

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING MINUTES
NOVEMBER 6, 2006
APPROVED**

Present: Peter S. Cunningham, Chair; George F. Dillon, Jr., Vice Chair; John L. Saball, Clerk; Mihran Keoseian, Member; Jeff Ritter, Interim Administrative Officer and Kathy Newell, Office Assistant.

Chairman Cunningham called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

Elizabeth Currier, Personnel Manager RE: Update and Appointment as HIPAA Officer

Ms. Currier and Ms. Valerie Jenkins were present for this portion of the meeting.

Ms. Currier reviewed a prepared report in which she defined the Personnel Manager's role, reviewed meetings with Department Managers, and suggested implementation of a new-hire orientation and her designation as the HIPAA Officer.

Mr. Cunningham stated that the process of hiring an employee had been fragmented and fractured; and also asked if there would be a handbook containing town policies.

Mr. Dillon commended Ms. Currier and noted that not only would new employees benefit from a policy handbook, but current employees would also benefit.

Mr. Saball welcomed Ms. Currier and expressed his support for her suggestions regarding employee evaluations. Mr. Saball also suggested exit interviews so that the employee and the Town are on the same page.

Mr. Keoseian also welcomed Ms. Currier and asked to spend some time on the performance evaluations. Ms. Currier stated that it was important to have a six month evaluation as well as the annual evaluation. The six month evaluation gives the employee a sense of accomplishment and direction. Ms. Currier reviewed evaluation instruments. Mr. Keoseian asked about management evaluations. Ms. Currier stated that she had not yet researched those, however after talking with department heads, it appears to be fractured. Mr. Cunningham stated that the Board had not been consistent doing performance evaluations. Mr. Dillon stated that there were many reasons for doing six month evaluations, not the least of which was the probation period.

Mr. Cunningham asked Ms. Currier she had come across a CORI policy. Mr. Ritter stated that he had discussed that with Ms. Currier and she would present a report to the Board next month.

Mr. Dillon stated that we should be thinking of the few remaining by-law employees and see if there needs to be updates or changes to the by-law. Ms. Currier stated that she would put that on her list.

Mr. Cunningham noted that Ms. Currier works closely with the Personnel Board which currently only has two members. Mr. Cunningham asked that anyone interested in personnel issues submit a committee interest form to the Board of Selectmen.

Mr. Dillon moved to appoint Elizabeth Currier Ushamirsky as the Health Insurance Portability & Accountability Act Privacy Officer (HIPAA), effective November 7, 2006. Seconded by Mr. Saball. Unanimous vote.

Vote to Open Warrant for Special Town Meeting, Accept Article and Close Warrant for Special Town Meeting to be held on Monday, December 11, 2006

Mr. Cunningham stated that the reason for the Special Town meeting was for funding of Surrenden Farm and acceptance of parcel of land. Mr. Cunningham reviewed the schedule for the special town meeting.

Mr. Dillon moved to open the Special Town Meeting Warrant for the sole purpose of accepting 2 articles as follows:

Article 1- *To see if the Town will vote to accept the parcel of land shown as "Parcel B" on a plan entitled "Plan of Land – The Marion D. Campbell Trust, Farmers Row, Groton, Massachusetts, Tax Map 220, Lot 32," prepared by Beals Associates, Inc., dated October 17, 2006, a copy of which is on file with the Town Clerk, consisting of 91,436 square feet, or take any action thereon.*

and

Article 2 - To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Board of Selectmen to negotiate with representatives of the Massachusetts Department of Fisheries and Wildlife a Conservation Restriction on its entirety or a portion of the land known as the "Groton Town Forest," or take any action thereon.

and close the warrant immediately. Seconded by Mr. Saball. Unanimous vote.

Chief of Police Robert Mulhern RE: Sergeant Promotion

Chief Mulhern stated that he had posted an opening in the department three months ago for the sergeant position and he had 3 outstanding candidates who had scored extremely well on both the written and oral testing. Chief Mulhern stated that it had been a difficult decision, but he had chosen Officer Keith Weidlich and respectfully requested his promotion to the Sergeant position effective November 7, 2006, starting at the Sergeant Step 1 for one year, with a six-month probationary period. Chief Mulhern commended all the candidates who participated in the process.

