

## **MINUTES OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING NOVEMBER 18, 2014**

Chairman Smith called the meeting to order at 6:03 PM with Mrs. Walter and Mr. Hevy also present. Mr. Smith reminded those in attendance that the meeting would be both audio and video taped.

Present in the audience were Peter Shipman and Brandon Avery.

### **I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- **November 12, 2014**
- **November 12, 2014 Executive Session minutes**

Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Hevy seconded, a motion to approve the aforementioned minutes as written. So voted.

### **II. APPROVAL OF WARRANTS**

- **School Warrant #1025 for \$269,415.05**
- **General Warrant #1026 for \$77,829.19**
- **Payroll Warrant #10 for \$297,033.82**

Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Hevy seconded, a motion to approve the aforementioned warrants. So voted.

### **III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

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

Mr. Smith announced that members of the audience would have the opportunity to comment on any agenda item this evening.

### **IV. FINANCIAL REPORT**

- **Quarterly budget update**

The Selectmen reviewed a report from Town Accountant Nancy Nykiel detailing each department's spending for this fiscal year, along with the percentage of each budget remaining. (Attachment #1) Mr. Hevy stated that he would like to see the departments using a purchase order system. It was agreed to put this on a future agenda for discussion.

### **V. OLD BUSINESS**

- **Town House Advisory Committee update**

Peter Shipman of the Town House Advisory Committee noted that the committee has now met a total of three times. At the first organizational meeting Mr. Shipman was elected chairman, Jason Petraitis was elected vice-chair, and Trish Miller was elected secretary. Mr. Shipman noted that the group has been able to tour the Town House, and the members were pleasantly surprised that the building is in better shape than previously thought. It seems as though the priorities for the building will be the roof, gutters, and dormers as funds allow. In addition, it would be nice to remove debris from the basement and also waterproof the basement.

Mr. Shipman said that the committee is concerned about the timeline; it will be difficult to meet the June 30<sup>th</sup> deadline. The committee plans to forward a draft RFP to the Selectmen next week, in the hope that the Board will review and approve it as soon as possible.

- **Accept donations to Police Vehicle Gift Fund**

Mr. Smith reviewed four donations to the Police Cruiser Gift Fund. (Attachment #2) Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Hevy seconded, a motion to accept donations from Brandon Avery for \$100.00, Suzanne and Tom Lewandowski for \$50.00, Margaret and David Hanson for \$50.00, and Sheila Orsi for \$50.00. So voted.

- **NBEMS contract**

The Selectmen reviewed a draft contract among the North Brookfield Emergency Squad and the towns of Brookfield and East Brookfield to provide ALS coverage. (Attachment #3) It expected that this contract will be finalized soon, and then the Selectmen will sign an addendum to the current contract between the Town and the squad for the ALS services.

- **Finalize Budget Guidelines**

The Selectmen reviewed the budget guidelines for FY16. (Attachment #4) Mrs. Walter noted that the Town Accountant has suggested line item details for some budgets, but that may be too regimented for the departments. The Board made some changes to the document, and Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Hevy seconded, a motion to approve the document as amended. So voted.

## **VI. DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS**

- **October Police Report**

Mr. Hevy reviewed the police report for the month of October as submitted by Police Chief Aram Thomasian, Jr. (Attachment #5) The Chief reported 11 incidents and 13 arrest/summons for the month. Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Hevy seconded, a motion to accept the report and place a copy on file. So voted.

## **VII. NEW BUSINESS**

- **Climbing wall at school**

Mr. Smith noted that in June the Selectmen received a request from Building Inspector John Couture to provide written authorization for him to issue a permit to build a climbing wall at the school. The Board of Selectmen approved this request at their June 24<sup>th</sup> meeting. Mr. Smith noted that the Selectmen were not aware that this project also included a challenge/confidence course. The Selectmen have asked for more information from teacher Jay Mooney about this course and exactly what is involved.

Mr. Smith said that according to Mr. Couture the course must be approved by the state department of public safety. Now that we know that the tower will be 40' high the Selectmen are concerned.

Mr. Hevy stated that he is concerned because the school has to have trained people to monitor the course when it is being used by the students; what happens after hours? Will the equipment be enclosed by a fence?

Mr. Smith said that he wishes the Selectmen had this information last June; this is clearly more than a climbing wall. In his opinion the School Committee needs to weigh in on these issues and the potential for injury and the security concerns regarding unauthorized use during non-school hours. The Selectmen cannot answer these questions until the School Committee addresses the issues.

