

TOWN OF ASHBURNHAM  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING  
MONDAY – SEPTEMBER 20, 2010 – 6:30 p.m.  
TRAINING ROOM – PUBLIC SAFETY COMPLEX

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This meeting was aired live on local cable television.

PRESENT: Ed Vitone, Chair, Maggie Whitney, Clerk, Ron Reed, Member, Doug Briggs, Town Administrator and Sylvia Turcotte, Assistant to the Town Administrator.

I. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Maggie Whitney. Vitone called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

II. SOLICIT PUBLIC INPUT

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

*Reed motioned to approve the agenda as presented and was seconded by Whitney. Motion carried.*

IV. PRESENTATIONS & REPORTS

A. Paul Zbikowski – Goals & Objectives (6:35 p.m.)

Vitone asked Chief Zbikowski to go over his FY10 Goals & Objectives and then to go into his FY11 list. Zbikowski began by stating that some of his FY10 Goals & Objectives were ongoing. He noted that they got a lot done on the SOP (Suggested Operating Procedures) update and that it is now a part of their review process. He stated that the RIT (Rapid Intervention Training) was well underway and that they ran an in-house class and would also have someone go to a training class in order to have them come back and train others. He added that Engine II would be the RIT truck by next month.

He stated that the third item, getting everyone trained and licensed to the CDL (Commercial Drivers License) level was underway. He noted that eleven participated and four did get their CDL license. He also noted that they were planning a CDL Class with Gardner and Ashby and that this would be ongoing.

He noted that item 4, the upgrades for Fire Alarm Systems were complete. Number 5, to streamline department operations was also completed.

Number 6, to institute officer training program, was done and exams would be upcoming. He noted that number 7, NIMS compliance was also completed but they continue to add classes so it's actually an ongoing item.

Number 8, the ISO (Insurance Services Office) inspection has been a problem with the on-line program and Bob Salo is working on it so this has been moved to FY11. He stated that Number 9, attaining Nation Accreditation, has been ongoing and will be going into FY11.

He noted that the final FY10 item on his list was to provide 24/7 paramedic coverage. He stated that finances have made this a difficult goal to achieve and that it would be going into this year.

Zbikowski then went on to his FY11 Goals & Objectives. Vitone noted that the first item on his list should be modified from “Suggested” Operating Procedures to “Standard”. Zbikowski stated that there was really no deviation between the two and that it had been this way for the past 25 years.

Goal #2 on his list was the RIT training and he stated that he had just signed someone to a “train the trainer” class. He noted that he was thinking about making Goal #3, the CDL level, mandatory.

He stated that under #4, the Fire Alarm System/Dispatch/Communications upgrades, Lt. Recos was working with Chief Barrett to get this done. Under item 5, department operations, he was looking at cost reductions and that this was ongoing. Goal #6 was to institute an Officer Training Program which he is working on.

He noted that the ISO (Insurance Services Office) inspection, Item #7, was ongoing and that he would have them come out when the new water tank comes in and the new water system is up and running with the design. He stated that item 8 to attain National Accreditation was a long-term project. And, the last item, to develop a 5 year Emergency Medical Service was underway and would probably be submitted by FY13.

Vitone stated that regarding item 9, last year they did an ambulance service review and talked about this as an annual affair. Zbikowski noted that he would look at all costs in that program for the last five years. Briggs stated that this was part of the Department Operations review, looking for better ways to do things as well as lower costs. Zbikowski also noted that they are looking at ways to regionalize as well.

Vitone noted that the new staffing schedule should be set up as a matrix to see how it is working and should be tracked. The Board thanked Zbikowski for his report.

**B. Steve Nims – Goals & Objectives (6:50 p.m.)**

Steve Nims began the review of his FY10 Goals & Objectives. He noted that the number one goal, the work request log was working really well and that their goal was to address each issue within two weeks. Number 2, maintaining the level of service, he noted that they had been able to do so even with fewer employees. He noted that they use an engineering firm now rather than an in-house engineer as was done previously and that it was working very well.

