

TOWN OF NORTH BROOKFIELD

MASSACHUSETTS 01535

OFFICE OF THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN

MEETING NOTICE

SEPTEMBER 30, 2014 @ 6:00 PM+++

SENIOR CENTER, 29 FOREST STREET

MINUTES

Call to order: Chairman Smith called the meeting to order at 6:00PM followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Attendees: Selectmen: Robert Smith, Mary Walter and Eric Hevy

Public: Mr. and Mrs. Charles Marshall

CHAIR'S OPENING REMARKS: Chairman Smith announced that the meeting was being both audio and video recorded.

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a. Approval of Minutes August 5, 2014

Without discussion a motion was made by Mary Walter and seconded by Eric Hevy to approve the minutes. So voted unanimously.

b. Approval of Minutes September 15, 2014

Chairman Smith stated that the minutes of September 15 would be deferred until the October 7 meeting.

c. Approval of Minutes September 22, 2014

Without discussion a motion was made by Mary Walter and seconded by Eric Hevy to approve the minutes. So voted unanimously.

d. Approval of Minutes September 23, 2014

Chairman Smith stated that these minutes included the repetition of the agenda for September 16 meeting where all actions of the meeting were rescinded and agenda items discussed to resolve the issue of the inadvertent failure to post the September 16 meeting.

A motion was made by Mary Walter and seconded by Eric Hevy to approve the minutes. So voted unanimously.

II. APPROVAL OF WARRANTS –

The Chairman stated that there were no warrants to be approved for this meeting.

III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

- a. Public has a brief opportunity to discuss items on the agenda through the BOS Chair.

The Chairman announced that public has the opportunity to discuss items on this agenda through the Chair, and asked if Mr. or Mrs. Marshall would like to discuss anything. They declined participation.

IV. FINANCIAL REPORT

- a. FY15 Budget Deficit Update

Chairman Smith opened the discussion stating that there was very little to report, but that some headway had been made by the Town Accountant who had identified increases in locally generated revenue over projections in some departments. He

further stated that this was not a large amount of money that it was sufficient to cover the cost of some of the article requests on the October 24 Special Town Meeting. In addition a change in the contract that will provide ALS service through North Brookfield Emergency Services, which will amount to about \$17,000.00. The budget deficit is still around \$370,000.00 less the above amounts. The Town is awaiting notification from the Department of Revenue of the amount certified for Free Cash. That notification is expected this week. The Selectmen continue review current budgets looking for further cuts to help reduce the deficit.

Chairman Smith thanked the Assessors for their hard work on the “New Growth” figure, which is anticipated to be an increase over initial projections. The hard work of the Town Treasurer and the Accountant was also recognized as being appreciated. Mrs. Walter stated that she wanted to sensitize the people to the difficulty of finding \$370,000.00 to balance the budget, and that there are not a lot of ways to balance the budget in the current predicament.

V. OLD BUSINESS

a. DISCUSSION

i. Departmental/Committee Reports

Chairman Smith stated that there were no Departmental or Committee reports for this meeting.

ii. Financial Reports from the Town Accountant (Monthly)

Chairman Smith stated that there were no financial reports for this meeting and he anticipated that they would begin with the next meeting.

Selectman Hevy asked which reports the Chairman would like to be quarterly or monthly. Chairman Smith stated that Departmental/Committee reports, when they have been received, have been quarterly, but Financial reports are done monthly for the department and would be formatted like an existing financial report which would have all of the budget information for a every department so that rate of spending and problems could be easily identified. These reports should be monthly, or when determined to be important by the Town Accountant. Selectman Walter commented that the Budget information is provided by the Town Accountant to all departments at the end of the month and that if a full set of this information were copied and submitted to the Selectmen it could accomplish what is being attempted without duplicating efforts. Selectman Smith stated that he preferred a simplified format and explained that he preferred the standard based on the "bible" version budget report used during the budget process. Selectmen Walter commented that this was good but was extra work for the Town Accountant. Selectman Smith stated that he would discuss this with the Town Accountant. Selectman Hevy interjected that he gets a set of reports from the Town Accountant, but that he was not sure if they were the same reports that were currently being discussed.

It was confirmed by the Chairman that they were. Selectman Hevy stated that he just wanted to be assured that we were all looking at the same information.

