

TOWN OF ASHBURNHAM
BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING
MONDAY – DECEMBER 17, 2012 – 6:30 p.m.
TRAINING ROOM – PUBLIC SAFETY COMPLEX

This meeting was aired live on local cable television.

PRESENT: Ed Vitone, Chair, Leo Janssens, Clerk, Doug Briggs, Town Administrator and Sylvia Turcotte, Assistant to the Town Administrator.

I. SALUTE THE FLAG

Vitone called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. SOLICIT PUBLIC INPUT None

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Ed Vitone stated that he wanted to add an update on the Briggs School Project under Old Business. ***Leo Janssens motioned to approve the agenda as amended and was seconded by Ed Vitone. Motion carried.***

IV. PRESENTATIONS & REPORTS

V. OLD BUSINESS

A. Update on Briggs School Project

Ed Vitone stated that he had attended a Briggs Committee meeting last week and he noted that the project is under 40% cost incurred. He added that the budget looks good and the project is well run and well managed. He noted that he was impressed and that they were doing a great job.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. Vote to approve and post the warrant for the January 8, 2013 Special Town Election

Mr. Janssens read the warrant as follows:

*“To any of the Constables of the Town of Ashburnham
Greetings*

In the name of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts you are hereby directed to notify and warn the inhabitants of said Town who are qualified to vote in elections and in Town affairs to meet in the J.R. Briggs Elementary School Gym, 96 Williams Road, Ashburnham.

WARRANT 2012-2013

Tuesday the 8th day of January 2013

at 9:00 o'clock in the morning

to bring in their ballots for:

One Board of Selectmen – For term ending April 29, 2014

Hereof fail not and make return of this warrant with your doings thereon at the time and place of said meeting.

Given under our hands this 17 day of December 2012

Selectmen of the Town of Ashburnham”

Mr. Janssens made the motion to sign and post the warrant and was seconded by Mr. Vitone. Motion carried.

B. Vote to approve license renewals for 2013

Mr. Briggs stated that there were five groups of licenses to be renewed, Liquor, Common Victualler, Coin-operated Machines, Class 4 and Class 2. He noted that all establishments

having their liquor license renewed were all TIP certified, all the taxes had been paid and the Police Department had no issues with the renewals.

Mr. Janssens read the list of renewals as follows:

- Liquor Licenses Turnpike Rod & Gun Club – Club License
 American Legion Post #142 – Club License
 Tweedo’s Variety & Pizza, Inc. – Retail Pkg. Goods – All Kinds of Alcoholic Beverages
 Ashburnham Wine & Spirits – Retail Pkg. Goods – All Kinds of Alcoholic Beverages
 Ashburnham Marketplace – Retail Pkg. Goods – Wine & Malt Beverages
 Mr. Mike’s – Retail Pkg. Goods – All Kinds of Alcoholic Beverages

- Common Victualler Licenses Tweedo’s Variety & Pizza, Inc.
 Mr. Mike’s
 Cumberland Farms
 The Daily Grind & Bagel
 American Legion Post #142
 Turnpike Rod & Gun Club
 Café 57
 Dunkin Donuts
 Lucky Dragon II
 Village Pizza
 Ashburnham Marketplace

- Coin-Operated Machines Licenses American Legion Post #142
 Turnpike Rod & Gun Club
 Café 57

- Class IV Repairman Licenses Ashburnham Marine & Power Equipment, Inc.
 Roy’s Auto Repair
 Precision Automotive
 Ashburnham Collision Center
 Rick’s Auto Repair & Service, Inc.

- Class II Used Car Dealer Licenses Ashburnham Marine & Power Equipment, Inc.
 John P. Spuria & Sons, Inc.
 DJ’s Classic Cars

Mr. Janssens made the motion to approve the license renewals as presented and Mr. Vitone seconded. Motion carried.

VII. TOWN ADMINISTRATOR’S REPORT

Mr. Briggs began his report by announcing that the Town of Ashburnham’s 2011 Annual Town Report came in second place in the MMA contest in the population category of 5,000 to 15,000. He congratulated Sylvia Turcotte for this achievement. Mr. Vitone also stated how pleased he was with this recognition, noting Ms. Turcotte’s passion at meeting this goal.

Mr. Briggs noted that Nick Davis has stepped forward to fill the vacancy on the Advisory Board. He then noted the vacancies on the Conservation Commission, the Council on Aging, the Capital Planning Committee, Parks & Recreation Committee and the Board of Assessors. He did note that we were also looking for interested parties to serve on the Cable Advisory Board, adding that we need people to get involved.

He stated that he has been meeting with the AWRSD teacher negotiation team and that they had several more meetings scheduled before the actual meetings with the teacher’s union that start on January 17th.

He noted that they are working with the engineering firm GCG and Mass DOT to get us back on the TIPS list for paving of Route 101 South.

Mr. Briggs stated that training for Code Red would take place on Tuesday, December 18th and that there is a link on the Town's website "CODE RED" where residents can sign up. He did add that if residents don't sign up then they would default to the white pages for contact information. He also noted that forms would be sent in the next light bill as well.

He stated that he started reviewing the FY14 Budgets with the Department Heads today.

He noted that the Hazardous Material (Asbestos) Inspection was completed and it has been estimated that the cost to remediate the asbestos at the VMS Building would not exceed \$30,000.

Mr. Briggs stated that the RFP for the sale of South Station was advertised on December 14th and will also be advertised on December 21st. He added that the bid opening will be on January 3, 2013 at 2:00 p.m. He also noted that an RFP was generated for a regional Animal Control and Animal Inspector for the towns of Westminster, Winchendon and Ashburnham and that it was also advertised with the bid opening to be held on January 9, 2013 at 2:00 p.m.

