

MINUTES OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING DECEMBER 7, 2009

Chairman Petraitis called the meeting to order in the Senior Center at 7 PM with all members present. Mr. Petraitis asked for a moment of silence in memory of those who lost their lives at Pearl Harbor, and also for the men and women currently fighting for our country overseas.

I. Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Filipkowski seconded, a motion to approve the minutes of November 24th and December 1st as written. So voted. Mrs. Walter noted that in the executive session minutes of November 17th, both she and Mr. Filipkowski had made the comment that a letter received by the Board contained measures of performance for town officials. Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Filipkowski seconded, a motion to approve the executive session minutes from November 24th and December 1st as written, and the executive session minutes of November 17th as amended. So voted.

IA. Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Filipkowski seconded, a motion to approve school warrant #1026 for \$26,041.38, general warrant #1027 for \$287,491.97, and payroll warrant #12 for \$293,986.76. So voted.

II. OLD BUSINESS

A. Kim Dodge came back to speak with the selectmen regarding her request for a Common Victualler's license for Fenders Auto Detailing at 322 North Main Street. When Ms. Dodge first came before the selectmen two weeks ago, the selectmen requested two weeks to review all of the relevant information. Mr. Petraitis noted that he has received information from the Planning Board, from the Building Inspector, and from the Board of Health. According to the information Mr. Petraitis has received, Ms. Dodge has not applied for a food permit from the Board of Health, the Building Inspector has not signed off on her occupancy permit, and she has not complied with the conditions of the Special Permit that was issued by the Planning Board.

Steve Cummings, vice-chairman of the Planning Board, stated that he has reviewed that board's minutes, and that they were very specific as to the intent of what Ms. Dodge could or could not do on the premises. She was given permission for activities related to auto detailing; she did not apply for, nor did she receive, permission for a café. The minutes state that "no cooking or serving of food" is to take place. Mr. Cummings offered that if Ms. Dodge was not clear on those conditions, she could come back to the Planning Board and they would explain them to her.

Ms. Dodge asked Mr. Cummings to read from the Special Permit where it states that she is able to have up to two vending machines, to which Mr. Cummings agreed that the permit does allow that.

Mr. Petraitis reiterated to Ms. Dodge that she does not have an occupancy permit, and she does not have a food permit from the Board of Health. Also, she is not in compliance with the terms of the Special Permit that was issued by the Planning Board as they relate to the condition of the parking lot. Mr. Petraitis told Ms. Dodge that the Building Inspector is in his office this evening, and that she could speak with him at his office.

Ms. Dodge stated that she has spoken to Attorney Gary Brackett, and that he would now be representing her.

B. Mrs. Walter explained that the Chambers Advisory Group has reviewed the town's telephone service and have made some recommendations that could save the town money. The recommendations included having Chambers contact Verizon to change the pricing on the town POTS line to 24 month pricing, having Chambers seek a refund of overcharges for voicemail and Caller ID from Verizon, and to work with Chambers to see if any lines can be eliminated. The Chambers Group would receive 50% of any savings during the first year.

Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Filipkowski seconded, a motion to accept the recommendations of the Chambers Group. So voted.

C. Mr. Petraitis noted that Senior Center Director Louise Bouchard has approached him asking for permission to advertise for an outreach worker to replace Barbara Harrington, who has resigned. As the town currently has a hiring freeze in place, Mr. Petraitis noted that this would be a good opportunity for the selectmen to better understand how the various departments operate.

Mrs. Walter stated that this position was originally funded by a grant, and has gradually shifted to a town-paid position. She believes that the selectmen need to assess the current level of work needed. Mr. Filipkowski agreed that the selectmen should conduct a needs analysis before making any decisions.

Mr. Petraitis also noted that he would like to see a member of the selectmen serve as an ex-officio member of the Council on Aging.

It was agreed to ask the Council on Aging to attend a meeting with the selectmen next Tuesday at 6:30 PM to discuss this.

III. NEW BUSINESS

A. Bob Locatelli of 96 Ward Street sent an e-mail requesting appointment to the Conservation Commission. He has already attended a meeting and met with the members. Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Filipkowski seconded, a motion to appoint Mr. Locatelli. So voted.

B. Mrs. Walter read a letter from Senior Center Director Louise Bouchard requesting a one-day beer and wine permit for the COA's annual holiday dinner on December 10th from 6 PM to 10 PM. Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Filipkowski seconded, a motion to grant the permit. So voted.

C. Mr. Filipkowski reviewed a contract from Hampshire Power to provide electricity to the Water Department at a reduced rate. Mr. Filipkowski noted that the selectmen recently signed a contract with Hampshire Power for the town's street lighting and other electric accounts, and this will provide the Water Department with savings as well. Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Filipkowski seconded, a motion to approve and sign the contract. So voted.

D. Mrs. Walter read a letter signed by several residents near Old West Brookfield Road complaining about road conditions caused by the farm owned by Janet Edwards. The letter was also sent to the Chief of Police. The residents complained about cow manure making the road slippery and damaging their vehicles. They also complained that the road was very narrow and winding near the farm.

Steve Cummings lives nearby on Ayers Street, stated that Old West Brookfield Road hasn't changed much in his 50 years, the farm has always been there, and it has always been a very narrow road.

Mrs. Walter wondered if the town had an easement on any property there that could be used to create a shoulder on the road.

Mr. Petraitis stated that he would like the Board to take the letter under advisement in order to see what can be done about the situation.

E. Mr. Filipkowski read a letter from the New Braintree Board of Selectmen asking the selectmen in North Brookfield and in Barre if they would like to share the cost of engineering the reclamation/reconstruction of Route 67 under the state's Transportation Improvement Program.

Mrs. Walter noted that the selectmen need more information on this; does the town own its portion of Route 67? She stated that the selectmen should contact Highway Superintendent Gary Jean and see if he has any information on the TIP program.

Mr. Petraitis stated that if Mr. Jean does not have more information, the selectmen could send a letter back to New Braintree asking for more information.

F. Mr. Petraitis reviewed an e-mail from Eric Hevy, co-chairman of the Police Building Committee asking for permission to use the town seal on the new police station. The replica would be cast aluminum approximately 30" in diameter, and would hang over the main entrance to the building. Mrs. Walter noted that the selectmen need to do some research on the protocol on using the town seal. Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Filipkowski seconded, a motion to approve the use of the town seal, pending discussion with Town Historian Mr. Caille on the proper protocol. So voted.

IV. ANNOUNCEMENTS

A. Mr. Petraitis encouraged residents to come out and vote in the state primary election tomorrow, from 7 AM to 8 PM in the Senior Center.

There being no further business, Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Filipkowski seconded, a motion to adjourn at 7:45 PM. So voted.

Respectfully submitted,

Leslie Scott Burton
Administrative Assistant