Nims noted that the Roads Program, Item 4, has gone well and that they paved Lashua Road, 1,500 feet of Stowell Road, and overlaid Willard to Cashman. The last item #5 the signage program, had to be scaled back due to budget cuts but that he was working with Chief Barrett on the signage issue.

Nims then proceeded to review his FY11 Goals & Objectives. The number 1 goal, review of policies and procedures, he noted that he would be reviewing and updating the Winter Operating Plan and the Cemetery Rules and Regulations annually. He stated that the reverse 911 technology was now in place and that he was looking to try to condense and use the website more as an informational tool.

He noted that he was in the process of completing item #2, the relocation of the DPW office to Town Hall. He stated that he was re-routing the mail to Town Hall as well and

that they were working on setting up a break room and area for the DPW employees at the DPW site

He stated that he was working on Item #3 which was to improve the DPW and Municipal Grounds website by consolidating them into one. Item #4 was the installation of water lines on Meeting House Hill with the goal to install them after the water tank is complete. Installing signage was again on his list for FY11 and he noted that the new signs would be put up either this fall or next spring depending on how much time is available. He also noted that they would be identifying which streets need signage as many streets are confusing.

Nims noted his final goal was Cost Improvement and that he was working with the Town of Westminster on regionalizing purchasing and equipment use. He noted that they have a good working relationship with Westminster. The Board thanked Nims for his report.

## V. UPDATE – STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE FROM OAKMONT

## VI. OLD BUSINESS

### A. Review of BOS Initiatives and Task List

Whitney stated that there was only one item on their task list and that was regionalization. Vitone noted that they were scheduled for a follow-up meeting on this subject with Westminster at the end of the month.

### B. Continued discussion on Proposed Changes – Special Act/Town Charter

Vitone stated that they needed to quickly set up a Public Input Session to go over the proposed changes with residents before Town Meeting. He stated that after this session the Committee could meet to decide on the public input and then the Board of Selectmen could vote at their next meeting on October 18<sup>th</sup>. It was decided that the Public Input Session would be held on Tuesday, October 5<sup>th</sup> and that it would be noted on the Town's website as well as on the cable channel and that it would be held in the upstairs auditorium at Town Hall at 7:00 p.m. He also stated that a meeting of the Special Act Committee would be posted for Thursday, October 7<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. and that the final changes would be emailed to the Selectmen for their vote on October 18<sup>th</sup> at their meeting. Briggs suggested that they should have a Special Meeting on Tuesday, October 12<sup>th</sup> for this vote and the Board stated that they would schedule it for that night.

Vitone stated that the fines in the General Bylaws hadn't been changed since 1965 so they should be looked at. Reed stated that he concerns regarding the newly elected Selectmen and the emergency access of Town Buildings whether they were covered under the bylaws or by a procedure. Vitone suggested that these concerns should be discussed at the Public Input Session on October 5<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. in the Auditorium upstairs at Town Hall.

### C. 250<sup>th</sup> Celebration Committee appointments

Briggs read the list of individuals who were interested in serving on this committee as follows: Christiane Scarpino, Elizabeth Penney, Brenda Bujnevicie, Patrick Harvey, Elaine Membrino, Julie Olivari, Donna Slocum, Rachel Fowler, Steve Coswell, Pat Frederick, Donna Brooks and Dennis Cormier. He suggested that the committee size should be no more than nine members with any others as support. He noted that at

present there were five members so they should choose another four. Reed agreed with Briggs. Vitone questioned whether they should choose or have the Committee choose from the list and Briggs stated that they could ask Bettyna Donelson for the Committee's recommendations.

VII. TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT (His report is attached to these minutes.)

Briggs went over his report beginning with current openings on Boards and Committees in Town. He stated that he would add October 5<sup>th</sup> and October 12<sup>th</sup> to his Special Town Meeting timeline.

