

MINUTES OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING JULY 28, 2015

Vice chairman Mary Walter called the meeting to order in the Senior Center with Mr. Smith also present. Mr. Hevy was not present. Mrs. Walter reminded those in attendance that the meeting would be both audio and video taped.

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- **June 24, 2015**
- **June 24, 2015 Executive Session**

It was agreed to defer approval of these minutes to the next meeting.

- **July 14, 2015**
- **July 14, 2015 Executive Session**
- **July 17, 2015 Executive Session**

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

II. APPROVAL OF WARRANTS

- **School Warrant #1002 for \$21,840.93**
- **General Warrant #1003 for \$314,732.27**
- **Payroll Warrant #2 for \$217,098.49**

Mr. Smith moved, and Mrs. Walter 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**

Mrs. Walter reminded those in attendance that they would be able to comment on any of this evening's agenda items by going through herself as Chair.

IV. FINANCIAL REPORTS

There were no financial reports.

V. OLD BUSINESS

A. Award highway materials bids

The Selectmen reviewed the list of road materials bids to be awarded, as recommended by Highway Superintendent Gary Jean. (Attachment #1) Mr. Smith moved, and Mrs. Walter seconded, a motion to award the bids as recommended. So voted.

B. Town House update

Mrs. Walter explained that the Town House is at the closeout stage, there is just punch list items remaining. The architect will be coming to do his final review this week.

C. Murphy Road update

Mrs. Walter noted that the bridge on Murphy Road is now complete, and the closeout paperwork has been processed. The Selectmen are very pleased with the assistance received from the folks at MassWorks in Boston.

D. Community Compact application

The Selectmen reviewed information regarding the Community Compact program, which is a new state program to assist municipalities in addressing various areas of concern. The state will provide resources that will help the town with implementation of its chosen "best practices." Mr. Smith explained that the Selectmen have chosen three areas of concern: first is to study regionalization and shared services; second is long-range financial forecasting and planning; and third is capital planning for needed infrastructure improvements. Mr. Smith moved, and Mrs. Walter seconded, a motion to submit a request to the state for the preceding areas of concern. So voted.

E. Solar RFQ

Mrs. Walter explained that the Selectmen have been working with a consultant to solicit bids to place solar installations on various town properties. The RFQ was reviewed last week, and should be ready to submit to town counsel this week.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. Eric Smith re: NB Downtown Central Business PDA

Eric Smith from Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission (CMRPC) was present to give the Selectmen his preliminary report on the North Brookfield Central Business Priority Development Area. (Attachment #2) The area covered by this is roughly from Maple Street to Spring Street, and Grove Street to Union Street.

Mr. Smith outlined the purpose of the study, which was an analysis of the downtown area, with specific emphasis on a walkable town center with the historic Town House as a destination and economic development resource. The study examines the existing infrastructure and zoning in order to promote economic development in the town's center.

The study looked at population and land use statistics, and pointed out several problems with the town's zoning bylaws. Mr. Smith made several recommendations on how to attract businesses to the downtown area.

Selectman Smith pointed out that there was an article recently in the Boston Globe that discussed a successful downtown revitalization effort in Hudson Massachusetts. He noted that we need to think outside of the box when it comes to attracting businesses to the downtown area.

Resident Claudette Marshall asked how the Selectmen would attract businesses to town, since the success rate on small businesses like restaurants is very low.

Resident Bill Skrobul wondered if the study took into account the ages of area residents, and Mr. Smith stated that it was a valid point to be considered.

Mr. Smith noted that craft type stores are very common in small towns, and they in turn attract restaurants and other businesses.

The Selectmen thanked Mr. Smith for his presentation. He noted that the full report will be coming within the next month or so, after which there will be a 30 day review period, and then the report will be finalized.

Representative Don Berthaiume was present to say hello to the Board, and ask if there is anything that the Selectmen need from him. Mrs. Walter stated that his support of any upcoming grant applications will be much appreciated.

B. Eric Smith re: NBRR project

Mr. Smith presented a scope of services and budget proposal to do an assessment of the North Brookfield Railroad. (Attachment #3) The proposed study would document ownership and management, review existing land structure, especially as it relates to encroachment by abutters, examine the condition of the existing rail crossings, and investigate economic development opportunities and constraints. The proposed budget for the study is 40 hours at \$80/hour of CDAP funded hours, along with \$60 additional for mileage. Mr. Smith expects that this study will be completed by the end of the year. This study will be at no cost to the Town.