He also mentioned that he was informed by Glenn Eaton, the Executive Director at MRPC that they would no longer be available to aid in the preparation of FY13 CDBG applications due to staffing arrangements and time constraints. Mr. Briggs noted that he is hoping that they would be on line in FY14.

Mr. Briggs stated he was notified that we received approval on the House and Senate bill S2271 regarding the Humvee and that once we receive the official notification we would proceed to return the Humvee to the Fire Association.

He then stated that there was an ambulance inspection on December 4th and while it passed, the inability to properly staff was an issue. He stated that Chief Zbikowski had put together a plan for staffing, for now. He noted that they haven't had sufficient volunteering. He stated that his concern is if this isn't good enough how do we go forward? He noted that they should put a small committee together to look at how to solve this and see what's best for Ashburnham.

Mr. Vitone stated that he read the briefing book from the Chief and noted that volunteerism has changed through the years. He stated that we need to look at all alternatives and what's best for the Town. He stated that a small committee would need to be put together and should include Chief Zbikowski, Doug Briggs and Advisory Board member Joe Oliveira and they should look at the total cost as it stands now, what's needed and look at every alternative. He added that they should come up with a resolution by the end of February. Mr. Janssens noted that they may want to have a citizen-at-large as well on the committee as this will have a major impact on the Town. Vitone stated that an odd number of members would be best and that ultimately the voters would have input at the Town Meeting. Mr. Vitone stated that this should be looked at every year like a business and the three points they should look at would be 1) add two extra people; 2) regionalization and 3) out-sourcing.

Chief Zbikowski stated that he looked at ALS service in ten towns and some cover 18 hours a day, some 20 hours a day and some have at least five or more full-time staff. He noted that many studies have been done over the years and that they are asking to fill the empty slot and to add a new person. Vitone stated that they need to do this quickly and look at today's environment and the cost to resolve as this is necessary to do our homework. The Chief stated that everyone has done a great deal of work to get these numbers together to resolve with a sustainable revenue source. He went on to say that they all do a myriad of things, not just driving the ambulance on calls.

Mr. Vitone stated that he would send a charter on what the team/committee should look at and that the Board of Selectmen has commissioned this committee to find a resolution. The Chief

stated that he needed to submit his report to the State the following day and Mr. Vitone stated that he should be honest and explain the process which includes the submission of a budget and the committee to be set up by the Board of Selectmen with a charge to come up with a resolution in two months. Mr. Janssens asked the Chief what would be the consequences if this plan of action is not accepted by the State and the Chief responded that we could be fined, they could remove the license or suspend it, we could be put on notice or could be dropped a level. Vitone stated that right now we don't have a budget to support more people so we can't say that we will hire someone now. Mr. Briggs stated that if we were able to rearrange salaries and wages we could do it but would need to cover benefits as well and Mr. Vitone noted that if the budget could support one new person, then they could okay this for next year too. He added that we need to do something responsive to the need with the committee recommendation.

Chief Zbikowski noted that if we show them good faith, we probably won't be dropped but the per diem coverage just isn't working. Mr. Vitone stated that we want to do the right thing and look at every alternative and then present it to the voters. He added that the draft of the charter would be sent out the following day.

VIII. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. December 3, 2012 – Regular Meeting

Mr. Janssens motioned to approve the minutes, as presented, from the December 3, 2012 Regular Meeting and was seconded by Mr. Vitone. Motion carried.

XI. BOS CORRESPONDENCE

X. DECEMBER/JANUARY MEETINGS

Mr. Janssens read the list of meetings as follows:

Mon., December 24	Town Hall Closed		
Tues., December 25	CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY		
Mon., December 31	NEW YEARS EVE – Town Hall closing at 3:00 p.m.		
Tues., January 1	NEW YEARS DAY HOLIDAY		
Tues., January 8	6:00 p.m.	Water/Sewer Commission	Lower Level – Town Hall
	SPECIAL TOWN ELECTION – J.R. BRIGGS SCHOOL GYM – 9:00 A.M. TO 8:00 P.M.		
Wed., January 9	5:00 p.m.	Board of Assessors	Assessor's Office Town Hall
Mon., January 14	10:00 a.m.	Council on Aging Board	Lower Level – Town Hall
	6:30 p.m.	Conservation Commission	Lower Level – Town Hall

XI. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Janssens read the announcements as follows:

Town Clerk Reminders:

- January 1st and throughout the year – Open registration of voters in the Town Clerk's office at Town Hall – Monday from 7:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. and Tuesday through Thursday – 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. (Town Hall is closed on Fridays.)
- December 19, 2012, Wednesday – Final registration for the Special Town Election. Town Clerk's office at Town Hall, 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.
- January 7, 2013, Monday at 12:00 noon – Last day for filing applications for absentee ballots for voters who will be out of town for the Special Town Election.
- January 8, 2013, Tuesday – **SPECIAL TOWN ELECTION** – Polls open at 9:00 a.m. and close at 8:00 p.m. at the J.R. Briggs Elementary School Gym, 96 Williams Road.

The Senior Center Christmas Party, which is open to all seniors, will be held on Tuesday, December 18th from 11:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the Senior Center in Town Hall. There will be a buffet lunch and the Overlook Middle School Chorus will sing.

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Selectmen will be held on Monday, December 17, 2013 at 6:30 p.m. in the Training Room at the Public Safety Building.

XII. SOLICIT PUBLIC INPUT

XIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

At 7:25 p.m. Mr. Janssens motioned to adjourn the meeting and was seconded by Mr. Vitone. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Sylvia Turcotte
Assistant to the Town Administrator