

## MINUTES OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING MARCH 13, 2012

Chairman Walter called the meeting to order in the Senior Center with Mr. Petraitis also present. Mr. Chabot was present remotely via cell phone. Mrs. Walter noted that the meeting would be both audio and video recorded.

I. Mr. Petraitis moved, and Mr. Chabot seconded, a motion to approve the minutes of February 28, 2012 as written. So voted.

IA. Mr. Petraitis moved, and Mr. Chabot seconded, a motion to approve School Warrant #1046 for \$77,260.74, General Warrant #1047 for \$113,065.33, and Payroll Warrant #19 for \$261,497.58. So voted.

IB. There was no one present for the Public Comment Period.

### II. OLD BUSINESS

A. The Selectmen reviewed the paperwork necessary to accept a \$50,000.00 Emergency Grant from the Massachusetts Historical Commission for the Town House Bell Tower. (Attachment #1) Mr. Petraitis moved, and Mr. Chabot seconded, a motion to adopt a resolution that Chairman Mary Walter is authorized to execute a contract, and enter into contracts for project work, sign preservation restrictions, and disburse funds or designate appropriate persons to do so. So voted.

B. Mr. Petraitis reviewed a letter from Edith Doane regarding her brother George's bequest of \$90,000.00 to the Town to take care of the Bates Observatory. (Attachment #2) Miss Doane writes that as George's only living relative, she would support any efforts to use these funds for the Town House instead of the observatory. Mrs. Walter noted that she thinks using the funds for other than specified would be a "stretch," but believes that the Selectmen should at least research it through town counsel and respond to Miss Doane. Mr. Petraitis stated that the Selectmen should consider this very carefully, as it would be changing the last wishes of Mr. Doane.

### III. NEW BUSINESS

A. Mrs. Walter introduced Superintendent David Papagni of the Bay Path Regional Vocational School to discuss the school's building renovation plans. Mr. Papagni introduced David Eisenthal of UniBank, Owner's Project Manager (OPM) Mark Lyden, Michael McKeon of Kaestle Boos Architects, Bay Path Business Manager John LaFleche, and Bay Path School Committee members Jim Caldwell and Don Gillette.

Superintendent Papagni noted that the school was built in 1974 for 800 students, and it now houses over 1,000. There are currently 500 applicants for the 300 freshman slots open for the fall. In 1974 there was more focus on students learning the trades, and less focus on academics. Mr. Papagni said that the total building addition and renovation project cost is \$73.8 million, and the state has agreed to pay approximately 64% of the cost.

OPM Mark Lyden explained that several options were explored, but the most cost effective one is the current plan to update the infrastructure and build additional classrooms and science labs. The project will upgrade existing HVAC systems, new sprinkler and alarm systems, and a new potable water system. Mr. Lyden stated that even if this renovation project is not done, there will still be \$15 - \$20 million in building repairs needed with no state reimbursement available.

Architect Michael McKeon of Kaestle Boos Architects explained the existing space problems at the school, and showed how additional space will be added to the front of the building.

Mr. Eisenthal explained the financial portion of the project, noting that after the state pays its share of the \$73.8 million, North Brookfield's share of the remainder is 3.72%. The annual cost ranges from \$22,000.00 to \$69,000.00 over the 30 year life of the loan. According to Mr. Eisenthal, the cost to the average North Brookfield homeowner is \$12 for the first year, and \$27 per year thereafter.

Finance Committee Chairman Bob Smith asked questions regarding the wording of the debt exclusion votes, and the estimates of future interest rates. Mr. LaFleche replied that state law sets the exact wording for the votes, and Mr. Eisenthal stated that the future interest rates were figured very conservatively.

School Committee member Don Gillette noted that 44% of Bay Path's graduates go on to post secondary education, and Superintendent Papagni noted that Bay Path offers Advanced Placement classes.

Resident Ellen Smith asked about the schedule for the town votes. Mr. LaFleche answered that if no action is taken by the Town by June 30<sup>th</sup> it will be considered that the Town has accepted the project. The state has extended the deadline for the election portion of the vote to September 30<sup>th</sup>.

Selectman Petraitis noted that the building improvements should last 50 years, but wondered about the building capacity in 50 years? Mr. Papagni reported that the state has set 1,110 as the capacity for the school. The district is not looking to "grow" the student population. The population of school-age children is declining statewide.

The Selectmen thanked all of the men for their time this evening.

B. The decision on if and when to schedule town votes for the Bay Path project was deferred until the next meeting. Mr. Chabot stated that he would like to confer with Mr. Smith and the Finance Committee before making his decision.

C. Harbour Fraser Hodder and Eva Brown from the North Brookfield Cultural Council were present to give out 11 grants to various individuals and groups. (Attachment #3) Mrs. Hodder noted that both the grant recipient and the hosts would be recognized. Most of the grant recipients were present, and spoke briefly about their event.

D. Mr. Petraitis read a letter from Fire Chief Brad Gannon asking for permission to cut up the old Fire Chief's vehicle for "Jaws of Life" training. (Attachment #4) As the vehicle is being sold as scrap, it is worth the same amount of money even if it is cut up first. Mr. Petraitis moved, and Mr. Chabot seconded, a motion to allow the Fire Department to use the old vehicle for training purposes. So voted.