C. Request for letter of support

Mrs. Walter reviewed a letter from Richard Dupre asking for a letter of support or non-opposition to his intent to apply for a state license to operate a marijuana cultivation and dispensary facility. (Attachment #4) Mr. Dupre has already been to the Planning Board with his proposal. Mrs. Walter said that the Selectmen would like to have the Planning Board's written recommendation before writing a letter. Mrs. Walter told Mr. Dupre that the Selectmen would like to speak with town counsel, and that this matter will be on the August 11th agenda.

D. Request for CMRPC appointment

The Selectmen reviewed a letter from Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission asking for the Selectmen's appointment of an alternate to the commission. (Attachment #5) Mrs. Walter volunteered to continue as the alternate. Mr. Smith moved, and Mrs. Walter seconded. So voted.

E. Request from Doug Blood for appointment

The Selectmen reviewed a letter from Doug Blood asking to be reappointed as Harbormaster and to the Town Beach Committee. (Attachment #6) Mrs. Walter noted that we should check with the Police Department about this, and talk about it again at the next meeting.

F. Requests for appointment to Town Beach Committee

The Selectmen reviewed four additional requests to be appointed to the Town Beach Committee from John Foyle, Pam Batchelor, Jennifer Bujenvicie, and Anne Adams. (Attachment #7) It was agreed to invite these people to the next meeting.

G. Request for Holden Hospital funds

Mr. Smith reviewed a letter from the North Brookfield Emergency Squad requesting money from the Holden Hospital Gift Fund. (Attachment #8) It was agreed to solicit input from the Police and Fire Departments, as well as Emergency Management. It was agreed to discuss this again at the next meeting.

H. Accept donation to Police Cruiser Gift Fund

Mr. Smith noted that North Brookfield Savings Bank recently collected change to be donated to the police cruiser gift fund. Mr. Smith moved, and Mrs. Walter seconded, a motion to accept the donation of \$283.13 from the bank to the cruiser gift fund. So voted.

I. Accept donation to General Fund

Mr. Smith noted that he recently received an anonymous donation from a "grateful resident" of \$365.00, or one dollar for each day of the year. (Attachment #9) This is the fourth year that this person has donated to the town's general fund. Mr. Smith moved, and Mrs. Walter seconded, a motion to accept the donation. So voted.

J. North Brookfield has received a CDBG grant

Mrs. Walter announced that the town has been awarded a Community Development Block Grant, along with the towns of Brookfield and Warren, in the amount of \$955,136.00. (Attachment #10) These funds will be used to provide engineering design for the North Common Street infrastructure study, and housing rehabilitation to three or more units.

K. Quote from Whalley Computer

Mrs. Walter reviewed a quote from Whalley Computer for \$2,552.00 to finalize the server replacement project. (Attachment #11) Mr. Smith moved, and Mrs. Walter seconded, a motion to approach the Finance Committee for the funds. So voted.

VII. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Smith announced that the North Brookfield Emergency Squad is conducting their annual subscription drive. He urged residents to support this worthwhile cause.

- **Town Forest informational woods walk**

Mrs. Walter reviewed an e-mail from Ross Hubacz, noting that he plans to host an informational woods walk on Saturday, October 3rd at the Town Forest on West Brookfield Road. There is no charge for the tour.

- **Senior Center Blood Drive**

Mrs. Walter noted that there will be a blood drive at the Senior Center on Friday, August 7th from 3 PM to 8 PM.

- **Request for assistance at Elementary School Library**

Mrs. Walter reviewed an e-mail announcing the need for volunteers to help refurbish the elementary school library during the first week of August. Volunteers should contact Katie Griffin or Janine Drake.

VIII. PENDING/FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- **See attached list**

IX. EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 8:20 PM Mr. Smith moved, and Mrs. Walter seconded, a motion to enter Executive Session to discuss strategy related to negotiations with non-union personnel, and to consider the purchase, exchange, lease or value of real estate because an open session may have a detrimental effect on the Town's negotiation position. Roll call: Walter, yes; Smith, yes. So voted. Mrs. Walter announced that the Board would exit Executive Session only to adjourn.

At 8:30 PM the Board came out of Executive Session. Mr. Smith moved, and Mrs. Walter seconded, a motion to adjourn.

Respectfully submitted,

Leslie Scott Burton
Administrative Assistant

PENDING/FUTURE SELECTMEN'S ITEMS

Solterra Agreement
NBDDP/Aztec
Gilbert Street Stormwater issues
Cable license renewal Oct 2015
Purchase Orders
Vacancies on town boards
Creation of Financial Advisory Committee
Personnel policies
Cemetery Road
Meeting with Gobi and Berthiaume