

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 2015 – 6:30 P.M.
TRAINING ROOM – PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING

This meeting was aired live and taped for local television.

PRESENT: Duncan Phyfe, Chair, Leo Janssens II, Member, Kyle Johnson, Clerk, Doug Briggs, Town Administrator, and Sylvia Turcotte, Executive Assistant.

I. SALUTE THE FLAG

Duncan Phyfe 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

Leo Janssens motioned to approve the agenda as presented and was seconded by Kyle Johnson. Motion carried.

IV. PRESENTATIONS & REPORTS None

A. Tax Classification Hearing

A motion was made by Leo Janssens to open the Tax Classification Hearing and was seconded by Kyle Johnson. Motion carried.

Kyle Johnson read the notice as follows:

“The Board of Selectmen will hold a tax classification hearing on Monday, November 16, 2015 at 6:30 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 and Linda Couture from RRG were in attendance and Mr. Scheid stated that the Board of Assessors recommends the single tax rate as Ashburnham only has a 5% commercial/industrial base. He discussed new growth and noted that it has been certified which allows the classification hearing to be held. He stated that the new tax rate would be \$22.75 with an impact on the average home being \$111 for the year.

Leo Janssens motioned to close the hearing and was seconded by Kyle Johnson. Motion carried.

Leo Janssens then read the following vote: “The Ashburnham Board of Selectmen votes in accordance with M.G.L., Ch. 40, Sec. 56, as amended, the percentage of local tax levy which

will be borne by each class of real and personal property, relative to setting the Fiscal Year 2016 tax rates and set the Residential Factor at 1.0000, with a corresponding CIP shift of 1.0000, pending certification of the Town's annual tax recap by the Massachusetts Department of Revenue." The vote was seconded by Duncan Phyfe. Motion carried.

The Board of Selectmen then signed the L5 form for the Assessors.

V. OLD BUSINESS None

VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. Update – DPW Building Committee

Kyle Johnson, the Chair of the DPW Building Committee, noted that they held an Open House at the DPW on Saturday and it was very well attended with some great measured feedback. He noted that this was the first of many events that they are planning and that their next meeting will be on Wednesday of this week.

B. Update – Downtown Focus Committee and Regional Agreement Committee

Duncan Phyfe, the Chair of the Downtown Focus Committee stated that they had their first meeting last week where they focused on the mission statement. He stated that they should have a member of the Planning Board on this Committee and Doug Briggs stated that he would reach out to them. Mr. Phyfe stated that they need to clarify the area and Leo Janssens noted that they should keep it in the Village Zone and Kyle Johnson agreed stating that this was a good recommendation.

Mr. Phyfe stated that the Regional Agreement Committee will be meeting again on December 1st and that both towns had their own issues. Ashburnham had concerns about Section 4 and Westminster was concerned about the assessment method and how they want more proportional representative, 5/4. Leo Janssens inquired if there would be a consensus reached and Mr. Phyfe replied that he thought there would be after the next meeting.

VII. TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S UPDATE

Doug Briggs began by stating that they have filled the openings on two Committees. Linda Couture has been appointed to the Conservation Commission and Rebecca Rice has asked to be appointed to the Historical Commission which is a Board of Selectmen appointment. He noted that Christina Sargent has enthusiastically approved Rebecca Rice's appointment. ***Duncan Phyfe motioned to approve Rebecca Rice's appointment to the Historical Commission and was seconded by Leo Janssens. Motion carried.***

Mr. Briggs noted that Larry Barrett, Mike Rivers, Paul Rekos and Steve Nims met along with Daniel Bourgeois of 1 Center Street to work on fixing the intersection issue. They are meeting again on December 2. Mr. Briggs then stated that he spoke with the DOT about this. Leo Janssens asked if this would affect our 101 paving project and Doug Briggs stated that they were two distinct projects but that the DOT said they would need to look at this again even though they have been working with Weston & Sampson all along. He added that he has contacted Senator Gobi to make her aware of the issue.

He noted that he has sent out the FY17 budget worksheets to all Department Heads and committee chairs and they are due back to him by December 9th. He has also met with the Capital Planning Committee Chair and Department Heads on the Capital Plan for FY17.

Mr. Briggs stated that an Open Enrollment Benefit Fair for employees will be held on Tuesday, November 24th and that effective January 1st, health insurance will increase by 11.5%. He added that the issue is that we can't change the carrier or deductibles until a union contract is changed. He added that they are sending out an RFP for June which may bring the increase down to 7-9%.

He noted that Tyler Wolanin, District Director, from the office of Senator Gobi, will hold office hours in the Center Meeting Room at Town Hall on Monday, November 23, 2015 from 4:00 to 5:00 p.m.

VIII. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. November 2, 2015 Minutes – Regular Meeting

Kyle Johnson motioned to approve the minutes of November 2, 2015 and was seconded by Leo Janssens. All in favor.

IX. BOS CORRESPONDENCE None

X. NOVEMBER MEETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Kyle Johnson read the following scheduled meetings:

- November 17 – 4:00 p.m. – Library Trustees – Stevens Memorial Library
- November 18 – 6:30 p.m. – Municipal Light Board – Light Plant
- November 19 – 6:30 p.m. – Planning Board – Lower Level Meeting Room at Town Hall
- November 25 and 26 – 6:30 p.m. – Town Hall closed for Thanksgiving Holiday
- November 26 and 27 – All Town Departments are off for Thanksgiving Holiday (non-emergency only)

Kyle Johnson then began the announcements by noting the openings on Boards and Committees as follows:

- (1) Trust Fund Commission
- (1) Council on Aging Board
- (2) Parks and Recreation Committee

He encouraged residents to come and be a part of Town government and volunteer to serve.

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.

The next scheduled Board of Selectmen meeting will be held on Monday, December 7, 2015 at 6:30 p.m. in the Training Room at the Public Safety Building.

XI. SOLICIT PUBLIC INPUT (5 minute limit) None

XII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Not required.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

At 6:58 p.m. Leo Janssens motioned to adjourn the meeting and was seconded by Kyle Johnson. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Sylvia Turcotte
Executive Assistant