Mr. Dillon moved to promote Officer Keith Weidlich to the position of Police Sergeant, effective November 7, 2006. Seconded by Mr. Saball. Unanimous vote.

Other Business

Nashoba Valley Technical School Community Project Proposals: Conference Table and Internet Technology

Mr. Saball had downloaded two pictures of sample tables for the Board's perusal. Mr. Keoseian and Mr. Dillon were in favor of the 1st design but specified they would prefer a natural wood finish.

Mr. Schulman asked if there were a possibility of having a table made for the upstairs conference room also, due to space constraints. Mr. Degen disagreed stating that the table held a lot of history and he had no issues with the upstairs table.

Mr. Ritter asked if there were costs associated with the project. Mr. Saball stated that the cost of materials would be required.

Mr. Cunningham stated that another requested area was live streaming over the internet which would increase accessibility. Letters would be sent to Nashoba Tech requesting the two projects be reviewed. The consensus of the Board was that they preferred design #1 in natural wood.

Mill Street Truck Exclusion (Draft Letter to Mass Highway)

Mr. Cunningham asked Mr. Ritter for an update. Mr. Ritter responded that all the information was contained in the meeting books. Mr. Cunningham asked if there were a consensus to send the proposed draft letter to Mass Highway. The Board concurred.

Appointments – Election Workers – Ruth Stevens, Shelia Nash, Kathy Morin, Martha Campbell and Nancy Pierce

Mr. Dillon moved to appoint Ruth Stevens, Sheila Nash, Kathy Morin, Martha Campbell and Nancy Pierce as Election Workers for the one-year term to expire June 30, 2007. Seconded by Mr. Saball. Unanimous vote.

Access to Town Counsel Memorandum

Mr. Cunningham stated that the Board has been concerned over the escalation of Town Counsel bills and he had requested that Mr. Ritter review the process. Mr. Ritter stated that he had been exceedingly concerned over legal expenses and 50% of the Legal Budget has been expended. Mr. Ritter stated that he was attempting to put a cap on legal expenses. Mr. Ritter reviewed a proposed memo to department heads.

Mr. Cunningham stated that answers to questions may be available elsewhere without having to utilize Town Counsel.

Mr. Saball concurred and asked if the memo addressed emergency situations and asked if the procedure would impede the process.

Mr. Keoseian stated that he felt the memo should be a more direct format i.e. a directive, not a suggestion.

Mr. Ritter stated that he would like to see the memo from the Chair of the Board.

Mr. Dillon noted that from viewing the information provided that the majority of the legal expenses stemmed from zoning and Chapter 40B issues. Mr. Dillon stated that it is just too easy to pick up the phone and call Town Counsel when the answers may be able to be discussed within the departments.

Mr. Degen asked if the Board was considering taking the Planning Board's legal budget. Mr. Cunningham stated that the Planning Board had its own budget and the Board was only considering the budgets which it has purview over.

Mr. Cunningham asked there was a consensus to send a more direct memo. The members concurred.

Mr. Dillon stated that the memo was reinforcing a policy which the Board already has.

Report of the Interim Administrative Officer

Mr. Ritter reviewed his IAO report.

- School Committee meeting was cancelled.
- State of the Town was cancelled.

Mr. Cunningham reviewed his correspondence and asked Mr. Ritter if the Town Accountant had been copied on a letter from the Attorney General to the Town Clerk. Mr. Ritter stated he would forward a copy.

Selectmen Liaison Reports

Mr. Cunningham reported that the Surrenden Farms Committee would be meeting on Wednesday to tweak the Conservation Restriction and discuss the necessity of segregating out a section of the road.

Mr. Cunningham stated that the Form of Governance Committee would be meeting on Wednesday to discuss two charters from the towns of Mashpee and Hopkinton.

Mr. Dillon reported that he had attended Trust for Public Land meeting and the SEIU 888 meeting.

Ms. Jenkins asked if there was a consent agenda and if the warrants would be signed. Mr. Cunningham stated that at the last meeting the Board had decided that the consent agenda was too cumbersome and the Board would resume signing the warrants without motion.

Mr. Dillon moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:20 p.m. Seconded by Mr. Saball. Unanimous vote.

Approved: _____
John L. Saball, Clerk

respectfully *submitted*,
Kathleen Newell
Office Assistant

Date Approved: *November 20, 2006*