

MINUTES OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING APRIL 5, 2016

Chairman Hevy called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM in the Senior Center with Mrs. Walter and Mr. Smith also present. Mr. Hevy announced that the meeting would be both audio and video taped.

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- **March 22, 2016**
- **March 22, 2016 exec**

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

- **March 23, 2016**

These minutes will be deferred until the next meeting.

- **March 28, 2016**
- **March 29, 2016**
- **March 31, 2016 exec**

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

II. APPROVAL OF WARRANTS

- **Debt Warrant #1046 for \$47,706.25**
- **School Warrant #1047 for \$137,233.38**
- **General Warrant #1048 for \$220,480.86**
- **Payroll Warrant #20 for \$281,312.83**

Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Smith 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. Hevy announced that anyone in attendance could comment on tonight's agenda items by going through the chairman.

IV. FINANCIAL REPORTS

A. FY17 budget update

Mr. Hevy noted that the Selectmen are continuing the difficult process of reviewing FY17 budget requests. Mr. Smith stated that the Selectmen look at each budget, and review the income and expense sheet prepared by the accountant. The Selectmen do try to address certain departmental needs each year. Mrs. Walter noted that the budget process this year has been a huge challenge.

V. OLD BUSINESS

A. CMRPC Community Compact project

The Selectmen had previously discussed potential projects for CMRPC to work on as part of North Brookfield's Community Compact. It was agreed to send along two projects; one to explore a Council of Governments plan for area towns, and the other to explore the possibility of regionalizing the Senior Center or some of its services.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. Sign Colonial Power contract for electric aggregation

Mark Cappadona of Colonial Power Group was present to ask the Board to sign a contract for electric aggregation. (Attachment #1) This will allow North Brookfield residents to purchase power at a lower rate than National Grid. Mr. Cappadona stressed that residents can opt in or opt out of the process at any time. North Brookfield had previously worked with Hampshire Power to bring aggregation to its residents.

Mr. Cappadona noted that the next step will be for Colonial to develop an Aggregation Plan, which must have a 15 day comment period, after which it will be sent to the state's DOER for approval. The entire process could take 6 to 7 months.

Mr. Smith noted that this contract does not cover the Town's electric accounts, which are already contracted with another provider. Mr. Cappadona acknowledged that this is correct.

Mrs. Walter noted that the Selectmen cannot guarantee how much resident participation there will be, which Mr. Cappadona acknowledged. The risk is on the supplier.

Mr. Smith asked how residents will be informed of this opportunity, and Mr. Cappadona explained that Colonial will do a mailing to each household, and will have an article in the local newspaper. In addition, Mr. Cappadona said that he would be willing to attend any meeting in Town to explain the process or to answer any questions.

Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Smith seconded, a motion to approve and sign the contract with Colonial. So voted.

B. Sabin Rossi re: Solar RFP

Sabin Rossi and Michael Hedges from Power Management were present to update the Selectmen and residents on a recent RFP for potential solar installations. Mr. Hedges noted that Power Management has been working with the Selectmen for more than a year on ways to save the Town money and generate revenue. The landfill site was removed from the RFP because of issues with its cap and with DEP. The RFP that was issued in January asked for proposals to construct solar installations at 5 locations in Town, including the school campus, the Water Plant, and the Police Station roof.

There were 10 RFPs issued to potential bidders, and three bids were received. One of the bids was rejected because they did not follow directions and only submitted a bid for the landfill site.

Of the two remaining proposals, from Melink Solar and Kearsarge Energy, Power Management recommends that the Town go with Melink because it presents the best opportunity to “deliver a lucrative and realistic solar solution, while proposing a realistic time schedule.” The Melink payment per megawatt is \$30,000.00, and the project should be completed by August of 2017. Mr. Hedges noted that Power Management has projects underway in 14 Massachusetts towns.

Mrs. Walter urged Mr. Smith and Mr. Hevy to approve this recommendation as soon as possible in order to get the best possible financial gain, especially regarding the state incentives.

Mr. Hevy asked Mr. Hedges to explain the state’s SREC program. Mr. Hedges noted that the state gives a Solar Renewable Energy Certificate to the owner of a project for the power that is generated. That certificate can be sold to other parties at a discount. It is a large revenue generator for the developer, which is why the developer will spend money to build the projects.

Mr. Smith noted that the development of these solar projects is in the long term interest of the town.

Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Smith seconded, a motion to approve and sign a letter selecting Melink Solar as the contractor to work with the Town. (Attachment #2) So voted. Mr. Rossi noted that the services of Power Management come at no cost to the Town; their fees are paid by the successful bidder. Final contracts and details regarding the exact size and location of the panels will be finalized at a later date.

C. Ann Hicks re: Wendemuth Meadow

Mr. Hevy reviewed an e-mail from Cynthia Henshaw of the East Quabbin Land Trust asking to speak to the Selectmen and residents on the plans for a “prescribed burn” at the Wendemuth Meadow site. (Attachment #3) Also present was Ann Hicks of the North Brookfield Conservation Commission. This burn will remove the organic material on the top of the soil, and if done at the proper time of year, will help control certain invasive species of plants.

A company that does these burns has been hired, and the Burn Plan has already been submitted to the Conservation Commission, the Fire Department, and DEP. Ms. Henshaw noted that the burn is very weather dependent, and the exact date is not known. All of the abutters will be notified by EQLT.

Mrs. Walter asked if there is an accelerant used for the fire and how much of the land will be involved, and Ms. Henshaw stated that diesel fuel will be used to burn the 4.7 acres.

Mr. Smith asked how the Fire and Police departments, along with dispatch, will be notified of the burn, and Ms. Henshaw noted that the Fire Chief has the final signoff and she will notify everyone else.

