



Nick Davis stated that he is new in Town but he has talked with many people to find out what's fact and what's fiction. He stated that his biggest goal would be the financial state of the Town and to bring new small business in Town. He stated that they need to do what's best for the Town. He asked why the seniors said no to moving their senior center to the new Briggs school. Lois Somers stated that there were three reasons: 1) issue with traffic; 2) having to be CORI checked; and 3) their center would be open only during school hours. Mr. Davis noted that the Town doesn't have a huge revenue base and the school would have been a good place for the seniors. He added that we need to focus on bringing new revenue in Town.

Ms. Somers stated that she would ask the Selectmen to not act in haste. Mr. Janssens stated that the VMS Building would not be on the warrant in the spring. He also stated that they should use a citizens petition and learn how to use the system. Lorna Fields inquired if any town items were being stored at the VMS and Mr. Briggs stated that there wasn't.

#### IV. PRESENTATIONS & REPORTS (continued)

##### B. 7:00 p.m. Tax Classification Hearing

Present – Harald Scheid, Donna Burton and Linda Couture.

Leo Janssens read the notice that was posted in the paper as follows:

*“The Board of Selectmen will hold a tax classification hearing on Monday, November 18, 2013 at 7:00 p.m. in the Training Room at the Public Safety Building. The purpose of the hearing is to inform taxpayers and interested persons of the choices open to the Selectmen in setting a single tax rate for all real estate and personal property, or two tax rates, one for residential and open space and one for commercial, industrial and personal property. Members of the Board of Assessors will be present to explain the options available in choosing the classification. Taxpayers and interested persons may submit oral or written material at the hearing.”*

Harald Scheid introduced himself as the Regional Tax Assessor for the Town. He stated that this hearing was to decide on a single or split tax rate. He added that in the past the Selectmen have voted for the single rate. Mr. Scheid stated that the tax rate would be \$19.83 per thousand but that it could change slightly after the DOR review. He stated that the Board of Assessors recommends the single tax rate.

***Nick Davis made the motion to adopt the single tax rate and to sign the LA5 report once completed. Leo Janssens seconded and the motion carried.***

#### V. OLD BUSINESS

##### A. Review Veterans Day Services

Nick Davis stated that the services went very well and attendance was good. He noted some concerns from some of the Veterans present on moving the Veterans park. He urged anyone with questions to call him as he is on the Veterans Memorial Committee as well as Bill Johnson and Dennis Driscoll. Doug Briggs noted that Mr. Davis did a nice job speaking at the event and his speech was very eloquent.

#### VI. NEW BUSINESS (continued)

##### B. Discussion – Use of Town Property Policy (Meredith Fagan)

Meredith Fagan stated that she was in attendance with questions on the use of Town property. She stated that she was requesting that the Board of Selectmen modify the policy to allow residents to put on a Dog Show in May with money raised going to local animal shelters. Doug Briggs stated this is contrary to the policy and that he asked her to bring additional information for the Board of Selectmen's consideration. He added that it states clearly that only non-profits, boards of committees are allowed to use the Town property as insurance coverage is needed.

Leo Janssens stated that on September 8, 2009 the policy was modified so that the Board of Selectmen has the authority to make exceptions but that insurance would still be needed. He inquired what area

they were looking for and Ms. Fagan stated the grassy area in front of the Library which is part of Winchester Park.

Nick Davis stated that Ms. Fagan has been very vocal about dogs in Town. He stated that he is very dog-friendly and that he feels they should not take dogs to Winchester Park. He added that there were better places to have a dog show and that they should come up with different ideas. Meredith Fagan asked about Whitney Field and Mr. Janssens stated that it has a fence and may not meet their needs. There were a few residents present who commented in favor of the dog show. Mr. Janssens stated that Ms. Fagan should check out the outside area at Whitney Field and he suggested that they should have port-a potties and insurance coverage. Ms. Fagan asked if she had the support of a non-profit would she still need abutters' survey and are the rules different in that case? Mr. Janssens asked how many people were expected and she stated about 200. He noted that they would definitely need port-a potties. Doug Briggs stated that there was also the issue of parking as it could be an imposition to the residents on Chapel Street.

Meredith Fagan stated that she would look for a non-profit to sponsor the dog show. Leo Janssens added that she should also poll her neighbors on Chapel Street, arrange for port-a-potties and look into insurance coverage for the event.

## VII TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S UPDATE

Doug Briggs stated that we still need members on the Conservation Commission, the Council on Aging Board, the Board of Assessors, Capital Planning Committee, Advisory Board and Cable Advisory Board. He stressed that members were needed.

He stated that they have applied for funding for the water line replacement and it has been submitted to USDA. He noted that the grant would be between 15% and 45% and the interest rate would be 2.5%.

Mr. Briggs stated that the Town received notification that our reimbursement for the October 2012 storm in the amount of \$31,000 had been approved and that this would go directly to free cash.

