

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING
MINUTES SEPTEMBER 8, 2014
APPROVED**

Present: Josh A. Degen, Chair; Anna Eliot, Vice Chair; Stuart M. Schulman, Clerk; Peter S. Cunningham, Member; John G. Petropoulos, Member

Also Present: Mark W. Haddad, Town Manager; Dawn Dunbar, Executive Assistant

Mr. Degen called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

1. Mr. Haddad said that the Fire Station Open House and Dedication was scheduled for Saturday, September 13th at 10am. He said this event was open to the public. He said that mandatory Open meeting Law training for all appointed officials was scheduled for Wednesday, September 17th at 7pm at the Groton Country Club. He said that all officials had been notified and elected officials had been invited also. Mr. Haddad added that the Town Hall, Library and Senior Center would be closed on Thursday, September 18th from 9:45am-12:15pm so that staff could attend a mandatory Discrimination and Harassment training.
2. Mr. Haddad said that interviews had been conducted to fill a couple of vacancies the town had. He said that for the Assistant Town Clerk position, they received 170 applications for the position. He said that Mr. Bouchard had done a great job reviewing the resumes and had chosen Marlene Kenney of Harvard, the former Assistant Town Clerk in Harvard, for the position. Mr. Haddad asked the Board to ratify the position.

Mr. Cunningham moved to affirm the appointment of Marlene Kenney as the Assistant Town Clerk effective 9/15/14. Ms. Eliot seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Haddad said they had also conducted a search for a Volunteer Coordinator at the Senior Center. He said that they had received 35 applications for the position and one individual rose to the top. He said that he was recommending Kathleen Santiago, the current Volunteer Coordinator at Rivercourt, and asked the Board to ratify the position.

Ms. Eliot moved to ratify the appointment of Kathleen Santiago as the Council on Aging Volunteer Coordinator effective 9/9/14. Mr. Cunningham seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Haddad asked the Board to ratify the appointments of the Harvard, Lancaster and Stow Police Departments as Special Police Officers.

Mr. Schulman moved to ratify the appointments made by the Town Manager of the Harvard, Lancaster and Stow Police Departments as Special Police Officers. Ms. Eliot seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Haddad said that the Sustainability Commission had recommended that Bruce Easom be appointed to the Sustainability Commission and asked the Board to ratify the appointment.

Ms. Eliot moved to ratify the appointment of Bruce Easom to the Sustainability Commission. Mr. Cunningham seconded the motion. The motion carried 4-0-1 with Mr. Degen abstaining.

3. Mr. Haddad said that the Electric Light Commissioners would be reviewing proposals for a solar field project at the Transfer Station. They are looking for a member of the Board to sit in on the review. Mr.

Haddad said that he would like to recommend that Mr. Cunningham be the one to represent the Board and asked the Board to ratify the appointment. Mr. Cunningham said that he would be interested in this.

Mr. Schulman moved to designate Mr. Cunningham as a member of the RFP Review Committee. Mr. Petropoulos seconded the motion. The motion carried 4-0-1 in favor with Mr. Cunningham abstaining.

4. Mr. Haddad said that he had revised the FY15 goals and objectives as discussed by the Board. He said that he thought it was a pretty good list but needed their assistance on some of them. He asked the Board if they would like to discuss further on Sept 22nd or Sept 29th and start at 5pm or 6pm. It was decided to hold a meeting prior to their Board meeting on Sept 22nd at 6pm.

MINUTES

Ms. Eliot moved to approve the Regular Session minutes of July 14, 2014. Mr. Cunningham seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Eliot moved to approve the Regular Session minutes of August 11, 2014. Mr. Cunningham seconded the motion. The motion carried 3-0-2 in favor with Mr. Petropoulos and Mr. Schulman abstaining.

