

## **MINUTES OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING FEBRUARY 23, 2016**

Chairman Hevy called the meeting to order in the Senior Center at 6 PM with Mrs. Walter and Mr. Smith also present. After the Pledge of Allegiance Mr. Hevy asked for a moment of silence for Father Richard Carey, who recently passed away.

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

- **February 9, 2016**
- **February 16, 2016**

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

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

- **School Warrant #1039 for \$146,447.43**
- **General Warrant #1040 for \$69,350.40**
- **Payroll Warrant #17 for \$281,590.87**

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 would have the opportunity to comment on any of this evening's agenda items by going through himself as chairman.

### **IV. FINANCIAL REPORTS**

#### **A. FY16 and FY17 budget update**

Mr. Smith updated residents on the status of the Town's FY16 budget. He noted that the Selectmen to monitor the departmental budgets closely. So far it appears we are on target.

Mr. Smith also noted that as each new budget process begins the accountant does an income and expense sheet. The Selectmen and the Finance Committee have each begun the process of reviewing FY17 budget requests. New this year will be a technology budget that incorporates all of the technology needs of every department.

### **V. OLD BUSINESS**

#### **A. CMRPC Community Compact project**

Mr. Hevy noted that the Selectmen are waiting for information from Senior Center Director Diane Nichols regarding the possible regionalizing of senior centers. Mrs. Walter noted that the Selectmen had previously discussed the Council of Governments model as well. That could be a subject for CMRPC to study.

Mrs. Walter asked if the Selectmen were going to discuss school regionalization? Mr. Hevy noted that since the teacher's contract is under negotiation it might not be the right

time, but he would like the Selectmen to discuss this first and then discuss it with other committees. Mr. Smith noted that we need to first identify what we want to get out of any potential regionalizing of schools.

### **B. 48 Brickyard Road**

Mr. Hevy noted that this is a 29 acre parcel that the Selectmen would like to add to the list of potential solar sites. The original plan was to include the landfill, but that site was removed from the list of potential sites because of the work that needs to be completed for DEP. Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Smith seconded, a motion to add 48 Brickyard Road to the list of potential solar sites. So voted.

## **VI. NEW BUSINESS**

### **A. Citizen Complaints**

Mr. Hevy read the Selectmen's policy on citizen complaints or special requests. (Attachment #1) He noted that this is in regards to some of the complaints that have been coming in recently. When citizens complain about a particular department that department will review the issue, and if they can't resolve it then the Board of Selectmen will step in.

Mr. Smith noted that the Selectmen adopted this policy on October 6<sup>th</sup> of last year, formalizing a policy that has existed for a long time. Any resident who has a concern can express that concern in writing to the Selectmen.

John Alphin of the Board of Health asked if a complaint must be in writing? The Board of Health must investigate anonymous complaints, and for good reason. Mr. Smith said that perhaps the policy should be amended to include that letters must be signed, but after some discussion it was agreed to leave the policy as is.

Mr. Smith read an anonymous letter that was sent to the Board of Health and Selectmen complaining that commercial trash haulers are in town every day, not just on the days the transfer station is open. (Attachment #2) This person said that some people are not recycling, and the trash buckets in the road are a nuisance. This person wants the town to regulate the days that haulers are allowed to pick up trash in town. Mr. Alphin noted that all haulers are licensed by the Board of Health, and they do agree to pick up recycling. However, no one can force a resident to recycle if they don't want to.

Suzanne Lewandowski read a letter that she wrote to the Selectmen asking that a group called We the People be sanctioned to act as intermediaries between residents and town departments. (Attachment #3)

Mr. Hevy told Ms. Lewandowski that she took the right steps by coming to the Board of Selectmen with her concerns. He said that town officials will never be able to get all of the information out to all of the residents. The Selectmen try to get information out in a positive manner. He told Ms. Lewandowski that her group could help by letting the Selectmen know whenever she hears "grumbings," and by getting the information out to

her group in a positive manner. He noted that it is the Selectmen's job to hear the problems and take care of those problems. If someone does not get satisfaction from the department involved, that person should come to the Selectmen for resolution.