He also touched on the issue of Health Insurance stating that the Ashburnham-Westminster Health Group would be going out with an RFP for services.

Briggs noted that he had worked with the FY12 numbers for Ashburnham and Westminster and that he was able to guesstimate on the new growth. He stated that both he and Vitone had a meeting scheduled with both Mike Zapantis and Sherry Kersey on September 23<sup>rd</sup> to discuss their 5 year capital plan. Vitone noted that the Town made a five year plan and they wanted the school to do the same.

Briggs reviewed the new Water/Sewer rate structure which was approved by the Water/Sewer Commissioners at their last meeting. He also noted that the new Land Use Administrator was hired and would be starting on October 4<sup>th</sup>.

The failed VMS Renovation grant was discussed and Briggs stated that he would be more active with the next grant process. He described the process noting that the application would need to be in by December. He stated that a Public Forum was scheduled at the COA on Tuesday, September 28<sup>th</sup> at noon with MRPC reviewing the process. He noted that there wasn't much interest from Westminster or our seniors for a regional Senior Center. Vitone stated that they should probably go for roads instead as a sure thing rather than taking a chance to lose on a Senior Center. Briggs stated that Steve Nims was working on a list of roads for this grant application.

Briggs also noted that a Public Hearing would be held on Monday, October 18<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. at the Board of Selectmen meeting to discuss this process further with Shelly Hatch from MRPC. He stated that he would need to advise MRPC if we shift gears and go for the roads instead. Vitone added that if the VMS renovation fails then there's no option and Whitney stated that they needed to make the right decision. She added that they should "go for the best bang for the buck". Vitone noted that if the odds are low they should do something positive and Briggs stated that he would pursue this with MRPC.

Briggs stated that a few employees went to Leominster for a training session in Munis on the Water/Sewer billing process. Vitone stated that a thank you letter should be sent to Leominster.

There was a short discussion on the Firehouse Pub and concerns that had been raised and it was noted that the Building Commissioner and the Health Agent responded. Vitone stated that these responses should be communicated to Josh Wright.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

A. Bond approval requested by Town Treasurer

Whitney read the vote as follows:

“I, the Clerk of the Board of Selectmen of the Town of Ashburnham, Massachusetts, certify that at a meeting of the Board held September 20, 2010, of which meeting all members of the Board were duly notified and at which a quorum was present, the following votes were unanimously passed, all of which appear upon the official record of the Board in my custody.

Voted: to approve the sale of a \$400,000 1.25 percent General Obligation Bond Anticipation Note (the “Note”) of the Town date September 24, 2010, and payable March 24, 2011, to Eastern Bank at par and accrued interest, if any

Further Voted: that each member of the Board of Selectmen, the Town Clerk and the Town Treasurer be and hereby are, authorized to take any and all such actions, and execute and deliver such certificates, receipts or other documents as may be determined by them, or any of them, to be necessary or convenient to carry into effect the provisions of the foregoing votes.

I further certify that the votes were taken at a meeting open to the public, that no vote was taken by secret ballot, that a notice stating the place, date, time and agenda for the meeting (which agenda included the adoption of the above votes) was filed with the Town Clerk and a copy thereof posted in a manner conspicuously to the public at all hours in or on the municipal building that the office of the Town Clerk is located, at least 48 hours, not including Saturdays, Sundays and legal holidays, prior to the time of the meeting and remained so posted at the time of the meeting, that no deliberations or decision in connection with the sale of the Note were taken in executive session, all in accordance with G.L. c. 30A, §§ 18-25 as amended.”

