

MINUTES OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING DECEMBER 20, 2011

Chairman Walter called the meeting to order in the Senior Center at 7:05 PM with Mr. Petraitis and Mr. Chabot also present. Mrs. Walter reminded those in attendance that the meeting was being both audio and video taped.

I. Mr. Petraitis moved, and Mr. Chabot seconded, a motion to approve the minutes of December 6, 2011 as written. So voted. Mr. Petraitis moved, and Mr. Chabot seconded, a motion to approve the Executive Session minutes of December 6, 2011 as written. So voted.

Mrs. Walter stated that she needed to make a clarification of the December 12, 2011 minutes in regards to collective bargaining. Mr. Petraitis stated that he would be fine with postponing approval of those minutes to the next meeting, as Mr. Chabot did not attend the meeting on the 12th.

IA. Mr. Petraitis moved, and Mr. Chabot seconded, a motion to approve School Warrant #1032 for \$98,210.14, General Warrant #1033 for \$124,641.56, and Payroll Warrant #13 for \$275,901.99. So voted.

IB. There was no one present for the public comment period.

II. OLD BUSINESS

A. Mr. Petraitis read a letter from Town Counsel Brian Riley regarding a bylaw proposed by Mr. Petraitis that would require the School Committee to notify the Board of Selectmen about labor contract negotiations. (Attachment #1) Mr. Riley stated that in his opinion, that would be a valid by-law. However, Mr. Riley also stated that the proposed requirement that the Chairman of the Board of Selectmen preside over those negotiations would most likely be deemed not proper. Mr. Petraitis moved, and Mr. Chabot seconded, a motion to put this by-law on the next town meeting. So voted.

B. Julie McCarthy and Trish Miller of the Friends of the Town House were present to ask the Selectmen to sign a letter to the Secretary of the Commonwealth (Attachment #2) requesting emergency funding for the Town House. Mr. Chabot reviewed the letter, and moved, and Mr. Petraitis seconded, a motion to approve and sign the letter. So voted.

III. NEW BUSINESS

A. Mrs. Walter reviewed a letter from the Brookfield Board of Selectmen asking if the Town of North Brookfield would be interested in purchasing 11 acres

of land at the Cooley Hill Reservoir located in North Brookfield. (Attachment #3) The Town of Brookfield no longer uses the reservoir, and would like to sell it. The reservoir has a three acre earthen dam that is leaking, and the state Office of Dam Safety has indicated that the cost to inspect and repair the dam could be substantial. Mr. Petraitis noted that the letter should be forwarded to the Planning Board, Conservation Commission, and Water Departments to determine whether or not they may be interested. The Selectmen noted that North Brookfield already has a problem with the Horse Pond Dam, and does not need to take on another project of that scope.

B. The Selectmen reviewed applications for appointment to the North Brookfield Emergency Management Agency for Brad Tuttle, Shaun Adams, Brenda Lacaire, and Lorell Trimby. (Available in the Selectmen's office) Mr. Petraitis moved, and Mr. Chabot seconded, a motion to appoint all four. So voted.

C. Mrs. Walter reviewed a letter from Margaret Munns, the owner of 193 Main Street, complaining about a lack of on-street parking for her tenants. (Attachment #4) Mr. Petraitis stated that he believes the tenants should be provided off-street parking by the landlord. Mrs. Walter suggested that perhaps the Planning Board and Building Inspector can come up with a solution. She will review the parking regulations for the downtown overlay district, but in the meantime, the Selectmen will see what they can do.

D. The Selectmen reviewed a letter from MEGA, the Town's former insurer. (Attachment #5) The letter noted that over the past few years, "MEGA has experienced considerable unforeseen claims that have substantially reduced their reserves." MEGA is asking for an additional \$2,855.66 in worker's compensation premiums for FY2007. Leslie reported that she has spoken with Town Counsel, who is of the opinion that because North Brookfield was a member of this self-insured consortium in FY2007, we must pay this amount. Mr. Petraitis moved, and Mr. Chabot seconded, a motion to pay off this amount at the end of the year if possible, or else include it in next year's budget. So voted.

E. Mrs. Walter reviewed a letter from Marilyn Travinski, the Executive Director of Tri-Valley, Inc. (Attachment #6) Ms. Travinski reported that North Brookfield received \$56,042.58 in services from Tri-Valley for our seniors. Tri-Valley is asking for a voluntary donation of \$861.00, which is \$1 per senior. Mr. Petraitis suggested that the Selectmen talk with the Friends of the Senior Center to see if they would be able to fund this, and if they can't do it the Selectmen and Finance Committee should find a way to fund it in next year's budget. Mr. Petraitis moved, and Mr. Chabot seconded, a motion to forward the letter to the Friends to see if they are able to come up with some funds. So voted.

F. Mrs. Walter reported that she and Finance Committee chairman Bob Smith are almost finished figuring out raises for town employees. This has been

difficult because some departments have received raises over the past four years, and others did not. She noted that in speaking with the School Department, it looks like February 3rd is the first date available for a town meeting. Mr. Petraitis moved, and Mr. Chabot seconded, a motion to set Friday, February 3, 2012 at 7 PM as the time and date for a Special Town Meeting. So voted.

G. Mrs. Walter noted that the Elementary School roof has been on the Capital Improvement Planning list since 2008. She noted that this was 25 year roof, and is coming up on the end of its lifespan. The CIP committee would like to see this done soon, rather than waiting for the roof to start leaking.

Mrs. Walter presented a draft Statement of Interest to the Massachusetts School Building Assistance Authority (MSBA) for funding for this project, and if approved by the MSBA, the Town would then submit an application. (Attachment #7) She noted that the new roof could possibly be designed to hold solar panels in the future.

Mr. Petraitis stated that he believes in maintenance before something becomes a problem, and asked if the Selectmen were saying that they just want to look into this for now? Mrs. Walter said yes, for now this is just preliminary information.

Mr. Petraitis moved, and Mr. Chabot seconded, a motion to approve the Statement of Interest. So voted.

IV. ANNOUNCEMENTS

A. Mr. Petraitis announced that the North Brookfield Bicentennial Calendars have arrived. They are \$10 and available in the Town Clerk's office.

B. Mr. Chabot announced that fishing permits for Horse Pond will be increasing in price effective July 1, 2012 from \$5 to \$10.

C. Mrs. Walter read an e-mail from Michelle Petraitis, treasurer of Hearts for Heat, thanking everyone who has supported the organization for the past two years. (Attachment #8) She also reminded everyone that applications for assistance are available at the Senior Center and the Haston Library.

V. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

A. Mr. Eric Weiss from Hampshire Power will be coming to speak at the January 3rd meeting regarding solar power.

Mr. Chabot suggested that the Town try selling the surplus fire truck on e-bay.

At 7:55 PM Mr. Petraitis moved, and Mr. Chabot seconded, a motion to enter Executive Session to discuss strategy related to collective bargaining, and to discuss strategy related to litigation, because an open session may have a detrimental effect on the Town's negotiating position. Roll call: Walter, yes; Petraitis, yes; Chabot, yes. So voted.

At 8:30 PM the Board came out of Executive Session. Mr. Petraitis moved, and Mr. Chabot seconded, a motion to adjourn. So voted.

Respectfully submitted,

Leslie Scott Burton
Administrative Assistant