Mr. Smith asked again for thoughts on the timing of Departmental reports monthly? Quarterly? Semi-annually? Selectman Walter suggested quarterly. Selectman Hevy asked what was meant by “departmental” Police? Fire? Sewer? Selectman Smith stated that Police submits a monthly report and Selectman Walter stated that Fire used to be monthly. Selectman Hevy stated that he wanted to get back to the monthly reports to get some communication going. He also asked if Water and Sewer did reports. Selectman Walter stated that they submit their monthly meeting minutes and that they are posted on the Town website. Selectman Hevy also suggested reports from the Playground and Lake Committees.

Selectman Smith stated that there is no reason that we can’t have a representative of the departments come at different times and give an update so that the Selectman know what they are doing.

Selectman Hevy suggested Police, Fire and Highway for monthly reports.

Selectman Walter asked for clarification on why these reports were also mentioned in Section VII of this agenda.

Mr. Hevy stated a clarification that in Section V.a. the purpose is discussion of the reports at this meeting, while Section VII. Is the actual presentation of the reports.

Selectman Smith asked if we would invite the Committees, and how would they know. Selectman Hevy stated that he did not want to do this all at once. He stated that he wanted to define the reports that we would like to see on a monthly basis and then define a few that we want to see on a quarterly basis and then start to roll it out on a gradual basis to provide updates to the Community.

Selectman Smith suggested the Insurance Advisory Committee as a candidate for more updates during their review of employee insurance benefits, and agreed with Selectman Hevy's suggestion of the Playground Committee.

For next week's meeting two Departments, Police and Fire, will be send a memo to provide a monthly report. It was decided that it is not necessary to have a member of the department present as previously suggested.

b. VOTE

i. October 24, 2014 STM Articles (Attachment #1)

The results of the reading and discussion of the Articles for the meeting were based on a draft of the Warrant dated 09/25/14 as follows:

Article 1. Selectmen Walter questioned the use of the word “sufficient” in this article. She stated that such an article is usually worded “a sum of money”. It was agreed to question the wording.

Selectman Walter moved and Selectmen Hevy seconded a motion to approve the article for the warrant. So voted unanimously.

Article 2. Chairman Smith commented that the article was the result of a shortage in the Group insurance account based on the final FY15 Cherry Sheet making it necessary to rescind a sum of money from the Group Insurance Account voted on June 20, 2014 and to vote to transfer available funds in the Tax Title account to the Group Insurance account to balance the shortage in the account.

Selectman Walter moved and Selectmen Hevy seconded a motion to approve the article for the warrant with the amendment. So voted unanimously.

Article 3. Chairman Smith explained that the purpose of the article was to apply loan premiums to specified loan payments giving us greater liquidity while reducing the deficit. Mrs. Walter commented that Jr/Sr should be followed by “High School”.

Selectman Walter moved and Selectmen Hevy seconded a motion to approve the article as amended for the warrant. So voted unanimously.

Article 4.

Selectman Walter moved and Selectmen Hevy seconded a motion to approve the article for the warrant. So voted unanimously.

Article 5. Selectman Walter explained that the promotion of the Board of Health clerk had to occur prior to the increase in salary.

The Board of Health approved the clerk's new job description, but did not follow through on the upgrade of the job classification.

It was agreed that the upgrade would be done for the FY 16 budget and that the article should be withdrawn from the warrant.

Selectman Walter moved and Selectmen Hevy seconded a motion to withdraw the article from the warrant. So voted unanimously.

Article 6. (New Article 5)

Chairman Smith reiterated that all items being appropriated in the articles for this meeting have funds available to cover their cost without adding to the current deficit. Selectmen Walter suggested checking that the Collector was included in

the Town's vote to accept the provisions of the law relative to this article.

Selectman Walter moved and Selectmen Hevy seconded a motion to approve the article for the warrant. So voted unanimously.

Article 7. (New Article 6)

Chairman Smith indicated that there is no law that relates to this article, but that the Town Accountant has been certified for 30 years. This item was cut from the budget last year with a commitment to revisit it this year.

Selectman Walter moved and Selectmen Hevy seconded a motion to approve the article for the warrant. So voted unanimously.

Article 8. (New Article 7) (Attachment #2)

There was a brief discussion of the removal of the old tanks and clarification of the location of the new tank. This article only covers the cost of the installation of the new tank.

Selectman Walter moved and Selectmen Hevy seconded a motion to approve the article for the warrant. So voted unanimously.

Article 9. (New Article 8)

Selectman Walter moved and Selectmen Hevy seconded a motion to approve the article for the warrant. So voted unanimously.

Article 10. (New Article 9)

Selectman Walter moved and Selectmen Hevy seconded a motion to approve the article for the warrant. So voted unanimously.

