appoint Mr. Lubelczyk. So voted.

C. Mr. Foyle reviewed a letter from Julie McCarthy asking that George Cross be appointed to the Council on Aging. Mr. Petraitis moved, and Mr. Foyle seconded, a motion to appoint Mr. Cross. So voted, with Mrs. Walter abstaining.

D. Mrs. Walter read a letter from Julie McCarthy asking to be appointed to the town's new 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee. Mr. Petraitis moved, and Mr. Foyle seconded, a motion to appoint Ms. McCarthy. So voted, with Mrs. Walter abstaining.

E. Mr. Foyle read a letter from Joe Chenevert asking to be appointed to the 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee. Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Petraitis seconded, a motion to appoint Mr. Chenevert. So voted.

F. Mr. Foyle read a letter from Board of Health Chairman John Alphin asking to hire Nate Dufresne to work at the transfer station. This is not a new position, but is a replacement for an employee who left. Mr. Dufresne currently works for the Cemetery Department. Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Petraitis seconded, a motion to table this item until the selectmen receive clarification on how the two departments will ensure that this employee will not go over 19.5 hours per week and become benefits-eligible. So voted.

G. Mr. Foyle read a memo from the Finance Committee asking that the selectmen institute a budget freeze on all discretionary spending. Mr. Foyle asked for a definition of discretionary spending. Mrs. Walter reported that the Finance Committee feels that department heads know what it means, and should be trusted to do what is necessary. Mr. Foyle stated that he would like the selectmen to come up with some guidelines to better define discretionary.

Mr. Petraitis stated that some town departments have more discretionary funds than others, and feels that the department heads can be trusted to do the right thing. He cautioned against micro-managing.

Mr. Foyle said that he would like to see the selectmen come up with clarification within two weeks. It was agreed that Mrs. Walter will draft a letter, with input from Mr. Foyle and Mr. Petraitis. Mr. Foyle moved, and Mrs. Walter seconded, a motion to table this discussion to next week.

H. Mr. Foyle reviewed a letter from Rich Quateman of SEA Consultants regarding the soil contamination at the town hall. The town needs to submit a Comprehensive Site Assessment (CSA) to DEP by December of 2009. Mr. Foyle will contact EPA to see if there are any grants available to help with this project.

J. Mr. Foyle reviewed a letter from Chief Thomasian noting a decrease in fuel consumption by the police department this year compared to the same time last year.

K. Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Petraitis seconded, a motion to set November 21<sup>st</sup> at 7 PM as the time and date for a Special Town Meeting. So voted.

L. It was agreed to change the date for the November 11<sup>th</sup> selectmen's meeting to November 10<sup>th</sup>. This change is necessary because November 11<sup>th</sup> is a holiday.

O. Mr. Foyle read an e-mail from Joe Holway regarding an Open House to be held on October 18<sup>th</sup> at the Fire Department's new training center. Mr. Holway will come to a meeting soon to provide further details.

Q. Mr. Foyle read an announcement from the Police Department regarding an ATV safety seminar to be held on October 14<sup>th</sup> at the high school.

The selectmen briefly discussed the MOU from the police department. Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Petraitis seconded, a motion not to sign the requested MOU because there was not sufficient information on any cost/benefit impact.

The selectmen signed the bi-weekly bills and payrolls.

At 10:10 PM Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Petraitis seconded, a motion to adjourn. So voted.

Respectfully submitted,

Leslie Scott Burton  
Administrative Assistant