***Whitney motioned to approve the vote and the further vote as read and was seconded by Reed. Motion carried.***

B. United Nation Day Proclamation for 2010

Reed read the proclamation which is attached to these minutes proclaiming October 24<sup>th</sup> as United Nation Day for 2010. ***Reed motioned to accept this proclamation and was seconded by Whitney. Motion carried.***

IX. CONSENT AGENDA

A. September 7, 2010 Minutes – Regular Meeting

***Reed motioned to approve the minutes for September 7, 2010 and was seconded by Whitney. Motion carried.***

X. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Whitney read the announcements as follows:

Town Clerk Reminders:

- Absentee ballots are now available in the Town Clerk’s office at Town Hall
- Wednesday, October 13<sup>th</sup> – Final registration for the State Election 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.
- Monday, November 1<sup>st</sup> – 12:00 noon – last day for filing applications for absentee ballots for voters who will be out of town for the State Election.

- Tuesday, November 2<sup>nd</sup> – State Election – Polls open 7:00 a.m. and close at 8:00 p.m. – J.R. Briggs Elementary School Gym, 96 Williams Road.
- Wednesday, November 17<sup>th</sup> – Special Town Meeting – Oakmont Auditorium at 7:00 p.m.

She gave a history of the Brian’s Gift Road Race – (On August 20, 1979, Brian Simmons set out on a path in life that was cut short, all too abruptly, by a drunk driver on July 26, 2003. Those whose paths intersected with Brian’s understand that he had a special gift to offer. Through this foundation, as his legacy, we hope to make the world a better place.)

September 25, 2010, starting line at Ashburnham Library, 4.5 mile race for runners or a 2.1 or 4.5 mile walk. Walkers start time is 10:30 a.m. and runners start time is 11:00 a.m. Registration begins @ 9:00 a.m. Race timing by Tri-State Racing. Auction, raffles, face painting, kids activities, food, music, apple sale and the Lions Club Scarecrow Decorating Contest.

She also noted that past participation has helped to provide:

- 2005 – Oakmont Youth Soccer Program - \$4,000 raised
- 2006 – Kid’s Against Hunger - \$5,000 raised with 20,000 meals provided
- 2007 – William J. Bresnahan Scouting & Community Center - \$7,000 raised
- 2008 – William J. Bresnahan Scouting & Community Center - \$8,500 raised
- 2009 – Food baskets delivered to area families in need.

This year’s proceeds will be used as follows:

The first \$5,000 will benefit Forward in Health based in Gardner, MA (constructing a much needed clinic in Haiti. The \$5,000 will “purchase” a room in the clinic and be named in Brian’s memory.)

The remaining proceeds will be donated to area food pantries.

She also read an email sent to the Board from the Town Clerk notifying them of the passing of Ashburnham’s oldest resident, Alyce J. Prentice age 103. She noted that Ms. Prentice resided at 55 Central Street and had only recently entered a nursing home. She was the recipient of the Boston Post Cane plaque on February 2, 2005 by Wes Landry, the Town Clerk at the time.

The next meeting of the Board of Selectmen will be held on Monday, October 4, 2010 at 7:00 p.m. at the Public Safety Complex in the Training Room.

Vitone again announced the Public Input Session on Tuesday, October 5<sup>th</sup> at the Town Hall in the upstairs auditorium to discuss the proposed changes to the Special Act and the General Bylaws.

## XI. BOS CORRESPONDENCE

## XII. SOLICIT PUBLIC INPUT

Vitone asked for public input and Pixie Brennan spoke up inquiring about the new schedule for the Fire Department and explained about an incident that had occurred over the weekend and the lack of response. Briggs stated that the schedule was set after analyzing the number of runs as well as to try and reduce overtime. Vitone noted that it is now in its second month and that after six months they would look at it again.

Briggs stated that he would look into the incident that Brennan referred to and check on the coverage on weekends.

XIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

Before they adjourned Whitney suggested that they might want to meet earlier than 7:00 p.m. It was noted that they would try meeting at 6:30 p.m. on a trial basis and see how it works. All were in agreement.

*At 8:02 p.m. Whitney motioned to adjourn the meeting and was seconded by Reed. Motion carried.*

Respectfully submitted,

Sylvia Turcotte  
Assistant to the Town Administrator