

MINUTES OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING JANUARY 19, 2010

Chairman Petraitis called the meeting to order in the selectmen's office at 215 North Main Street at 7 PM with all members present.

I. Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Filipkowski seconded, a motion to approve the minutes of January 12, 2010. So voted. Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Filipkowski seconded, a motion to approve the January 12, 2010 executive session minutes. So voted.

IA. Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Filipkowski seconded, a motion to approve school warrant #1036 for \$90,840.82, general warrant #1037 for \$299,811.11, and payroll warrant #15 for \$270,262.69. So voted.

II. OLD BUSINESS

A. Highway Superintendent Gary Jean was not able to be present because of today's snowstorm. This item discussing Route 67 and Mr. Jean's request for overtime pay will be tabled until next week.

B. Mrs. Walter read a letter from the Brookfield Council on Aging asking about the status of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between North Brookfield and Brookfield regarding the outreach worker. Brookfield has been unable to locate a copy of this MOU, so Leslie has asked COA Director Louise Bouchard to provide a copy. Mr. Petraitis noted that the selectmen will take this item under advisement until they have more information.

C. Mr. Petraitis noted that the selectmen have postponed a planned walk of property on Bates Street that was schedule for January 23rd until January 30th at 2 PM. Mr. Filipkowski noted that he won't be there until 2:15 because of a prior commitment.

III. NEW BUSINESS

A. Water Superintendent Steve Jones was present with Water Commissioners Tim Nason and Jim Kularski to update the selectmen on the status of the Horse Pond Dam repair project. Also present was project manager Scott Charpentier of Lenard Engineering. The Commissioners reported that the previous cost estimate of \$850,000.00 has risen to \$1.2 million. Mr. Charpentier noted that the Water Commissioners made several changes to the project specifications in an effort to keep the costs down.

Mr. Charpentier stated that the town has already received three extensions from the Office of Dam Safety because there is progress being made. If the town fails to repair the dam as ordered, the town could be subject to fines up to \$500 per day.

Mr. Charpentier reported that the project has been through an environmental review, and must now go to the state Office of Dam Safety for permitting. Included in the project cost is an estimated \$55,000.00 for wetlands replication.

A pre-application has been submitted to USDA. There is a potential for a 30% to 40% grant if the project is financed with USDA. The final application cannot be sent to USDA until the town approves the financing, however.

Mr. Charpentier noted that a diver was hired to inspect the gate below the gatehouse on Oakham Road and found that it is not operable.

Mr. Jones stated that this is the final design and the final cost estimate. The total construction, engineering and permitting cost is \$1,223,061.00. Mr. Charpentier noted that the town should include an additional \$10,000.00 to \$15,000.00 for legal expenses and borrowing costs.

Mr. Jones and the board discussed the need for a Proposition 2 ½ debt exclusion vote, which will require passage at an election and a town meeting.

On a different topic, Mr. Petraitis stated that the Water Commissioners had previously inquired about hiring another worker. Mr. Petraitis asked that they consider hiring a person who could be cross-trained with the sewer or highway departments in an effort to save money for the town.

B. Mrs. Walter reviewed a letter from the Sewer Commissioners asking for a withdrawal of \$32,000 from the sewer retained earning account to cover the costs of chemicals and solid waste removal. The commissioners cited more than anticipated sludge processing in order to meet EPA permit levels, increased chemical dosing to meet the EPA permit levels, the cost of processing more septage than anticipated, and the 10% budget cuts forced by the selectmen and finance committee as reasons for the additional costs.

IV. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Petraitis noted that North Brookfield School Committee has agreed to participate in the "Race to the Top" program, a state funded grant to schools that uses federal stimulus funds. Any new positions or programs that are begun with these stimulus funds must be continued.

Mr. Filipkowski stated that this program is not a windfall for the town, there will be a cost to the taxpayers.

Mrs. Walter noted that she would like to get more information on this and discuss it again. Mr. Filipkowski noted that he would like to discuss it with the school superintendent and the school committee.

A. Mr. Filipkowski announced that Hearts for Heat will be holding a spaghetti supper and movie night on January 23rd at the elementary school. The cost for the dinner is \$7 per person, with a family maximum of \$20, and the movie is free.

Mr. Filipkowski thanked all of the town departments that worked at last week's H1N1 flu clinic; John Alphin and the Board of Health, School Superintendent Erin Nosek, and the members of the North Brookfield Emergency Management Agency.

At 7:50 PM Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Filipkowski seconded, a motion to enter executive session for the purpose of discussing contract negotiations. Roll call: Petraitis, yes; Walter, yes; Filipkowski, yes. So voted. Mr. Petraitis announced that the Board would exit executive session only to adjourn.

At 8:05 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