

MINUTES OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING NOVEMBER 17, 2015

Chairman Hevy called the meeting to order in the Senior Center at 6 PM with Mr. Smith also present. Mrs. Walter was present via cell phone. After the Pledge of Allegiance Mr. Hevy asked for a brief moment of silence in honor of the victims of the Paris terrorist attacks.

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- **September 17, 2015**

Approval of these minutes was deferred until the next meeting.

- **September 22, 2015**

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

- **October 26, 2015**

Approval of these minutes was deferred until the next meeting.

- **November 2, 2015**
- **November 3, 2015**
- **November 3, 2015 Executive Session**
- **November 6, 2015**
- **November 9, 2015**

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

- **Release all executive session minutes related to negotiations with the North Brookfield Sewer Department**

Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Smith seconded, a motion to release all executive session minutes related to negotiations with the North Brookfield Sewer Department into the open domain. So voted.

II. APPROVAL OF WARRANTS

- **School Warrant #1022 for \$273,505.66**
- **General Warrant #1023 for \$38,270.19**
- **Payroll Warrant #10 for \$282,193.29**

Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Smith seconded, a motion to approve the aforementioned warrants as written. 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 could briefly comment on any of this evening's agenda items.

IV. FINANCIAL REPORTS

- **None**

Mrs. Walter asked if the FY17 Budget Guidelines and templates had gone out to department heads, and was informed that they had indeed gone out.

V. OLD BUSINESS

A. Dissolve Town House Advisory Committee

Mr. Hevy explained that the Town House Advisory Committee was formed for the purpose of overseeing the recent Town House renovation project. That task has been completed. Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Smith seconded, a motion to dissolve that committee. So voted. Mrs. Walter noted that this committee performed a stellar job under difficult conditions, thanks to the generosity of Senator Brewer. Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Smith seconded, a motion that each member of the committee be sent a thank you letter. So voted.

B. Appointment of Mark Smith as E911 Coordinator, and Local Emergency Planning Committee member

Mr. Hevy noted that these are two positions that were held by the former police chief. Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Smith seconded, a motion to appoint Police Chief Mark Smith as the E911 Coordinator, and to the Local Emergency Planning Committee. So voted.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. Appointment of Christine Lentz

Board of Health Chairman John Alphin was present to introduce Christine Lentz, and to ask that she be appointed to replace Cindy Thompson. Christine currently works for Lamoreaux Ford, and they will allow her to work 5 hours two mornings per week here.

Ms. Lentz introduced herself, and said that she is looking forward to working for the town.

Mr. Alphin stated that since Ms. Lentz won't need health insurance from the town he would like to raise the rate of pay to \$15.00 per hour. Ms. Thompson was paid \$13.57 per hour.

Mr. Hevy stated that the Board needs to take a look at what town employees in similar positions are being paid. The Selectmen need to be fair to everyone.

Mr. Alphin said that he agreed that the Selectmen need to look at current employees who do not get raises.

Mrs. Walter said that the Selectmen should appoint Ms. Lentz now, and discuss the salary later.

Mr. Alphin noted that the position is called a Director on the job description, but on the payroll it is still listed as a clerk position. He said that it makes no difference to him what it is called. It was suggested that Ms. Lentz be called an Administrative Assistant, since the other departmental secretaries are called that.

Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Smith seconded, a motion to appoint Christine Lentz as the new Board of Health Administrative Assistant. So voted.

B. Colonial Power re: electric aggregation

Tom Flaherty and Mark Cappadona of Colonial Power Group were present to speak with the Board about the electric aggregation process. The Town had previously worked with Hampshire Council of Governments on this until the state denied the petition. Hampshire COG now recommends that the Town use Colonial as its consultant for this process.

Mr. Flaherty explained that this is an “opt-out” program for residents on National Grid’s basic service. Residents will have the option of joining with others for a lower electric rate, or staying with National Grid. Residents who have already signed contracts with other suppliers will not be affected. There will not be a second bill for residents; the new supplier will appear as a line on the National Grid bill.

Colonial will prepare an aggregation plan that will be approved by the Board of Selectmen. After approval by the Selectmen the plan would be advertised for several weeks for comments, and after the comment period the plan would be sent to the state for approval. He stressed that this aggregation plan can be done at any time, it will be done at the town’s pace.