He also stated that notification was received from the DCR that the extension of time has been changed to December 31, 2013 for the Dam Safety Phase I inspection of Lower Naukeag Dam, which Tighe & Bond, who has been contracted to complete, will have no problem to meet.

Doug Briggs stated that he met with the DPW Union on November 13<sup>th</sup> and will review the first proposal in Executive Session with the Board of Selectmen on December 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Mr. Briggs stated that the Fire Department has received a grant for \$1,998 from the United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service and administered by the DCR. He stated that this is a 50% matching grant of which the Gordon Erickson EMFRF will cover the match. He also noted that this will allow them to purchase an additional floating pump which would reach the far areas of Town. He asked the Board of Selectmen to approve the acceptance of this grant. ***Leo Janssens motioned to approve the acceptance and was seconded by Nick Davis. Motion carried.***

He also noted that they were looking for permission to apply for a grant for a pumper truck which is a part of the Capital Plan. This grant is only a 5% matching grant requirement. He stated that if we get the pumper truck it would replace engine 1 and a tanker. This would lower the amount of assets in Town. He stated that they are also looking to apply for a grant to purchase breathing apparatus and thermal imaging cameras worth \$160,000 with the Town paying \$38,000. ***Leo Janssens made the motion to approve applying for both grants and was seconded by Nick Davis. Motion carried.***

Mr. Briggs stated that an Insurance Advisory Committee would be meeting on November 19<sup>th</sup> where Edd Byrnes, our insurance advisory, would give a presentation on health insurance. He stated that this is the first step and the group would include union representatives from each entity as well as non-union reps. He

also noted that we will be looking at a GIC look-alike program for the last six months of 2014. He added that we are looking at alternatives being sensitive on the cost of this insurance.

Doug Briggs noted that we now have Property Info On-Line. He stated that there is a link for residents to now obtain property info online. He added that you should be able to see the owner of the property, photos and some property information by selecting the CAI property card tab. He stated that he was impressed as it is a very functional application which is a service which will allow residents to get information without having to go to Town Hall. He gave KUDOS to the Assessors.

He stated that the FY15 budget worksheets were distributed to all Department Heads and are due back by December 11<sup>th</sup>. He added that this will help set up the financial calendar. He has also started reviewing the Capital Plan Budget at the Department level, mainly with Fire, Police and DPW.

Mr. Briggs stated that he has submitted an application to the State for the Town to be recognized as an organization that can perform CORI checks as we have many activities that require this. He noted that we get the information very quickly and we are not charged a fee. He did add that this is not open to the public.

#### VIII. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

##### A. November 4, 2013 Minutes – Regular Meeting

*Nick Davis made the motion to approve the minutes of November 4, 2013 and was seconded by Leo Janssens. Motion carried.*

#### IX. BOS CORRESPONDENCE       None

#### X. NOVEMBER MEETINGS and EVENTS – Nick Davis read the meetings and events as follows:

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Wednesday, November 27 – Town Hall Closed for Thanksgiving Holiday

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Thursday, November 28 and Friday November 29 – Thanksgiving Holiday

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#### XI. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Nick Davis read the announcements as follows.

Town Clerk Reminders:

- January 1<sup>st</sup> and on – Open registration of voters at the Town Hall, Town Clerk’s Office, 32 Main Street, from 7:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. on Mondays and 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Tuesday thru Thursday.
- Dog registration is ongoing with the additional late fee of \$10.00 added to each license. The \$50.00 fines along with a letter from Police Chief Barrett have been sent to those who still have not registered their dog(s). This is in addition to the \$25.00 fine previously sent. If you have any questions, please call the Town Clerk’s office at 978-827-4100 extension 114.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Tree Lighting and Santa Parade (Food & Toy Drive) will be held on Friday, December 6<sup>th</sup> beginning at 5:30 p.m. This event is being held by the Ashburnham Parks & Recreation Committee, the Ashburnham Fire Department and the Ashburnham Fire Association. This event includes:

- Ornament making starting at 5:30 p.m.
- Santa Parade at 6:30 p.m. (from the School Boy to Town Hall)
- Tree Lighting at 7:00 p.m.
- Pictures with Santa and special appearances from the Grinch and Mr. Snowman.

The next scheduled Board of Selectmen meeting will be held on Monday, December 2, 2013 at 6:30 p.m. in the Training Room at the Public Safety Building.

XII. SOLICIT PUBLIC INPUT (5 minute limit)

Bill Johnson stated that he wanted to correct a previous statement on the feasibility study renovation cost which is \$2,375,299 and this came from the original report. He also noted that there is a report issued by the VMS Building Use Committee back on February 4, 2013 and this report is available at Town Hall or the Library.

XIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

*At 7:50 p. m. Leo Janssens motioned to adjourn the meeting and was seconded by Nick Davis. Motion carried.*

Respectfully submitted,  
Sylvia Turcotte  
Assistant to the Town Administrator