PUBLIC HEARING - EARTH REMOVAL PERMIT – ROBERT C. BLACK

Ms. Eliot moved to open the public hearing. Mr. Cunningham seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Haddad read the public hearing notice into the record. Ms. Collette said that the Earth Removal Stormwater Advisory Committee took a vote at their meeting their prior week and to approve the request. She said that she walked the site that Saturday and found that everything was in compliance and very well established.

Mr. Cunningham moved to renew the Earth Removal Permit for Robert C. Black to expire on September 8, 2016 with standard conditions. Ms. Eliot seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Cunningham moved to close the public hearing. Mr. Schulman seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARING - EARTH REMOVAL PERMIT – ELLIOT BLOOD

Ms. Eliot moved to open the public hearing. Mr. Cunningham seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Haddad read the public hearing notice into the record. Ms. Collette said that the Earth Removal Stormwater Committee voted unanimously to support the request. She said that she also conducted a site visit and found everything to be in impeccable order.

Mr. Cunningham moved to renew the earth removal permit for Mr. Blood to expire on September 8, 2016 with standard conditions. Ms. Eliot seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Blood thanked everyone for their support during the fire. He said that people came out of the woodwork and he appreciated it. Mr. Degen thanked him for rebuilding and carrying out the legacy of 6 generations. Mr. Blood said they would have a soft opening at the end of September.

Mr. Schulman moved to close the public hearing. Ms. Eliot seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

MRPC – DRAFT HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN

Tom Roufos of the MRPC (Montachusett Regional Planning Commission) thanked the Board for having him. He said that the MRPC was set up to help with transitional planning and future hazard mitigation. Mr. Roufos said that

he was a grant writer and had worked on the plan he was about to present. He said that the MRPC received grant money from MEMA and FEMA to update the plan which expired in July 2014. He said the new plan would be good for 5 years. He said that the past and present hazards were identified on the map as well as the updated flood maps showed areas subject to heavy rain, snow, ice melt, atmospheric and geologic hazards. He said that the critical facilities map showed shelters, town buildings, etc.

Mr. Degen said that the critical facilities map did not show the new Center Fire Station. Mr. Degen asked Mr. Haddad to go through the plan with the Fire Chief, DPW Director, Police Chief and member of the Board to go through the document and get comments back to the MRPC. Ms. Eliot asked if the plan could be posted on the website. Mr. Haddad said that he would have the final one posted or a link to the MRPC page posted.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT – CONT.

5. Mr. Cunningham said that the Goals and Objectives as revised by Mr. Haddad was what they had asked for. Mr. Haddad said that he would schedule for the Board to meet at 6pm on the 22nd to finalize their goals. Mr. Petropoulos asked if the establishment of a Media Policy could be added with a goal end date of the end of the year. Mr. Petropoulos said they should also review it and separate the goals from everyday policies.

6. Mr. Haddad said that he had provided the Board with a draft of the 2014 Fall Town Meeting Warrant. He said there were 26 articles adding that their public hearing with the Finance Committee was scheduled to be held at 7:15pm on Sept 15th. Mr. Haddad said that his budget memo would also be incorporated in the warrant. Mr. Haddad began reviewing the articles for the Board. Mr. Degen asked about whether or not they had the ability to reopen the warrant to add an article considering re-joining the mosquito control project. Mr. Haddad said that they were still \$170K under the levy limit adding that this would have no impact on the FY15 budget but would impact the FY16 budget through the cherry sheet. He added that he had not yet heard what the school district would be looking for from the Town and hadn't yet begun to look at the FY16 municipal budget. Mr. Haddad said that he didn't want to make a 3 year commitment when they didn't know what the budget looked like. Mr. Schulman thought residents might be confused if they placed it on the warrant and had to pull it again. Mr. Petropoulos said he would like to see the parameters set on next year's budget first.