Mr. Hevy asked if letters would be sent to town residents if this plan is approved, and Mr. Cappadona said that letters would be sent only to residents on National Grid’s basic service. Residents who have already signed contracts with other providers would not be affected. He stressed that a resident can opt in or opt out of the aggregation process at any time without fees or penalties.

Mrs. Walter stated that a lot of things have changed since the town first voted for the aggregation two years ago. Many residents have chosen other suppliers. She wants to clarify that those people would not have to change if they choose not to. Mr. Flaherty confirmed that residents who are under contract with a different supplier will not be part of this program.

Mr. Smith asked if people could join the contract at a later date, and Mr. Cappadona confirmed that a resident can join or leave the program at any time without fees or penalties.

Resident Ray Hebert said that he gets several phone calls each week asking him to switch electric providers. One recent one offered him a \$75 gift card for switching. Mr.

Cappadona explained that a lot of those offers are for a very short term, sometimes only one month or so.

The Selectmen thanked the men for their time and information this evening.

C. Appointments to NBEMA

There was no action taken on this item since the prospective appointees were not present.

D. Memo from Highway Department re: leaves

Mr. Hevy read a memo from Highway Superintendent Gary Jean asking that residents not rake their leaves into the road. (Attachment #) Mr. Jean pointed out that it is a town by-law that residents may not place anything in the roadway. Mr. Hevy noted that the Recycling Center does accept leaves, it is the homeowner's responsibility to properly dispose of the leaves. Mr. Smith noted that the leaves can create problems by blocking water flow into storm drains.

E. Letter from Lottery Commission re: Time Out

Mr. Smith read a letter from the Massachusetts Lottery Commission notifying the Selectmen that Time Out, at 31 East Brookfield Road, has applied for a Keno license. (Attachment #) If the Selectmen wish to object they must send a letter within 21 days. The Board agreed that they do not have any objections, and that further action is needed.

F. Sign statement of support

Mr. Hevy reviewed a statement of support for the Guard and Reserve on behalf of Veterans' Services Officer Holly Kularski. (Attachment #) Mrs. Walter noted that the Selectmen signed one of these a few years ago. Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Smith seconded, a motion to approve and sign the statement of support. So voted.

G. DOR IT Review

Mrs. Walter explained that the Town did a Financial Management Review through the Department of Revenue in 2007. Now they have a preformed a full review of the Town's technology needs. (Available in the Selectmen's office) This report indicates that we have a technology problem, which is no surprise. The information contained in the report is very valuable, but it will require significant funding.

Mr. Hevy said that he agrees; we need to explore the recommendations and come up with a plan for implementation.

It was agreed that the Selectmen would discuss this again in more detail at a later date. Mrs. Walter stated that she would like the person from DOR to come to the meeting as well.

VII. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **Tax Title auction November 18th**

Mr. Hevy announced that there will be a tax title auction tomorrow at 11 AM at the Police Station. (Attachment #)

- **Tyler Wolanin office hours**

Mr. Hevy noted that Tyler Wolanin from Senator Gobi's office will be at the North Brookfield Senior Center on Tuesday, November 24th at 11:30 AM. (Attachment #)

VIII. PENDING/FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- **See attached list**

IX. EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 7:35 PM Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Smith seconded, a motion to enter Executive Session to discuss strategy related to pending litigation. Roll call: Hevy, yes; Walter, yes; Smith, yes. So voted. Mr. Hevy announced that the Board would exit Executive Session only to adjourn.

At 8:35 PM the Board came out of Executive Session. Mrs. Walter moved, and Mr. Smith seconded, a motion to adjourn.

Respectfully submitted,

Leslie Scott Burton
Administrative Assistant

AGENDA ITEMS LISTED ARE THOSE REASONABLY ANTICIPATED BY THE CHAIR TO BE DISCUSSED AT THE MEETING. NOT ALL ITEMS MAY BE DISCUSSED, AND OTHER ITEMS NOT LISTED MAY BE BROUGHT UP FOR DISCUSSION TO THE EXTENT PERMITTED BY LAW.

PENDING/FUTURE SELECTMEN'S ITEMS

**NBDDP/Aztec
Purchase Orders
Creation of Financial Advisory Committee
Personnel policies
Cemetery Road
Bids on health insurance
Cable license renewal 12/1
Annual license renewals 12/1
Planning Board re: Green Communities 12/15**