On another note, Ms. Henshaw stated that EQLT will be partnering with the Youth Center this summer two days per week when the children will be at Wendemuth Meadow. Mr. Smith noted that Ms. Henshaw and EQLT have created a great community resource.

Mrs. Walter complained that people are still letting their dogs run loose on the property. Ms. Henshaw noted that there are signs prohibiting this, but personnel can't be there all the time to enforce it.

D. Ross Hubacz re: Town Forest Celebration event

Mr. Hevy reviewed an e-mail from Ross Hubacz noting that Kate Marquis, the DCR Service Forester for North Brookfield, has approached him to ask if the Town would be interested in hosting the annual DCR Town Forest celebration event. (Attachment #4) This is a statewide event held in a different town each year, and highlights the stewardship work the town has done, presents some of the history of the area, includes several speakers in an indoor portion of the event, and a site walk during an outside portion of the event.

Ms. Marquis passed out sample agendas from prior events, and noted that DCR will pay if there is a rental charge for the school, and will also pay for busses to bring people to the town forest for a site visit, and also for lunch.

Ms. Marquis said that they are thinking about September or October for the event. Mr. Hubacz noted that this is a great honor for the town, and the Selectmen agreed.

Mr. Smith suggested if there were a way to incorporate Brookfield Orchards into the event, and Ms. Marquis said that she would certainly try. She promised to let the Selectmen see the agenda when the event is finalized.

E. Bob Locatelli re: Conservation Commission appointment

Mr. Hevy read an e-mail from Bob Locatelli asking that he be appointed to the Conservation Commission beginning July 1st. (Attachment #5) Mr. Locatelli was present and he noted that the Conservation Commission is down to only four members, which is the quorum. This puts a lot of pressure on the members to be present for every meeting. Mr. Locatelli noted that he served on the commission previously, has taken the necessary classes to become certified, and feels that he can help the commission. Mr. Locatelli is currently busy with the Finance Committee and the budget process. Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Smith seconded, a motion to appoint Mr. Locatelli to the Conservation Commission as of July 1, 2016. So voted.

F. Earth Day request

Mr. Smith reviewed an e-mail from Suzanne Lewandowski regarding the annual Earth Day celebration and several other town events. (Attachment #6) Mr. Smith suggested that the Selectmen invite the interested parties to a Selectmen's meeting to discuss the other events. Mrs. Walter stated that the Selectmen need to appoint people to oversee the other events such as Memorial Day and the annual Tree lighting.

Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Smith seconded, a motion to allow Ms. Lewandowski to coordinate the Earth Day events on April 23rd with the Highway Department and the other town entities involved, and to thank her for her involvement. So voted.

G. Town Park thank you

Mrs. Walter read an e-mail from Joe Holway thanking various town departments for their support during the restoration of the Town Park. (Attachment #7) Mrs. Walter explained that the park is on the east side of West Brookfield Road. Mr. Smith said that we should also thank Mr. Holway for all he does for the town.

H. Review town meeting articles

The Selectmen reviewed articles submitted for the May 6th Annual Town Meeting. (Attachment #8) This will be discussed again during the April 12th Selectmen's meeting.

VII. ANNOUNCEMENTS

A. May 2nd Annual Town Election

Mrs. Walter reviewed a sample ballot from the Town Clerk for the May 2nd Annual Town Election. (Attachment #9) Offices and candidates up for election were listed, in addition to a ballot question asking for a debt exclusion to purchase a new fire truck.

B. Tyler Wolanin office hours

Mr. Hevy reviewed a press release noting that Tyler Wolanin from Senator Gobi's office will be holding office hours in North Brookfield on Tuesday, April 26th from 11 AM to noon in the Senior Center. Mrs. Walter noted that residents can also make an appointment to see Mr. Wolanin in necessary.

C. Public Hearing on request to designate Lake Lashaway a Great Pond

Mr. Smith reviewed a letter from DEP notifying the North Brookfield and East Brookfield Selectmen that there will be a public hearing on a request to designate Lake Lashaway as a Great Pond. (Attachment #10) The hearing will be held on Wednesday, April 27th at 11 AM in the North Brookfield Police Station Community Room.

Mrs. Walter noted that she did speak with Mr. Graff from DEP. He said that for a body of water to be considered a great pond the original pond without dams must be 10 acres or more. The Selectmen need to get old maps and records of the lake to see the dimensions of the old pond.

Mr. Hevy asked why this is being pursued?

Mrs. Walter stated that Mr. Pizarczyk and 10 others have requested this, and DEP is required to hold the hearing.

Mrs. Walter stated that the North Brookfield and East Brookfield selectmen should meet to discuss this and work together. Mr. Hevy stated that he will contact Ted Bouley of the East Brookfield selectmen to try to set up a meeting.

D. Community Dinner April 13th

Mr. Hevy announced that there will be a Community Dinner on Wednesday, April 13th from 5 PM to 7 PM at the Congregational Church. This is being sponsored by the Congregational Church and the North Brookfield Schools.

VIII. PENDING/FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- **See attached list**

IX. EXECUTIVE SESSION

There was no executive session scheduled.

There being no further business, at 8:45 PM Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Smith seconded, a motion to adjourn. So voted.

Respectfully submitted,

Leslie Scott Burton
Administrative Assistant

PENDING/FUTURE SELECTMEN'S ITEMS

**NBDDP/Aztec
Solar RFP
Purchase Orders
Creation of Financial Advisory Committee
Personnel policies
Cemetery Road
98 Shore Road
DOR IT recommendations
Electric aggregation
Community Compact
FY17 Budgets
Meeting with EB re: Town Beach**