

MINUTES OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING MARCH 31, 2009

Chairman Foyle called the meeting to order in the Senior Center at 6 PM with all members present.

I. Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Petraitis seconded, a motion to approve the minutes of March 24, 2009 as written. So voted.

IA. Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Petraitis seconded, a motion to approve school warrant #1044 for \$79,775.49. So voted. Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Petraitis seconded, a motion to approve general warrant #1045 for \$275,898.30. So voted. Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Petraitis seconded, a motion to approve payroll warrant #20 for \$289,330.41. So voted.

II. OLD BUSINESS

A. Mr. Foyle reviewed e-mail and correspondence between the selectmen and the water department regarding the Horse Pond Dam project. In December of 2008 the Water Commissioners noted that by having the cost of the project borne by taxpayers instead of water users, the impact per household would be less because the debt would be spread out with more people paying. The selectmen then voted in December to take the recommendation of the water commissioners and have the project costs borne by the taxpayers. Mr. Foyle noted that it was never the intent of the selectmen to put the project before the town for approval; it was always thought that the water department would do that since it is their project. It was also noted that there may be grants available if the water users pay, but not if the taxpayers pay. Mr. Foyle noted that he would like to see the water department assume the engineering costs in order to keep the project on its projected timeline, and this would allow the selectmen and water commissioners time to develop a payment strategy.

Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Petraitis seconded, a motion to send a letter to the Water Department noting that in order to keep the project moving forward, the selectmen would like the water department to borrow for the engineering costs. So voted.

B. The selectmen briefly discussed last week's presentation from Geoff Rogers of Hampshire Power. It was agreed that the selectmen would like to talk to Mr. Rogers further on the possibility of changing the town's electric provider to Hampshire Power instead of National Grid. Leslie will try to schedule him for a future meeting.

C. Mr. Foyle noted that the town house survey that was sent to residents with the annual census in January has had a phenomenal response, over 938 to

date. A committee comprised of Julie McCarthy, Ray Hebert, Ellen Smith, and Brandon Avery will compile the surveys and present the results to the selectmen and to the town.

D. The selectmen discussed a request presented by the Local Public Access Committee (LPAC) last week to implement a stipend for volunteers who cover the various meetings in town. The committee is hoping to attract new people by offering the small stipends. Mr. Foyle commented that the process needs to be well monitored, and that 1099s or W-2s will need to be issued where appropriate. Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Petraitis seconded, a motion to send a letter to the committee asking to see a proposed budget for the stipends, and a explanation of the process to be used to verify and approve stipends or hourly studio work. So voted.

III. NEW BUSINESS

A. The selectmen briefly discussed the expected shortfall for the FY2010 budget, and the need for a wage freeze. Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Petraitis seconded, a motion to adopt a wage freeze for all non-bargaining unit personnel for FY10. So voted.

B. Mr. Petraitis reported that back in December he and Sergeant Blood attended a meeting at CMRPC to discuss the regionalization of emergency management in the four Brookfields and Spencer. At that time Mr. Petraitis and Sergeant Blood applied for a District Local Technical Assistance Grant, and they were recently notified that the application has been approved. He noted that some of the five towns have lots of resources, and some of the towns have lots of people. This grant would help start the process of regionalizing and combining these programs and assets.

C. In response to an e-mail from resident Edi Hubacz, it was voted to send a letter to Verizon asking that FIOS be installed in North Brookfield.

At 7:20 PM Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Petraitis seconded, a motion to enter executive session for the purpose of conducting collective bargaining with the union for the police department. Roll call: Foyle, yes; Walter, yes; Petraitis, yes. So voted.

Mr. Foyle announced that the Board would exit executive session only to adjourn.

At 9:05 PM Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Petraitis seconded, a motion to exit executive session. Roll call: Foyle, yes; Walter, yes; Petraitis, yes. So voted.

At 9:05 PM Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Petraitis seconded, a motion to adjourn. So voted.

Respectfully submitted,

Leslie Scott Burton
Administrative Assistant