E. Chief Gannon was present to read his report for the month of February. (Available in the Selectmen's office) The Chief reported 1 structure fire, 5 outside fires, and 2 car accidents. The Chief also noted that Carbon Monoxide detectors have a lifespan of 5 – 7 years, and if a resident has a detector that is still "chirping" after the batteries have been replaced, the detector has reached the end of its lifespan and must be replaced. Mr. Petraitis moved, and Mr. Chabot seconded, a motion to accept the report. So voted.

F. Mrs. Walter reviewed the police report for the month of January as submitted by Police Chief Thomasian. (Available in the Selectmen's office) The Chief reported 30 incidents and 13 arrest/summons for the month. Mr. Petraitis moved, and Mrs. Walter seconded, a motion to accept the report. So voted.

Mr. Petraitis read the February Police report. (Available in the Selectmen's office) In February there were 23 incidents and 17 arrest/summons. Mr. Petraitis moved, and Mr. Chabot seconded, a motion to accept the report. So voted.

G. Mrs. Walter read a letter from the Cemetery Department thanking the Highway Department for their assistance with the repair of a truck recently. (Attachment #5) John Lane, Chairman of the Cemetery Department noted that the Highway Department is always willing to offer their assistance. Mrs. Walter noted that it is always nice to read good news.

H. Mrs. Walter reviewed a letter from several Bell Street residents complaining about the condition of their road. (Attachment #6) Mr. Petraitis suggested that the letter be forwarded to Highway Superintendent Gary Jean for his assessment of the situation and a response.

I. Mr. Petraitis read a letter from the Conservation Commission supporting the closure of a portion of Tucker Road. (Attachment #7) This closing had been suggested last year, but the Fire Chief had expressed his concern that closing the road could dramatically increase the response time for emergency vehicles. The three selectmen were all in agreement that they do not agree with the Conservation Commission's opinion. Mrs. Walter noted that area residents were very concerned last year when the Fire Chief voiced his objections. Mr. Chabot stated that he would like the road to be left open, and Mr. Petraitis stated that the beavers further downstream are causing the problem. Mrs. Walter suggested that further research to see if removing the downstream beavers would help the situation.

J. Mrs. Walter read a letter from the North Brookfield Emergency Squad, Inc. requesting a FY13 payment of \$25,000.00 in a single lump sum. (Attachment #8) Mr. Petraitis moved, and Mr. Chabot seconded, a motion to approve the request. So voted.

K. A letter was received from RCAP Solutions asking if North Brookfield is interested in receiving their assistance in writing and implementing a Community Septic Management Plan. (Attachment #9) The Board agreed to defer discussion on this to the next meeting.

L. Mrs. Walter noted that budget season is coming up soon, and wondered if the Selectmen should return to a weekly meeting schedule. Mr. Petraitis moved, and Mrs. Walter seconded, a motion to return to the weekly meeting schedule starting April 1<sup>st</sup>. So voted, with Mrs. Walter abstaining.

M. Mrs. Walter noted that the Fire Chief had emergency repairs to the rescue truck and had requested \$2,094.00 from the Reserve Fund. The Finance Committee agreed to pay \$1,000.00 from the Reserve Fund, and is asking that \$1,000.00 come from Holden Hospital Funds, and the Fire Chief will pay the \$94.00. Mr. Petraitis moved, and Mr. Chabot seconded, a motion to approve the payment of \$1,000.00 towards this repair bill from the Holden Hospital Fund. So voted.

#### IV. ANNOUNCEMENTS

A. Mr. Petraitis reviewed an update on the May 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Town Election as submitted by Town Clerk Sheila Buzzell. (Available in the Town Clerk's office) The last day to file nomination papers in Monday, March 19<sup>th</sup> at 5 PM.

B. Mrs. Walter reviewed five Planning Board hearing notices, all to be held on Wednesday, March 14<sup>th</sup> at the Senior Center, starting at 6:30 PM. (Available in the Selectmen's office)

C. Mr. Petraitis read a list of current vacancies on Town Boards, including three openings on the Alternative Energy Committee, 1 Fence Viewer, and 2 Lumber Surveyors. (Available in the Selectmen's office) Any resident interested in serving on any of the committees should contact the Selectmen's office.

D. Mrs. Walter noted that Burning Permits are available at the Fire Station on Saturday and Sunday mornings from 8 AM to noon at the Fire Station during the burning season, which runs January 15<sup>th</sup> to April 30<sup>th</sup>. The cost of a permit is \$20.

E. Mrs. Walter announced that the 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee has t-shirts, mugs and hats for sale in the Town Clerk's office and at the Haston Library.

F. Mrs. Walter announced that Jim and Sam Buzzell will be presenting a program on "North Brookfield and the Civil War" on Friday, April 27<sup>th</sup> at the Elementary School Auditorium as part of the Town's 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

At 9:05 PM Mr. Petraitis moved, and Mr. Chabot seconded, a motion to enter Executive Session to discuss strategy related to litigation because an open session may have a detrimental effect on the Town's negotiating position. Roll call: Walter, yes; Petraitis, yes; Chabot, yes. So voted. Mrs. Walter announced that the Board would exit Executive Session only to adjourn.

At 9:30 PM the Board came out of Executive Session. Mr. Petraitis moved, and Mr. Chabot seconded, a motion to adjourn. So voted.

Respectfully submitted,

Leslie Scott Burton  
Administrative Assistant