

Minute Clarification - mfw
MINUTES OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING
SEPTEMBER 15, 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 approve the minutes of September 8, 2009 as amended. So voted.
- IA. Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Filipkowski seconded, a motion to approve school warrant #1010 for \$40,325.62, general warrant #1011 for \$654,535.34, and payroll warrant #6 for \$267,587.72. So voted.
- II. OLD BUSINESS
 - A. Mr. Petraitis noted that the selectmen have agreed not to trial having one non-camera meeting per month in response to citizen requests and called for a vote to rescind the trial agreement of September 1. Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Filipkowski seconded, a motion to rescind the vote of September 1, 2009 to implement non-camera nights on a trial basis. So voted.
 - B. Mr. Metcalf was not present.
 - C. Mrs. Walter presented an outline drawn up by West Brookfield selectman David Eisenthal, which was presented at the last regional selectmen's meeting. The regional group would like to begin the process of studying the creation of the Quaboag Council of Governments. One representative from each of the Brookfields and Warren will form a task force to study the concept of creating a COG. It is hoped that a COG would allow the towns to govern better and less expensively. Mr. Filipkowski noted that regionalizing a service my have the same cost, but provide a higher level of quality for all participants.

This will be discussed more at the next regional selectmen's meeting being held this Thursday, September 17 at the High School Kiva Room in North Brookfield at 6:30PM.
 - D. Police Chief Aram Thomasian was present to discuss his request to hire three additional part-time officers. The Chief noted that the October 15th retirement of Sergeant Doug Blood would only exacerbate the manpower shortage. The Chief stated that filling five shifts per week with part-timers would cost approximately \$490, and filling five

shifts per week with full-timers on overtime would cost \$1,200. At that rate the police overtime budget would be depleted **prior to** the end of the year. Mrs. Walter asked if the Chief were getting the hours from the part-time officers on the current list. The Chief responded that due to family and work obligations of the current part time officers, he was struggling to meet the current shift requirements and that after the retirement of Sergeant Blood there would be a need for five additional full time shifts. Mrs. Walter asked the Chief if he could hire the three officers and stay within his budget. The Chief stated that he could not promise that he could stay within his budget, and that it will take 4 – 6 weeks to hire, train, and equip these officers.

Mrs. Walter addressed Mr. Filipkowski regarding the possibility of hiring two part time officers now and reviewing the impact on force and the budget in January. Mr. Filipkowski noted that he would like to see the Chief hire two officers now, and then come back to discuss the hiring of a third a month or so after the training period with the intention of moving one of the officers to a regular part-time position. Mr. Petraitis asked if the Chief could hire one officer at a time. The chief stated that he would be willing to try that, but that would make the process longer and decrease the number of available hours.

The Selectmen agreed that the Chief could proceed with hiring two part time officers with a review in January barring any unforeseen circumstances. It was also agreed that the Chief needed to stay within his current budget.

The topic of hiring a full-time replacement for Sergeant Blood was not addressed.

Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Filipkowski seconded, a motion to approve he hiring of two additional part-time officers at less than **19 hours per week**. So voted.

E. Mr. Maher was not present. Mrs. Walter stated that she was unable to reach BOH Director, John Alphin. She stated that perhaps Mr. Maher would be willing to leave his conservation materials at the **Town Offices**, and discuss bringing them to the recycling center at a later date. **No further action was taken.**

III. NEW BUSINESS

A. Mrs. Walter read a letter from Planning Board Chairman John Nothardt asking that Carole Ryback be appointed as an alternate to the Board.

Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Filipkowski seconded, a motion to appoint Ms. **Ryback as an alternate to the Planning Board.** So voted.

B. North Brookfield Emergency Management Director Sergeant Douglas Blood introduced Chris Blood, Jeff Shimmelpennigh, and Betty Libby. These three residents have requested appointment to NBEMA. Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Filipkowski seconded, a motion to **appoint** Chris Blood, Jeff Shimmelpennigh, and Betty Libby **to the North Brookfield Emergency Management Agency.** So voted.

Bruce Desrosiers of Spencer could not attend, but Sergeant Blood will see if he can attend on another night.

