

MINUTES OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING JUNE 2, 2015

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

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- **May 19, 2015**

Mr. Smith noted that in the last paragraph on the first page of the May 19th minutes, the correct amount for School Choice out should be \$770,000.00, not \$370,000.00. Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Smith seconded, a motion to approve the minutes as amended. So voted.

- **May 19, 2015 Executive Session minutes**

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

II. APPROVAL OF WARRANTS

- **School Warrant #1059 for \$101,099.56**
- **General Warrant #1060 for \$235,146.52**
- **Payroll Warrant #24 for \$322,824.60**

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

III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

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

Mr. Hevy reminded those in attendance that they would have the opportunity to briefly comment on any of tonight's agenda items through the chair.

IV. FINANCIAL REPORTS

A. FY 16 budgets

Mr. Hevy noted that the Selectmen have been meeting to review budget requests in order to find some potential cuts. While the departmental requests are justified, the deficit is a huge challenge. The Selectmen have come up with several scenarios ranging from honoring all requests to level funding, or making across the board cuts. The Selectmen would like to add another police officer and highway worker, and the police department needs another new cruiser.

Mr. Hevy noted that the goal is to develop a budget that gives the departments what they need without cutting services, which the Town has been able to do for the past few years. Now we are close to having to make deeper cuts that may affect services.

Mr. Smith noted that the Town has had a structural deficit for the past 5 or 6 years. Each year we are short approximately \$250,000.00. There is only \$1.6 to \$1.7 million that can be cut after all of the fixed costs within the \$14 million budget.

Mrs. Walter stated that we found our way into this situation by perpetuating a bad habit that was pointed out by the DOR in 2007 of using Free Cash to balance the budget. It was preferred over the use of Stabilization or overrides in the past. She would like to see equity among the departments. We need to look toward changing the way we do business. We need a plan to serve people faster so our people can devote their time to more important tasks.

In addition, Mrs. Walter noted that the Selectmen are working hard to increase economic development in Town. This takes a lot of work and time; we have to be willing to accept businesses that want to come here through zoning changes, and be good to the businesses that are here.

V. OLD BUSINESS

A. Ann Hicks re: Wendemuth Meadow

Ann Hicks gave an overview of the current status of the Wendemuth Meadow project. She reported that the Conservation Restriction was recorded on May 11th, and that the fundraising campaign is within \$1,000.00 of the \$50,000.00 goal. She asked Mr. Hevy to sign a "baseline report" for the state that contains the same information as the grant package. (Available in the Selectmen's office) Mr. Hevy signed the report.

B. NBEMS contracts

Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Smith seconded, a motion to approve and sign the FY16 contract for ambulance services with the North Brookfield Emergency Squad, Inc. in the amount of \$50,000.00, and an amendment to provide ALS services for \$68,000.00. (Available in the Selectmen's office) So voted and signed.

C. Town House update

Mr. Hevy noted that the second jobsite meeting was held at the Town House last week. The contractor is confident that he will be able to meet the June 30th deadline. The building should be shingled this week, and work has already begun to rebuild the dormers. The Selectmen thanked Peter Shipman and the Town House Advisory Committee. Mrs. Walter noted that the Friends of the Town House are finalizing their plans for a capital campaign.

D. Murphy Road update

Mrs. Walter stated that there will be a bridge on Murphy Road despite the beaver problems. The old bridge is gone, and the culverts and wing walls will be set in place this week by crane. This project should be finished by June 30th, thanks to the excellent contractor we have working for us. Mrs. Walter said that the Selectmen need to recognize the tremendous support we have received from our legislators like Steve Brewer and Anne Gobi.

E. Cable Advisory update

Peter Barstow, member of the Cable Advisory Committee, read a tribute to former LPAC chairman Mike Tillotson, who passed away last week. (Attachment #1) In addition, Mr. Barstow gave an overview of the next steps in the cable license renewal process. (Attachment #2) We are currently awaiting a response and draft contract from Charter.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. Fuel bids

The Selectmen reviewed the newspaper ad requesting fuel bids this evening. (Attachment #3) There were three bids received: from R. J. MacDonald of Barre, Fountain and Son of Warren, and Peterson Oil of Worcester. The Selectmen opened and read the bids. Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Smith seconded, a motion to refer the bids to Highway Superintendent Gary Jean for his recommendation. So voted.

B. Request for appointment to Cable Advisory Committee

Mr. Hevy reviewed a letter from Paul LeBlanc asking to be appointed to the Cable Advisory Committee. (Attachment #4) Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Smith seconded, a motion to appoint Mr. LeBlanc. So voted.

C. Request for appointment to LPAC

Mr. Hevy read an e-mail from Jake Anderson asking to be appointed to the Local Public Access Committee. (Attachment #5) Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Smith seconded, a motion to appoint Mr. Anderson. So voted.

D. Request to transfer funds

The Selectmen reviewed two requests to transfer funds, one from the Selectmen's office in the amount of \$176.00 and one from the Council on Aging for \$26.50. (Attachment #6) Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Smith seconded, a motion to approve and sign the requests. So voted.

E. Request for additional information re: supply contracts

Mr. Hevy reviewed an e-mail from Sabin Rossi of PMC asking for more information on the Town's electric contracts. (Attachment #7) PMC is the company looking into installing solar panels at the landfill and other potential locations in town. Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Smith seconded, a motion to sign the request. So voted. Resident Claudette Marshall asked that the Housing Authority be included in any potential savings.

VII. ANNOUNCEMENTS

A. Color Fest 2015

Mrs. Walter announced that the Color Fest fundraiser will be held on Saturday, June 20th at the former Chooch's from 10 AM to 6 PM. There will be live music, craft vendors, and color throws. There will be food and beverages as well. This is a fundraiser for the Wendemuth Meadow property.

B. Tyler Wolanin office hours

Mr. Smith announced that Tyler Wolanin of Senator Gobi's office will be available at the Town Offices on Tuesday, June 23rd from 5 – 6 PM.

C. BOH notice re: paint disposal

Mr. Hevy announced that North Brookfield residents will now be able to dispose of paint and stain whenever the transfer station is open at a cost of \$2 per gallon.

D. Dog license reminder

Mrs. Walter read an announcement from the Town Clerk that dog licenses are now due, along with a \$5 late fee. Mrs. Walter also warned dog owners that leaving dogs tied up outside in the heat is unacceptable, and people should contact animal control if they see it happening.

VIII. PENDING/FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

It was agreed to remove Wendemuth Meadow from the pending list now that it is almost finalized. Mr. Hevy stated that he would like to focus on the budget for the next few weeks. Mr. Smith said that he would like an update from Highway Superintendent Gary Jean on the Gilbert Street drainage problems. Leslie will ask Mr. Jean to attend the next meeting.

IX. EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 7:35 PM Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Smith seconded, a motion to enter Executive Session for the purpose of conducting negotiations with non-union personnel, and also to discuss strategy related to collective bargaining. Roll call: Hevy, yes; Walter, yes; Smith, yes. So voted. Mr. Hevy announced that the Board would exit Executive Session only to adjourn.

At 9:15 PM the Board came out of Executive Session. Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Smith seconded, a motion to adjourn. So voted.

Respectfully submitted,

Leslie Scott Burton
Administrative Assistant