Mrs. Walter acknowledged that there have been problems with videotaping and broadcasting the Selectmen's meetings, but the Selectmen and LPAC committee are spending a lot of money with Charter to upgrade equipment and improve broadcasts. That information will be available and was available until a few months ago via the Town's website.

Mrs. Walter noted that residents who have questions should review the Annual Report, which is available each year at the Annual Election and Town Meeting, and through the Town Clerk's office. It shows everything in town, from playgrounds and parks through financial information. Citizens can join any committee that interests them through appointment by the Board of Selectmen. The complaint process is in place, and the Selectmen do their best to resolve them. People don't understand that the only thing we need is money. The tools are there for residents to use.

Mr. Smith reiterated that all anyone needs to do is put the concern or complaint in writing, and the Selectmen will address the issue. If people have problems they should let the Selectmen know.

Mr. Alphin from the Board of Health stated that people who want information should come to meetings; it is the best way to get involved.

Tashena Holmes of Hillsville Road said that she believes there is a "disconnect" with citizens. She recommended that the Selectmen use Facebook to stay involved.

Mr. Smith noted that the Selectmen received two complaints last week about snow removal. The police department investigated a complaint alleging that a beer can was thrown from a town plow truck, and found no evidence of this. The Highway Superintendent reiterated to his men the policy against drinking while on the job.

Mr. Smith also said that the topic of the sand to salt ratio has come up recently, he asked the Highway Superintendent about this, and was told that a mix of 3/1 is used on back roads, and 2/1 is used on main roads. If the weather situation becomes really serious, a 1/1 mix is used.

Mr. Hevy noted that the number of Highway Department personnel has gone down significantly over the years; we have four men and a superintendent to take care of over 70 miles of road in North Brookfield. Not that many years ago there were 7 men on the department. Mrs. Walter noted that state guidelines suggest one man for every 10 miles of road.

Ms. Lewandowski thanked the Selectmen for speaking with her.

### **B. David Foss with Wilcox and Barton proposal re: landfill**

David Foss of Wilcox and Barton explained that there is an issue with groundwater contamination at the landfill on East Brookfield Road, and the contamination of a private well. The chemical is 1,4dioxane, which is highly soluble and moves very quickly through the ground water. He said that it is unlikely that the chemical has traveled beyond this private well, which is within 500' of the closed landfill.

Mr. Foss presented a proposal to address the contamination, and what DEP says must be done. (Attachment #4) Mr. Foss said that there is some urgency in signing the proposal, since there is a report due to DEP by April 1<sup>st</sup>. Mr. Foss and his company hope to do sample testing by the end of February, then do the calculations in order to get the status report to DEP by the April 1<sup>st</sup> deadline.

Mr. Hevy asked if we know for sure that this contamination is due to the landfill, and Mr. Foss noted that they have reviewed the historical data from the landfill test wells, and one of those wells shows a high concentration of the 1,4dioxane. There is 36 parts per billion in the landfill test well, and 11 parts per billion in the private well. He said that this does not mean that there are no other sources of contamination from prior industrial sites in that area. Mr. Foss noted that DEP has recently lowered the acceptable levels of contamination. The landfill test well did not reach the prior allowable levels, but now they do. He noted that only one of the landfill test wells is coming back as contaminated, the other wells show no detectable levels.

Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Smith seconded, a motion to approve and sign the proposal from Wilcox and Barton for the Immediate Response Action Implementation plan. So voted.

John Alphin, Chairman of the Board of Health, noted that he is paying for all of this testing and the LSP consultant services from his Purchase of Services account, but he will not have enough in his budget to finish out this fiscal year. The Selectmen acknowledged that they are aware of this situation.