Mr. Haddad said that article 2 contained a couple of increase in hours and reclassifications. He said that the IT Desk Top Specialist was something that Jason Bulger mentioned during his exit interview. The current position was budgeted for 35 hours per week. He said that he would like to see that increased to 40 hours and a reclassification from a Grade 5 to a Grade 6. He said that the Accounting Department had requested that the Assistant Accountant be upgraded from 27 hours to 30 hours and reclassified to a Grade 9 based on a study done by he and Ms. Doig. He said that the Treasurer/Tax Collector had requested a reclassification and based on grading should be a Grade 7. Mr. Haddad said that he had also been asked to place the Dispatcher that was taken out in the spring back on the warrant for consideration. He asked the Board to support these requests.

Mr. Haddad said that the new Fire Chief was off to a great start and in reviewing his budget determined that there were insufficient funds in the training budget. He was requesting \$13K to provide management training for the officers. Mr. Degen asked what the current budget was. Mr. Haddad said \$2K. Mr. Haddad said that the request would be something that was added into his yearly budget and could also be used for strategic planning in the future if training of this nature was not required. Ms. Eliot asked if there would be other revenue from other towns coming in to us for use of our training facility. Mr. Haddad said that he would have trouble charging other towns especially where towns do not charge each other for mutual aid. Mr. Degen said Ms. Eliot had a valid point adding that maybe if there was joint training and someone from the outside had to be brought in, they may consider sharing the costs.

Mr. Haddad said that factors such as more state aid than planned for had brought them to \$176K under the levy limit vs. \$74K as originally planned for. He said that the estimated tax rate based on these figures would be \$18.36. Mr. Degen said that they could also discuss offsetting the tax rate based on this. Mr. Haddad said that he was looking to add \$400K to the Capital Stabilization fund and \$175K to the Stabilization fund. Mr. Haddad said that as far as offsetting the tax rate, we suggested waiting until the end of the month until their free cash was certified.

Articles 7 & 8 requested money for police data conversion and improvements to the Public Safety Building now that the Fire Department was all moved out. Mr. Degen asked Mr. Haddad to provide the Board with some breakdowns on the improvements to the building.

Mr. Haddad said that article 14 was a placeholder for the Lost Lake Watershed Advisory Committee whereas he had placed \$50K in there as a number for budgeting purposes. He said that he was waiting to hear from the committee as to whether they wanted to ask for funds or not and if so, how much. Mr. Petropoulos said they had agreed to request a placeholder but had not discussed funding. Mr. Degen said that they had already spent a lot of money and wanted to wait until there were concrete ideas.

Mr. Haddad said article 6 was the Local Meals Tax which would generate \$40-50K in FY15 if passed. Articles 9 & 10 had to do with the Tarbell School. Articles 11-13 had to do with the Prescott School. He said that bids were due for both properties on Wed at 10am. Mr. Haddad said that article 16 was a request by the Sargisson Beach Committee for CPC funds to complete Phase II of the project. He said they were asking for \$75K.

Mr. Haddad briefly reviewed articles 17-25 which were sewer and zoning articles which they would discuss more at their next meeting. He said that article 26 was a Citizens' Petition to appoint a committee to look at electronic voting. He said that the citizen's wanted Town Meeting to be behind the idea.

LIAISON REPORTS

Ms. Eliot said that the Planning Board would be holding a public hearing on Sept 18th and urged residents to come out to familiarize themselves with the proposed zoning changes.

Mr. Cunningham said that the Tennessee Gas Pipeline Working Group had met and continued to organize and categorize their approaches. They also had updated the Town's website with new documents. Mr. Petropoulos said they had discussed 3 tracks to take. 1) do we need the pipeline, 2) mitigation and avoiding places like Groton, etc., 3) education and communication.

Mr. Schulman said that he attended to Fireman's Muster and thought it was a good time adding that both Chief Bosselait and Chief McCurdy were there.

Mr. Cunningham moved to adjourn at 8:45pm. Mr. Schulman seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Approved: _____

Stuart Schulman, Clerk

respectfully *submitted*,
Dawn Dunbar, Executive Assistant

Date Approved: 9/29/14