Article 11. (New Article 10)

Selectman Walter moved and Selectmen Hevy seconded a motion to approve the article for the warrant. So voted unanimously.

Article 12. (New Article 11)

Selectman Walter moved and Selectmen Hevy seconded a motion to approve the article for the warrant. So voted unanimously.

Article 13. (New Article 12)

Selectman Walter moved and Selectmen Hevy seconded a motion to approve the article for the warrant as recommended by the Planning Board. So voted unanimously.

Article 14. (New Article 13) (Attachments # 3 and 4)

Selectman Walter moved and Selectmen Hevy seconded a motion to approve the article for the warrant. So voted unanimously.

Selectman Walter suggested that some additional information could be provided to help the public understand

the tax impact of the purchase of two cruisers. The tax impact is for one year and increases the tax rate \$.21 for all tax payers. After one year the tax rate is reduced by \$.21. Chairman Smith stated that for the average home assessment (\$203,262.00) for one year the Assessment is \$3.73 per month or \$.86 per week. This type of exclusion is called a Capital exclusion. Chairman Smith further explained that this is not like a debt exclusion which is multiple years while the project is paid off, or an override, which is a permanent increase in taxes.

ii. Anticipated spending and budget encumbrance forms
(Attachment # 5 and 6)

Chairman Smith opened the discussion related to the forms to be used to monitor budget discretionary spending for all Departments. He also mentioned that a letter was sent to School Committee Chairman Michael Kiszka with a copy to Superintendent Tencza requesting their cooperation in observing a freeze on discretionary spending. The Selectmen were invited to a meeting on Monday October 5 with the School Committee to discuss this subject.

There was a brief discussion on the forms and guidelines for the spending freeze.

Selectmen Walter moved and Selectmen Hevy seconded a motion to implement the forms as well as the guidelines with modification to the dates. So voted unanimously.

iii. Proposal from Two Way Radio Services (Attachment #7)

Chairman Smith recalled that a request from the North Brookfield Water Department for guidance from the Board for the installation of a radio antenna to improve the ability of AA Transportation School Bus drivers to communicate with AA and public safety agencies throughout the Town. A representative of Two Way Radio Services gave a brief explanation of the project and indicated that he would send a proposal/contract for review. Chairman Smith stated that he had no issues with the installation of the antenna and appreciated the description of the work in the proposal response, however there was no mention of AA Transportation Company's responsibility for the cost of the installation or future maintenance of the antenna. Selectmen Hevy stated that we should contact AA Transportation and get a letter from them stating that they would pay for the installation and maintenance of the antenna and also ask for our approval. There was agreement that this should be done.

c. PENDING INFORMATION

Chairman Smith asked Selectmen Hevy to explain this section of the new agenda format. Selectmen Hevy stated that this is the information that keeps items that we have talked about in the past and we are still waiting for additional information in order to make decisions on them. He used the example of the Beaver issues at the landfill.

If there is to be a discussion on something due to new information it would then be moved to the “Discussion” section of the agenda.

i. Beaver Issues

Selectmen Walter stated that the Board of Health was beginning the project for removing the dams from their own budget, and that twelve beavers had been previously removed from the landfill location, also paid for by from the Board of Health budget.

It was mentioned that this category should include Beavers at Brickyard, Tucker and Murphy Roads.

ii. Town House Project

- Will be on the agenda on October 7th
- The Board has been in contact with the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development regarding the contract that was received during this week.

This is not a capital project it is a project in the State FY15 Operating Budget, and the money has to be spent by June 30, 2015. A meeting is anticipated with the Friends of the Town House.

Chairman Smith stated that he wanted this subject on the October 7TH meeting Agenda.

iii. Murphy Road Bridge Project

The Chairman signed the letter to MassWorks requesting an extension of the contract for the project from December 31,

2014 to June 30, 2015 which was voted and approved at the September 16/23rd meetings.

Chairman Smith asked if there was anything else in this section which should be discussed. There was no further discussion.

- iv. Solterra Agreement - no discussion
- v. NBDDP - no discussion
- vi. CDBG Infrastructure Study - no discussion

VI. NEW BUSINESS

a. INTRODUCTION

Common Victualer permit for North Brookfield Pizza

Michelle Perritt appeared before the Board as the new owner of North Brookfield Pizza and presented her Certificate from the Board of Health and her Business License issued by the Town Clerk satisfying the requirement for the issuance of the Common Victualer License.

Selectman Walter moved and Selectmen Hevy seconded a motion to approve the Common Victualer License for Michelle Perritt for North Brookfield Pizza.