Mr. Hevy agreed that the Selectmen need to know what decisions about this course have been made by the School Committee.

Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Hevy seconded, a motion to rescind the vote of June 24, 2014 authorizing Mr. Couture to issue a permit for this climbing tower/challenge course. So voted.

- **Meeting schedule**

Mr. Smith said that he would like to go back to a bi-weekly meeting schedule. Mrs. Walter and Mr. Hevy agreed to meet December 2, 16, and 30<sup>th</sup>.

## **VIII. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- **Winter parking ban**

Mr. Smith announced that the Police Department has instituted the Winter Parking Ban effective November 15<sup>th</sup>. There is no parking on town streets from 1 AM to 6 AM.

- **Toys for Joy**

Mr. Smith announced that any family who wants to participate in the Toys for Joy program should sign up at the Police Department by December 5<sup>th</sup>. Donations of toys or money are gratefully accepted.

- **NBEMS Subscription Drive**

Mr. Smith reminded residents to return their money for the annual subscription drive sponsored by the North Brookfield Emergency Squad.

- **Tree Lighting**

Mr. Hevy announced that the annual Tree Lighting will be held in the center of town on Saturday, December 6<sup>th</sup> at 6 PM. Children can write letters to Santa at the Haston Library from 4 – 5:30 PM.

- **Chapter 70 meetings**

Mr. Smith noted that the Selectmen plan to attend a meeting Thursday night at the Wachusett High School about the state's plans to study and revamp the formula used to determine a town's required minimum school contribution. The state has set up a special committee to work on this issue.

## **IX. PENDING/FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

- **See attached list**

It was agreed to add discussion regarding the use of purchase orders to future agenda items.

Mrs. Walter said that she would like to do project updates next time, possibly on Solterra, the Downtown Development Project, and the East Side Infrastructure Project.

Add vacancies on town boards to the list.

Mrs. Walter said that she would like to look in the creation of a Financial Advisory Committee. This would not replace the Finance Committee, and it would not be an Economic Development Committee. It would be comprised of astute people who could help the Selectmen spend money better, or do our budgeting differently. It would be a fresh way of looking at things.

Mr. Smith noted that the Finance Committee is going to give the Selectmen a third list of items to pursue. The Selectmen cannot possibly do all of these things. He would like to ask a group of residents to work on a study committee to look into some of these things.

Mrs. Walter asked about an e-mail from Julie McCarthy noting that Albert Rex would be coming to Jim Buzzell's office in Leicester to talk about the Town House project. When the Friends of the Town House attended the November 10<sup>th</sup> Selectmen's meeting they invited the Selectmen to a meeting to hear Mr. Rex's plan for what happens with the Town House project after the \$1 million in state funds is spent.

Mr. Smith stated that when the Town House Advisory Committee was established he thought the concern was what would happen between Phase I of the project and Phase II. Mr. Smith said that his concern is that residents won't be able to hear about Mr. Rex's plans if the meeting is held in Leicester. He thought Mr. Rex was coming to North Brookfield.

Mrs. Walter said that the Friends are trying to accommodate Mr. Rex. There is a lot of information to hear and process, and then the Selectmen can socialize the information to residents.

Mr. Hevy said that he has a prior commitment that evening. He has been in touch with Ms. McCarthy about his concerns. He thought the meeting was to discuss now Phase I and Phase II would mesh together. Both he and Mr. Smith thought that the meeting would be held in North Brookfield so the Selectmen and the Friends and the Town House Advisory Committee could all attend.

Mr. Smith stated that it would be more productive to have the meeting in North Brookfield instead of Leicester.

## **X. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

- **None**

There being no further business, at 8:05 PM Mr. Smith moved, and Mr. Hevy seconded, a motion to adjourn. So voted.

Respectfully submitted,

Leslie Scott Burton  
Administrative Assistant

## **PENDING/FUTURE SELECTMEN'S ITEMS**

**Tucker Road beaver issues  
Brickyard Road beaver issues  
Murphy Road beaver issues  
Murphy Road Bridge Project  
Solterra Agreement  
NBDDP  
CDBG Infrastructure Study  
Gilbert Street Stormwater issues  
Police Chief Search Committee  
Budget Workshop  
Highway Truck Proposal  
Finance Committee recommendations  
Town Offices server recommendations  
Changes to health insurance tiers  
Job descriptions  
Cable license renewal Oct 2015  
Water Superintendent retirement  
PDA Study  
Purchase Orders  
Sale of tax title and town-owned land**