C. Sue Lewandowski, chairman of the North Brookfield chapter of “Hearts for Heat,” introduced Tom Lewandowski, Joe Zegarra, Charlotte Hoogasian, Louise Bouchard, Ellen Smith, and Judy Manning. The selectmen presented awards to the group; **Mrs. Lewandowski had previously received a special plaque from the Selectmen at the Hearts for Heat Appreciation Breakfast on September 19.** Mrs. Lewandowski noted that last year the group raised \$11,000 to be distributed to North Brookfield residents who need help with their heating costs, and that they were starting this year with \$7,500 already collected. Bob LaFlamme and Patty Zegarra also received awards, but were not present.

E. The selectmen briefly discussed the need to hold a fall special town meeting.

Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Filipkowski seconded, a motion to tentatively set Friday, November 6, 2009 as the date for a special town meeting with articles to be submitted to the selectmen by September 25, 2009. So voted.

F. **The Board received a copy of a letter from** Julie McCarthy informing the Board that she will be taking a leave of absence from the Council on Aging until January. This type of leave is allowed by the COA by-laws. No action by the Board was deemed necessary.

F. Tim Hansen of CMRPC was present to discuss a CDBG application for the town, and how to best use the funds. Mr. Hansen reported that over the past two years student interns from CMRPC conducted a survey of the center of town and inventoried the condition of homes, **roads, sidewalks, and infrastructure.** In order to qualify for a block grant, the town must meet one of three national objectives: benefit to persons of low to moderate income, prevention of slum and blight, or urgent need. The downtown and surrounding areas fall under the second criteria, prevention of slum and blight. At least 25% of the properties in the target area must be in fair to poor condition, in North Brookfield

approximately 49% meet this condition. The selectmen need to send a letter to the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) declaring that this area meets the criteria for slum and blight. This declaration is good for 10 years. Mr. Hansen will draft this letter to DHCD asking for approval of this designation. The letter needs to be received before a block grant application **can be** submitted.

Mr. Filipkowski asked, “**W**hat is the benefit of doing a block grant?” Mr. Hansen replied that in addition to infrastructure improvements the town could do storefront improvements, sidewalk improvements, or housing programs. Some of the ideas previously discussed include the repair of water lines on Maple Street, the alleviation of flooding in parts of the **designated area** and the renovation of the Nash Building for **affordable housing and office space**.

G. Five representatives of Junior Girl Scout troop #30477 came before the Board to be recognized for their achievement of the Bronze Award. Their Scout Leader and her Assistant accompanied them. The Junior Scouts explained the various requirements for earning a Bronze award, which requires working with the Brownies to help them earn a badge and setting everything up that is needed. The major project chosen was an Appreciation Dinner for people in their lives who help them and that they are thankful for. The Junior Scouts made all of the arrangements and did all of the cooking for eighty people. They were very proud of their success. The selectmen congratulated the Junior Scouts and their leaders for coming and sharing this experience.

H. The selectmen received a memo from Kopelman and Paige regarding recent changes to the Conflict of Interest Law, and the need to appoint a liaison with the state ethics commission. The selectmen will discuss this next week after they have had a chance to review the material.

IV. ANNOUNCEMENTS

A. Mr. Petraitis announced that the town would hold a tax title auction at 11 AM on October 15th at the library. There are 7 parcels to be auctioned.

B. Mrs. Walter announced that the retirement party for Sergeant Douglas Blood would be held on October 16th at the Spencer Country Inn. Tickets are \$35.

C. Mr. Filipkowski noted that a flu clinic for the seasonal flu, not the H1N1, would be held on November 17th at the Senior Center.

D. Mr. Petraitis noted that there would be a meeting of Town Officials on September 24th to discuss the anticipated spending and encumbrance reports. The meeting will be held in the Kiva room of the high school

E. Mrs. Walter announced that any one who would like to participate in the September 2010 Quaboag 350th Anniversary parade must sign up by the end of this month. Contact is Madaline Arn on madaline.arn@state.ma.us .

F. Mr. Filipkowski read an email from School Committee Chairman Jeff Hicks asking for help raising \$4,000 to install a flagpole near the front of the school complex.

At 8:20 PM Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Filipkowski seconded, a motion to enter executive session for the purpose of conducting contract negotiations with the police chief. Roll call: Petraitis, yes; Walter, yes; Filipkowski, yes. So voted. Mr. Petraitis announced that the Board would exit executive session only to adjourn.

At 9:15 PM the Board came out of executive session. Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Filipkowski seconded, a motion to adjourn. So voted.

Respectfully submitted,

Leslie Scott Burton
Administrative Assistant