Trees at 61 Gilbert Street

There was a brief discussion of trees at 61 Gilbert Street that the owner claims were affected by storm water issues from infrastructure blockage and disruption by tree roots. Mrs. Walter commented that there are innumerable possible causes for the decline of the trees. She also stated that the estimate made by the Highway Superintendent regarding the cost of the project was proving to be very accurate.

We are waiting for additional information from two tree experts, both of whom have very busy schedules. Chairman Smith asked if we had an estimate on removal of the trees. Selectman Walter stated that the cost has been estimated, but has not been confirmed, and therefore should not be quoted at this time. Chairman Smith closed the discussion with a summary of the project that is underway to determine permanent solutions to the storm water and drinking water infrastructure problems.

VII. DEPARTMENT/COMMITTEE REPORTS

- Monthly
 - a. Police – None
 - b. Fire – None
 - c. Sewer – None
 - d. Water – None
 - e. Highway - None
- Quarterly
 - a. Cable Advisory Committee – None

VIII. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- a. NB Cultural Council Seeks Grant Proposals (Attachment #8)
Read by Selectman Hevy
- b. Regional Household Hazardous Waste Day (Attachment #9)
Not read. Event was on the 27th of September.
Chairman Smith thanked the Board of Health for this important service to the Community.
- c. Hydrant Flushing (Attachment #10)
Selectman Hevy read the announcement.
- d. Public Forum to be held October 9th (Attachment #11)
Selectman Walter read the press release relative to a public forum relative to the CDGB Infrastructure Planning project.
Claudette Marshall addressed the Chair with a question regarding the infrastructure carrying the Forget Me Not Brook by pipe infrastructure behind the homes of residents of Gilbert Street.
Selectmen Walter provided the contact information to the Mr. and Mrs. Marshall so that they could contact the engineers directly with their question.
- e. Email from Mr. and Mrs. Dennis Trela e-mail (Attachment #12)
Chairman Smith addressed an email sent by Mr. and Mrs. Dennis Trela apologizing for not mentioning the dance sponsored by the Friends of the Town House and the North Brookfield Historical Society as part of the celebration of the 150th birthday of the Town House. The Dance was held at the North Brookfield Sportsmen's Club and had about 100 participants. Chairman Smith sincerely thanked Mr. and Mrs. Trela for organizing this very popular event.

IX. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- a. Finance Committee Recommendation - Town Manager
Chairman Smith suggested that the Board invite a representative of the consulting firm to a meeting to give a presentation. Selectman Walter moved and Selectmen Hevy seconded a motion to contact the consulting firm for a presentation at a Board meeting. So voted unanimously.
- b. Town House Gutters – Chairman Smith stated that this topic will be on the discussion section next week. He also stated that Selectman Hevy had done a lot of work on the subject of the gutters and that the discussion would be related to the entire project. The title of the subject was revised to Town House Project.
- c. Police Chief Search Committee – Chairman Smith commented that Chief Thomasian has some ideas on the future of the department.
- d. CDBG Infrastructure Study - No Discussion.
- e. NBDDP – No discussion.
- f. Budget Workshop – No discussion.
- g. Highway Truck Proposal – (Attachment #13) No discussion.
- h. North Brookfield EMS (ALS) Contract Amendment – No discussion.
- i. North Brookfield Fire Department Project (Attachment #14)
Selectman Hevy requested that the money designated by the Legislature at the request of Senator Stephen Brewer and subsequently approved by the Governor for renovation of the fire station be added to this section. He stated that he wanted the Board to discuss the subject first after researching all of the information available on the subject. He then suggested that the representatives of the Fire Department be asked for their thoughts

and ideas on the subject. Chairman Smith agreed and suggested that after a plan is in place a letter could then be sent to the Governor's office with a compelling argument for the need and use of the money.

There being no further business for the meeting a motion was made by Selectman Walter and seconded by Selectman Hevy to adjourn the meeting at 7:55 PM. So voted unanimously.

X. EXECUTIVE SESSION – None

Minutes respectfully submitted by

Mary Walter, Vice Chairman

AGENDA ITEMS LISTED ARE THOSE REASONABLY ANTICIPATED BY THE CHAIR TO BE DISCUSSED AT THE MEETING NOT ALL ITEMS MAY BE DISCUSSED AND OTHER ITEMS NOT LISTED MAY BE BROUGHT UP FOR DISCUSSION TO THE EXTENT PERMITTED BY LAW.