
BOARD OF SELECTMEN MINUTES

MONDAY, JANUARY 5, 2015 – 6:30 P.M.
TRAINING ROOM AT PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING

This meeting was aired live and taped for local television.

PRESENT: Leo Janssens II, Chair, Duncan Phyfe, Member, Nick Davis, Clerk, Doug Briggs, Town Administrator, and Sylvia Turcotte, Assistant to the Town Administrator.

I. SALUTE THE FLAG

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

II. SOLICIT PUBLIC INPUT (5 minutes limit) None

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Duncan Phyfe made the motion to approve the agenda as presented and was seconded by Nick Davis. Motion carried.

IV. PRESENTATIONS & REPORTS None

V. OLD BUSINESS None

VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. Class II License Renewal

Doug Briggs stated that Charles Bergeron was seeking to renew his Class II License at 180 Center Street. He stated that Mr. Bergeron forgot that it was due for renewal at the end of December. He also noted that there were no issues with this renewal. ***Duncan Phyfe motioned to approve the renewal and was seconded by Nick Davis. Motion carried.***

B. Senior Work-off Rate

Doug Briggs noted that the Board of Assessors has requested the Board approve an increase in the hourly rate for the Senior Work-off Program in order to stay current with the Mass General Laws. ***Duncan Phyfe motioned to approve and was seconded by Nick Davis. Motion carried.***

C. Regional Agreement

Duncan Phyfe, who is a member of the Regional Agreement Committee, stated that what they have presented is almost a full re-write. He stated that their first meeting would be held on Wednesday. He also noted that they never did a formal re-write and that the last time it was amended was back in 1987. Mr. Phyfe stated that his top issues would be the need to define capital expense and updating the payment schedule. He also noted that the statutory method would remain the same.

Bill Johnson stated that Allison Weissensee was on the Committee as well, as the Advisory Board representative. He noted that the \$5,000 capital threshold is an issue, is outdated, doesn't make sense and needs to be more realistic.

There was a short discussion on each town's percent of contribution. Bill Johnson stated that the Town doesn't get adequate notification of capital expenses and that the line of communication needs to be enhanced.

Doug Briggs stated that it's important that we have an agreement that both towns can adhere to. He noted that he feels we need to look at the following:

- Proper use of E&D funds
- Proper use of Stabilization fund (for capital items within the district)
- Proper use of Stabilization fund for Transportation (for transportation only)

He also noted that the payment schedule should be set and he proposed quarterly payments to coincide with our tax revenue (August, December, March, June). Mr. Janssens noted that this should be set to avoid any borrowing by the School or the Town.

Bill Johnson noted that Ashburnham did vote on some changes a while ago but the Town of Westminster didn't.

VII. TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Doug Briggs began his report by stating that we received a request from a resident to volunteer to serve on the Council on Aging Board or the Zoning Board of Appeals and that he was pleased to see some interest in serving. He noted that he had an inquiry regarding the Energy Committee as well.

He stated that he has received all department budgets and has generated expected revenues. He noted that because we have a new Governor coming in, he will be allowed an additional 5 weeks to submit his budget which would make it around March 5th before we would see our revenue numbers. He stated that he also reached out to Superintendent Hicks regarding this and Mr. Hicks stated that it should not impact the timeframe to submit the preliminary school budget.

Mr. Briggs stated that on December 29th the Board voted a Preliminary Denial on the Cable contract with Comcast but that it's still in the final stages of negotiations.

He noted that a Fire Union negotiation meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, January 7th and that this could be the final meeting before he brings it to the Board for their approval.

He reported that he would be attending the MMA Conference on January 22-24th and that he was asking for the Board's authorization to act as their voting delegate at the MIIA annual meeting. ***Leo Janssens made the motion and was seconded by Duncan Phyfe. Motion carried.***

He stated that after he met with Kevin Flynn who is now a private consultant on applying for grants, it was determined that due to the timing of the CDBG grant proposal and the quality of the application it would be best to hold off until next year's round of funding.

Mr. Briggs stated that the Energy Committee is working to put together their initial proposal for spending the grant by January 15th. He noted that they are looking at the Library since their energy audit is complete and would include insulation, thermostats, windows and an alternate heating source. He added that they are in the process of looking at audit firms to do Town Hall, Public Safety Building and the Light Department.

He stated that as of December 17, 2014 the Town through tax taking is the owner of Naukeag Hospital. He stated that he has contacted MIIA to have the facility set up for Liability Insurance and that there would be a 30 day evacuation order sent to the inhabitants. He added that Paul Pollastri is looking at different options for the owner who has up to 12 months to reclaim the property by paying past due taxes and fees.

VIII. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. December 15, 2014 Minutes – Regular Meeting

Duncan Phyfe motioned to approve the minutes from the December 15, 2014 Regular Meeting and was seconded by Leo Janssens. Motion carried. It was noted that Nick Davis was not in attendance at this meeting.

IX. BOS CORRESPONDENCE

Leo Janssens stated that he received an email from a Hillandale Road resident regarding roads and other issues in Town and that he would forward this to Doug Briggs to respond.

X. JANUARY MEETINGS AND EVENTS - Nick Davis read the following:

- Tuesday, January 13th @6:00 p.m. – Water/Sewer Commission – Lower Level Town Hall
- Wednesday, January 14th @5:00 p.m. – Board of Assessors – Assessors Office Town Hall
- Thursday, January 8th @6:30 p.m. – Municipal Light Board – Training Room Public Safety Bldg.

XI. ANNOUNCEMENTS - Nick Davis read the following:

Town Clerk Reminders:

- January 1st 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.

Tyler Wolanin, legislative aide to State Senator Anne Gobi, will be in the Lower Level Meeting Room at Town Hall on Monday, January 12th from noon to 1:00 p.m. to meet with any interested constituents or town officials.

The first of many events celebrating the Town’s 250th Anniversary, the Christmas Tree Bonfire and Family Skate, will be held on Saturday, January 17, 2015 from 4:00 to 7:00 p.m. at the Fitchburg Sportsmen’s Club, Swallow Hill, Route 119. You can drop off trees at Landry Field, 8 Williams Road, from January 3rd thru January 15th for this event.

The next scheduled Board of Selectmen meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 20, 2015 at 6:30 p.m. in the Training Room at the Public Safety Building. This meeting is scheduled for Tuesday because of the Martin Luther King holiday on Monday, January 19th.

XII. SOLICIT PUBLIC INPUT (5 minute limit) None

XII. EXECUTIVE SESSION None

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

***At 7:01 p.m. Duncan Phyfe motioned to adjourn the meeting and was seconded by Nick Davis.
Motion carried.***

Respectfully submitted,
Sylvia Turcotte, Assistant to the Town Administrator