

MINUTES OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING JUNE 2, 2009

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

I. Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Filipkowski seconded, a motion to defer approval of the May 26th minutes to next week. So voted.

II. OLD BUSINESS

A. Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Filipkowski seconded, a motion to approve and sign the warrant for the June 19th Special Town Meeting. So voted and signed.

B. Mr. Petraitis reviewed a notice to proceed from the town to P & P Construction, general contractors for the new police facility. Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Filipkowski seconded, having verified with Police Building Committee co-chairman Eric Hevy that P & P has provided their proof of insurance coverage, a motion to approve and sign the notice. So voted and signed.

C. Highway Superintendent Gary Jean was present to address some issues that have come up recently.

1. Michelle Zuidema of 8 Willow Street came to the selectmen's meeting last week to complain about water problems at her home. She stated that her back yard is flooded most of the time, and her basement frequently fills with water, which is causing foundation problems. Charlotte Connor of 62 Grove Street stated that her property also floods. Mr. Jean reported that he has been to the area many times, and the storm drains are running and do not appear to be blocked. He explained the steps his department has taken over the past few years to try to alleviate the situation, including cleaning catch basins and installing berms in front of the Zuidema property. There is no evidence that water is coming up from the ground due to broken pipes. He believes that because the property is the lowest point in the area the water naturally accumulates there.

Mr. Jean reported that he has applied for grant funding to do a study of the drainage issues in that entire area, but the state has limited funds to give out in any given year, so the town is on a waiting list. Mr. Jean stated that he has done his best to try to fix the problem.

Mrs. Walter asked what type of foundation did Mrs. Zuidema have, and was told that it is a stone foundation.

Mr. Petraitis stated that the town in general has a high water table, and with the Zuidema property being the lowest point the water will collect there. The

selectmen would like to determine if this is the town's problem, perhaps the Zuidema's perimeter drain is not functioning properly, and that coupled with an old stone foundation could be why the basement is flooding.

Mr. Filipkowski told Mrs. Zuidema that he can understand her frustration, but the town has been working to try to alleviate the situation. The town was there today to clean out the catch basins.

Mrs. Walter asked Mr. Jean if the new homes up on New Braintree Road were contributing to the water flow, and Mr. Jean acknowledged that water from the Oakham Road and New Braintree Road areas do run down behind those properties.

Mrs. Zuidema asked if Mr. Jean could put a berm in front of her driveway to divert the water, and Mr. Jean said that he could do that, but it would probably just send the water to the rear of the property. He offered to meet with the Zuidemas to discuss the problem and try to work together to find a solution.

2. A discussion of the annual fuel bids led to an agreement that the Highway Department will issue the bids for gasoline and diesel fuel in June of 2010 for FY2011. Mrs. Walter pointed out that the highway department does a lot of work for other town departments that may not be fully recognized; for instance the weekly trash pick-up at town buildings and facilities takes approximately 6 man hours per week. The time and money spent to monitor fuel usage for town vehicles, the cost to prepare monthly billing to those departments, and the cost to maintain and repair the fuel pumps all come from the highway department budget. Mr. Jean stated that he would like those items separated and detailed within his budget. Mrs. Walter and Mr. Filipkowski stated that they would like to find a way to compensate the highway department for services performed for other town departments, perhaps a manner similar to the indirect costs charged to the sewer and water departments.

3. The selectmen's office received a phone call over the weekend complaining about the condition of the bridge on Murphy Road. Mr. Jean reported that he rarely goes down that way, and didn't realize that the hole in the bridge was so big. His men have repaired the bridge for now, but it will need more work in the future.

4. The selectmen received an e-mail from Ruth Fogarty of Forest Street asking if the town could provide prior notice of street sweeping so cars could be moved. Mr. Jean stated that there are over 80 miles of road in North Brookfield, and he has been working shorthanded since Jim Brown was struck by a car over a year ago. He stated that he will think about a way that he could provide some notice of a general "window" of when work is to be done.

5. Mr. Petraitis read an e-mail from Building Inspector John Couture stating that the new parking place in front of the town offices does not meet the specifications necessary to be considered a handicapped parking place. Mr. Couture suggested a "Senior Citizen Parking" sign as an alternative. Mr. Jean will confer with Mr. Couture about this.

D. Mrs. Walter announced that there will be a budget forum on Thursday, June 4th at the elementary school. This will be an opportunity for town officials and the general public to ask questions and address any concerns about the town's FY09 and FY10 budgets.

E. Mr. Filipkowski announced that the North Brookfield Youth Center will be sponsoring their third annual road race on Saturday, June 13th. The cost is \$20 for adults and \$10 for children.

F. Mr. Petraitis announced that the selectmen will be observing a summer schedule after the June town meeting. The selectmen will have regular Tuesday night meetings on warrant weeks July 7th and 21st, and August 4th and 18th. On the non-warrant weeks, one member of the selectmen will be available at the senior center from 7 PM to 8 PM to meet with town residents. The dates for office hours will be June 30th, July 14th and 28th, and August 11th and 25th. In September the Board will resume regular weekly meetings.

III. NEW BUSINESS

A. Mrs. Walter read a letter from Marie Cormier resigning from animal inspector after 29 years. Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Filipkowski seconded, a motion to accept the resignation and to send a letter of thanks. So voted.

B. Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Filipkowski seconded, a motion to approve a request to transfer \$1,000 from the Worcester County Retirement account to the Collector's postage account. So voted.

Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Filipkowski seconded, a motion to approve the transfer of \$68.75 from the Selectmen's Advertising account to the Town House Repairs and Maintenance account. So voted.

C. Mr. Petraitis signed the EMS Service Zone Plan Application. Mr. Foyle's name was on the previous plan that gets filed with the state, and the plan needs to be updated with Mr. Petraitis listed as chairman.

D. Mr. Petraitis reviewed a request from the Water Department that the selectmen sign a contract with National Grid for an energy conservation program at the water plant. Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Filipkowski seconded, a motion to sign the contract. So voted.

E. Mr. Petraitis announced that there is a vacancy on the school committee, and any one interested in serving should contact a member of the selectmen or a member of the school committee.

F. Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Filipkowski seconded, a motion to accept the quarterly work plan for the highway department. So voted.

G. Mr. Petraitis read a hearing notice from the Planning Board regarding a public hearing on June 24th to amend or rescind the definitive plan for the Deer Run subdivision on Hillsville Road.

H. Mr. Petraitis announced that the Police Association is sponsoring a recycling day this Saturday, June 6th at the school.

I. Discussion on future items for the selectmen's agenda included a possible meeting with representatives of Bay Path Vocational School, progress reports from the Educational Task Force and the group compiling the town hall surveys, and recognitions from the selectmen to Jim Foyle, Sue Lewandowski, and Marie Cormier.

Mrs. Walter stated that the Finance Committee would like to know when the selectmen would like the final FY2010 budget recommendations from the Finance Committee. It was agreed that probably at the next selectmen's meeting would be the best time.

Mrs. Walter also suggested that the selectmen should work out a formula for the distribution of Holden Hospital Funds; for instance, an agreement to keep a certain percentage in reserve, and agreements on what percentage to allocate for emergency medical services, and how much for first responders such as the police and fire would receive. This would allow each department to know how much of each year's disbursement they would receive.

Eric Hevy reminded the selectmen that the ground-breaking ceremony for the new police station will be held Friday morning at 10AM.

There being no further business, Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Filipkowski seconded, a motion to adjourn at 8:50 PM. So voted.

Respectfully submitted,

Leslie Scott Burton
Administrative Assistant