

MINUTES OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING OCTOBER 22, 2013

Chairman Walter called the meeting to order at 7 PM at the Senior Center with Mr. Smith and Mr. Chabot also present. Mrs. Walter reminded those in attendance that the meeting would be both audio and video taped.

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF OCTOBER 8, 2013 APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF OCTOBER 17, 2013

Mr. Smith moved, and Mr. Chabot seconded, a motion to approve the minutes of October 8, 2013 as written. So voted. Mr. Smith moved, and Mrs. Walter seconded, a motion to approve the minutes of October 17, 2013 as written. So voted, with Mr. Chabot abstaining.

IA. APPROVAL OF SCHOOL WARRANT #1020 FOR \$58,631.78 APPROVAL OF GENERAL WARRANT #1021 FOR \$261,824.53 APPROVAL OF PAYROLL WARRANT #9 FOR \$293,202.22

Mr. Smith moved, and Mr. Chabot seconded, a motion to approve the aforementioned warrants. So voted.

II. OLD BUSINESS

A. WATER DEPARTMENT REQUEST TO BE EXEMPTED FROM PURCHASE REQUEST FORMS

Mrs. Walter reviewed a letter from the Board of Water Commissioners asking to be exempt from the new Purchase Request System. (Attachment #1) Water Board Chairman Tim Nason and Commissioner Jim Kularski were in attendance to discuss this request. According to Mr. Nason, this new form creates a lot of extra work for the department. In his opinion the Water Commissioners were elected to oversee the departmental budget, and that is what they do. Mr. Kularski stated that this is a duplication of effort, the Board of Water Commissioners already approves expenditures.

Mr. Smith noted that the Selectmen are not trying to micro-manage the Water Department. The Selectmen and the Finance Committee need to be able to tell in "real time" the town's cash availability. The Town Accountant encumbers funds so that everyone will know what has been spent.

Mr. Chabot stated that the town's annual audit recommends that the Selectmen oversee the entire town budget. The auditor says that North Brookfield is doing a good job, the Selectmen are just trying to do a little bit better.

Mrs. Walter pointed out that even though the Selectmen monitor the town budget, it could be as much as four to six weeks before the Selectmen see the bill for a purchase. We need know where each budget stands when the expenses occur, not weeks later when the bill is paid.

Mrs. Walter also noted that in 2009 the Selectmen implemented a similar system, but called it "Anticipated Spending" reports. At that time it was well received by everyone, including the Water and Sewer Departments.

Mr. Smith stated that this in no way hinders emergency situations; that is not the intent.

Mr. Chabot suggested that the Water Department try this for a year, and maybe this issue could be revisited at that time. Mr. Smith agreed that this is a good idea.

Mrs. Walter told the two Commissioners that the Selectmen respect the fact that they do a good job; the Selectmen need to a better job of overseeing the town's budget. She asked the Water Commissioners to help the Selectmen do this.

B. DISCRIMINATION POLICY

The Selectmen reviewed the town's EEO, Discrimination and Harassment policy, (Available in the Selectmen's office) particularly the parts relating to the use of electronic media that could be detrimental to the workplace. This new policy was adopted by the Selectmen effective September 1, 2013 and accepted by all of the town's unions.

III. NEW BUSINESS

A. SEPTEMBER POLICE REPORT

Mr. Smith reviewed the Police Department report for the month of September as submitted by Chief Aram Thomasian, Jr. (Attachment #2) The Chief reported 10 incidents and 17 arrest/summons for the month. Mr. Smith moved, and Mr. Chabot seconded, a motion to accept the report. So voted.

B. TREASURER ANNE JANNETTE HAS EARNED THE DESIGNATION OF CERTIFIED MASSACHUSETTS MUNICIPAL TREASURER

Mr. Chabot reviewed a letter from the Massachusetts Collectors and Treasurers Association. (Attachment #3) The letter advised the Selectmen that North Brookfield Treasurer Anne Jannette recently earned the designation of Certified Massachusetts Municipal Treasurer. Mrs. Jannette will be awarded a certificate at the next association meeting on November 13th. The Selectmen offered their congratulations to Mrs. Jannette.

C. NORTH BROOKFIELD STUDENTS QUALIFY FOR ADAMS SCHOLARSHIPS

The Selectmen read the names of twelve North Brookfield students who qualified for the John and Abigail Adams Scholarships because of their MCAS scores. This scholarship provides tuition waivers for Massachusetts public state colleges and universities. The twelve students are: from Bay Path Vocational School, Jennifer Davis, Keith Marshall, and Robert Weston; and from the North Brookfield High School the qualifying students are Valerie Avery, Logan Fullam, Rebecca Kaplan, Kyle Lareau, Alexander Orsi, Joshua Rafferty, Andrew Shays, Erica Tillotson, and Keely Walsh. The Selectmen congratulated the students and their families on this wonderful accomplishment.

Mr. Smith added that in 2013 North Brookfield students achieved the highest English and Mathematics MCAS scores in the history of the district, and was one of only 29 school districts statewide in which no third graders scored in the warning category for reading.

D. NORTH BROOKFIELD SCHOOLS RECEIVE \$525,478.00 GRANT

Mrs. Walter announced that the North Brookfield Public Schools have received a \$525,478.00 federal grant for nutrition and physical education over the next three years. North Brookfield was one of only three districts in the state to receive this grant which, among other things, will be used to adopt a new health curriculum and build an outdoor adventure challenge course for students to use during gym class.

IV. ANNOUNCEMENTS

A. TRICK OR TREAT HOURS

Mr. Chabot announced that Trick or Treat will be allowed on Thursday, October 31st from 5:30 PM to 6:30 PM.

B. SPECIAL TOWN MEETING TO BE HELD NOVEMBER 1ST AT 7 PM. REGISTER TO VOTE IN THE TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE BY 8 PM TODAY.

Mrs. Walter reminded residents of the Special Town Meeting to be held next Friday, and noted that there was still a few minutes to get to the Town Clerk's office to register to vote.

C. THE COLLECTOR'S OFFICE WILL BE OPEN ON FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 1ST

Mr. Smith noted that the Town Collector will be open next Friday, November 1st, to collect real estate taxes which are due that day.

Mr. Chabot announced that Sam Buzzell will be receiving his Eagle Scout on November 10th. This is a great honor for Sam, and is the result of much hard work. He offered the Selectmen's congratulations to Sam and his family.

Mr. Smith informed everyone that the 162nd Annual Firefighters Ball will be held on Saturday, November 9th at Salem Cross Inn. Tickets are available from any fireman, and are \$40 per person.

V. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

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

Respectfully submitted,

Leslie Scott Burton
Administrative Assistant