

MINUTES OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING NOVEMBER 12, 2014

Chairman Smith called the meeting to order at 6 PM with Mr. Hevy also present, and reminded those in attendance that the meeting would be both audio and video taped. Mrs. Walter joined the meeting at 6:10 PM.

Also in attendance were Charles and Claudette Marshall.

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- **November 5, 2014**

Mr. Hevy moved, and Mr. Smith seconded, a motion to approve the minutes of November 5, 2014 as written. So voted.

II. APPROVAL OF WARRANTS

- **None**

There were no warrants to be approved.

III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

- **The public has the opportunity to briefly comment on agenda items through the Chairman**

Chairman Smith noted that residents in attendance have the opportunity to briefly comment on any agenda item listed.

IV. FINANCIAL REPORT

Mr. Smith explained that the Selectmen would have a quarterly budget update next week.

Mr. Smith stated that he has been contacted by some citizens who regret the fact that the Capital Exclusion to purchase two cruisers for the Police Department failed at last week's election. Some of these residents have asked if the Selectmen would be willing to accept donations towards a cruiser for the department. Mr. Smith noted that the Town Accountant will set up a gift fund for this purpose, and anyone who wants to donate should make the checks payable to the Town of North Brookfield with "police cruiser donation" on the memo line. Mr. Smith went on to say that this is a very serious matter; two of the current cruisers are not going to make it much longer. The Selectmen plan to revisit the issue in the spring.

V. OLD BUSINESS

- **Town House update**

Mr. Hevy noted that the Town House Advisory Committee did a walk-through of the building on Sunday, and then met on Monday to discuss what was seen and to begin to discuss priorities. It does seem as though the roof, gutters, and dormers will be the priorities. The committee is having a meeting this evening to discuss the 2007 cost estimates.

Mr. Hevy said that some committee members had questions for Mass Historic, but he asked them to hold off and let the Selectmen handle that piece.

Mr. Smith stated that the Selectmen sent a letter to the state last week asking for a definition of “capital expenditure.”

- **CDBG Infrastructure Study update**

Mr. Smith announced that last Friday he and Mr. Hevy met with Andrew Loew of Pioneer Valley Planning Commission to discuss the East Side Infrastructure Study being conducted on the Town’s behalf by Fay, Spofford, and Thorndyke using Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds. The final report should be received by December.

Also discussed were plans to apply for a second round of CDBG funding. According to Mr. Loew, the Town’s needs scores have dropped since the last grant application. The Town of Spencer, with whom North Brookfield filed a joint application, also experienced a drop in their needs score. Mr. Loew suggested that North Brookfield consider partnering with a different town with a better needs score in order to improve the chances of a successful application. The Selectmen have authorized Mr. Loew to approach two other towns on behalf of North Brookfield.

- **Approve and sign letter re: Fire House grant**

Mr. Smith reviewed a letter drafted by Mr. Hevy to be sent to Governor Patrick regarding \$2 million in grant funds for the North Brookfield Fire House. The letter explains all of the reasons the money is needed for a new station, and asks the Governor to release the funds to North Brookfield. (Attachment #1) Mr. Smith requested some grammatical changes, to which Mr. Hevy agreed. Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Hevy seconded, a motion to approve the letter as revised. So voted.

VI. DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

- **None**

There were no departmental reports.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

- **MassWorks contract**

Mrs. Walter presented a new contract for the Murphy Road Bridge MassWorks contract. (Attachment #2) She noted that the contract has been extended to June 30, 2015, and includes an increased drawdown schedule and a revised budget. Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Hevy seconded, a motion to approve and sign the revised contract. So voted.

VIII. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **Veterans’ Day**

Mr. Smith offered the Board’s congratulations to the VFW and the American Legion Post #41 for their moving Veterans’ Day ceremony. The Selectmen were pleased to be involved, and Mr. Smith thanked both organizations for inviting the Board.

- **NBEMS Subscription Drive**

Mr. Smith reminded residents to return their subscription cards to the North Brookfield Emergency Squad. The cost is minimal, and the benefits are great in the event of an emergency.

- **Winter parking ban**

Mr. Hevy reminded residents that the winter parking ban will begin on November 15th between the hours of 1 AM to 6 AM. The first offence will result in a warning, but subsequent violations could result in towing of the offending vehicle.

- **Toys for Joy**

Mrs. Walter announced that families that would like to participate in the Toys for Joy program should apply at the Police Station by December 8th. Chief Aram Thomasian, Jr. asked any resident who knows of a family going through difficult times let him know. Donations of cash or toys can be made to the Police Department.

- **Chapter 70 meetings**

Mr. Smith explained that a state-wide Foundation Budget Review Commission has been established by the state legislature to review the Chapter 70 formula and how it affects small towns like North Brookfield. Mrs. Walter read an announcement from Spencer Town Administrator Adam Gaudette announcing that a regional meeting will be held on Thursday, November 20th at the Wachusett Regional High School in Holden. (Attachment #3) All three Selectmen stated that they plan to attend.

Mr. Smith noted that the loss of “choice out” students for non-education related issues such as sports or parental convenience is costing North Brookfield dearly. In his opinion this was not the original intent of the law. Mrs. Walter said that the original intent of the law was more focused, and Mr. Smtih agreed, saying that this was meant for failing districts.

Mr. Smith read an e-mail from John LaFleche, Superintendent of the Bay Path Vocational School, who explained that he has been appointed to this state-wide commission, and that there will be six public hearings across the state. (Attachment #4) The public hearing for Central Massachusetts is tentatively scheduled for January 24th.

IX. PENDING/FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- **See attached list**

The Selectmen reviewed the attached list of future agenda items, and agreed that for next week’s agenda they will discuss the climbing wall at the school, a Town House update, the quarterly budget update, the NBEMS contract, and will finalize the budget guidelines.

X. EXECUTIVE SESSION

- **Executive Session to discuss strategy related to negotiations with non-union personnel.**

At 7 PM Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Hevy seconded, a motion to enter Executive Session to discuss strategy related to negotiations with non-union personnel. Roll call: Smith, yes; Walter, yes; Hevy, yes. So voted. Mr. Smith announced that the Board would exit Executive Session only to adjourn.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Leslie Scott Burton
Administrative Assistant