### **C. Request for outdoor entertainment license**

Thomas Waugh and Glenn Waugh, representing Time Out at 31 East Brookfield Road, came in to request an outdoor entertainment license. Thomas Waugh reviewed a letter that he had previously sent to the Selectmen. (Attachment #5) He stated that they hope to continue with the outdoor entertainment that they currently have, but hope to have better controls and restrictions than the previous operator. He said that they want to be good neighbors, and will abide by whatever restrictions the Selectmen impose.

Mr. Hevy said that he would like to notify the abutters and have a public hearing. It was agreed to do this hearing on March 8<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Alphin of the Board of Health asked if the Waughs use porta-potties for outdoor events, and was told that they do; the building is closed during these events.

#### **D. Notice of intent to retire**

Mr. Hevy read a letter from Town Collector Donna Gauthier announcing her intent to retire in February of 2017. (Attachment #6) Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Smith seconded, a motion to accept the resignation with regret. Mr. Hevy said that she will be missed. Mr. Alphin said that she has been very helpful with the landfill billing process. Mrs. Walter noted that Ms. Gauthier will be very hard to replace.

#### **E. Request for endorsement letter for school grant**

Mrs. Walter reviewed an e-mail from Jay Mooney asking the Selectmen to write a letter of endorsement for a distance learning grant that the school is applying for. (Attachment #7) Mrs. Walter stated that she did not understand the relevance of the grant to North Brookfield students. Mr. Smith said that he saw the School Committee meeting when this grant was discussed, and he believes that this will augment the school curriculum. Students will be able to take college classes through Mount Wachusett Community College. He said that the Selectmen should trust the School Committee and Superintendent that it will benefit our students. Mr. Hevy and Mrs. Walter agreed. Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Smith seconded, a motion to send a letter of support. So voted.

#### **F. Letter from Troy Brown**

Mrs. Walter read an e-mail from Troy Brown asking if the Selectmen would be interested in leasing space in the building adjacent to the Town Offices, should that space become available. (Attachment #8) The Selectmen agreed that they would like to see the space. Leslie will notify Mr. Brown.

#### **G. Municipal Modernization bill**

Mrs. Walter noted that she sent this information to the Selectmen because she believes we should not let this pass by. (Attachment #9) She reviewed the list of items that the MMA would like the state legislature to adopt. She would like to speak with Senator Gobi's office about this; some of the items listed seem to be in conflict with the Community Compact best practices. She noted that it sounds like most of these items would be more relevant for larger towns. She agreed that she will contact Senator Gobi's office and report back.

### **VII. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

#### **A. May 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Town Election**

Mr. Hevy reviewed a memo from Town Clerk Sheila Buzzell listing the offices and incumbents up for reelection at the May 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Town Election. (Attachment #10) The last day to register to vote is Tuesday, April 12<sup>th</sup>, and the last day to file nomination papers is Monday, March 14<sup>th</sup>.

#### **B. March 1<sup>st</sup> Presidential Primary**

Mr. Smith reminded residents that next Tuesday, March 1<sup>st</sup> is the Presidential Primary Election from 7 AM to 8 PM in the Senior Center. (Attachment #11)

### **C. March 26<sup>th</sup> Rabies Clinic**

Mrs. Walter announced that there will be a rabies clinic at the Second Chance Animal Shelter on Saturday, March 26<sup>th</sup> from 9 AM to 11 AM. (Attachment #12) The cost is \$12, and the Town Clerk will be available for dog licenses.

### **D. North Brookfield Adult Education classes**

Mr. Smith reviewed a listing of adult education classes that are available through the North Brookfield schools beginning March 7<sup>th</sup>. (Attachment #13) He noted that there are many more and varied classes this year, and urged residents to take advantage of this opportunity.

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

- **See attached list**

## **IX. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

There was no Executive Session scheduled.

There being no further business, at 8:45PM 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**  
**Bids on health insurance**  
**98 Shore Road**  
**DOR IT recommendations**  
**Electric aggregation**  
**Community Compact**  
**FY17 Budgets**  
**Meeting with EB re: Town Beach**

