

*BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING MINUTES*

**MONDAY, MAY 16, 2016 – 6:30 P.M.
TRAINING ROOM – PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING**

This meeting was aired live and taped for local television.

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

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 None

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

IV. PRESENTATIONS & REPORTS None

V. OLD BUSINESS

A. Update – DPW Building Committee

Kyle Johnson stated that the vote on the proposed facility wasn't successful but the job isn't done and the issues are still there. He noted that the Committee will regroup with the public feedback from the Town Meeting and will continue to work. He added that they lost this battle but didn't lose the war.

B. Update – Downtown Focus Committee and Regional Agreement Committee

Duncan Phyfe noted that the Downtown Focus Committee will meet next week and will work with the input from the Town Meeting.

He stated that regarding the Regional Agreement, the Ashburnham Board of Selectmen and Advisory Board as well as the Westminster Advisory Board all supported the changes that were proposed. He added that the Westminster Board of Selectmen wants to add the other method of assessment to the agreement. Bill Johnson stated that at the meeting of the Advisory Board last week they withdrew their support of the 5-4 split on members for the School Committee and want the 10 member committee. He noted that they would not support the other method of assessment but if they take this out of the agreement they would support the 5-4 split. He also noted that each town should vote in their own members for School Committee which would also allow them to recall, etc. Duncan Phyfe stated that his first thought was to reject the other funding method that the Westminster Board of Selectmen wants but he said he would allow this as long as we keep the 10 member Committee. After a short discussion ***Duncan Phyfe made the motion to accept the changes***

in Sections 4 and 5 and under Section 1A, bump to 10 members and strike Section 1B. Kyle Johnson seconded and the motion carried.

C. Review Health Care options under Chapter 32B

Doug Briggs stated that he was in favor of leaving the health insurance plan the way it is with the 4% increase and that the policy year of July 1 through June 30 was a good thing and he already had the increase in the budget. He noted that with the proposed plan they Town would have a savings of about \$25,000 which would be split with the Light, Water and Sewer departments. He noted that he would like to see it stay the same and ask employees to opt out and give them a stipend, which could be a significant savings to the Town (\$10k to \$12k savings on family plan). He added that he proposes no design change this year. ***Kyle Johnson motioned to go with the Town Administrator's recommendation and he was seconded by Duncan Phyfe. Motion carried.***

VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. The Board will do a recap of the Special and Annual Town Meetings

Kyle Johnson stated that generally the meetings went well but we could improve as the meetings were sometimes out of control. He noted that he was proud of everyone for their preparation but he was disappointed with the 250th Committee.

Duncan Phyfe stated that we weren't organized enough and should look at making things more clear on the yes and no votes. He noted that this was the most active meeting he has attended. He also stated that we should be more open with why people couldn't be heard.

Leo Janssens stated that he agreed with Mr. Phyfe and that he was impressed with the turnout coming to the meeting and how they expressed themselves.

Kyle Johnson stated that they should put out a page with how the votes are made and why for everyone to understand the protocol. He added that this would better prepare them for Town Meeting participation. Bill Johnson agreed and stated that they would print the Advisory Board handout on colored paper as they have done in previous years and the debt schedule will be included in the handout as well. He noted that the 250th issue at the town meeting was troubling. He added that without justification we couldn't give them more funds and it made it appear that we were taking their money when they knew the intent. Kyle Johnson added that the 250th Committee did a tremendous job but it's time to move forward.

Doug Briggs stated that the business of Town Meeting went well. He stated that he was pleased with the content of the discussion on the proposed DPW facility and Kyle's presentation went very well but it was disappointing that it didn't pass. He also noted that Bill Johnson did a good job on the budget articles.

Kyle Johnson stated that there were legitimate concerns that were brought up and the Committee does want the public involved.

VII. TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S UPDATE

Doug Briggs began his report by stating that with everyone's help we finalized the FY17 Budget and spending for FY16 in all departments is right in line. It's a great job by all!

He stated that he met with the Advisory Board to make two transfers from reserves to start the year-end cleanup.

He also noted that the Snow & Ice deficit will be covered when we do the recap at the end of the year and there should be minimal transfers.

Mr. Briggs stated that the Energy Committee has received authorization to proceed with the replacement of the boiler at the Library as well as the total replacement of lighting at the Library, Town Hall, and the Public Safety Building. He added that they will also do some additional insulation at the Library. He noted that the Committee will be applying for additional grant monies to get assistance in submitting a competitive grant application up to \$250,000 a large part to go towards a HVAC system at the Library. He added that we will see great savings with the lighting replacements as we have seen a 50% decrease in the light bill at the Public Safety Building. He noted that Ed Vitone has been the backbone of this Committee and Kyle Johnson agreed stating that both Mark Carlisle and Ed Vitone have done a lot of work and the process is very efficient.

He stated that he met with Marielle Stone, David Boyer from MA DEP, Charlie Packard, Val Daigle from the Water/Sewer Commission, Steve Nims, DPW Superintendent, Paul Rekos, Fire Chief and a representative from Weston & Sampson about a complaint issued by Gardner DPW Superintendent Dane Arnold about notification regarding the fuel spill that occurred at Cushing Academy on February 14, 2016 when approximately 35 gallons drained into the sewer system. He stated that it was a very good meeting, faulty information was corrected and accusations dispelled and a commitment from the Town to review Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) in regard to actions taken during a spill that affects the sewer system. He added that Clean Harbors came and said a shut-down of the system was not needed. He noted that an SOP will be done with Gardner and will take care of this going forward which will work better. He added that the DEP seems to be satisfied and okay with this. He noted that Dick Reynolds inspects all the schools and this shouldn't happen again. Mr. Reynolds annually inspects the schools, town buildings and his goal is to inspect all public buildings in Ashburnham annually.

Mr. Briggs stated that in order for us to get funds from FEMA and MEMA we need to adopt the Hazard Mitigation Plan that was upgraded by MRPC and accepted by FEMA. ***Kyle Johnson motioned to adopt the plan and was seconded by Duncan Phyfe. Motion carried.*** Chairman Leo Janssens signed the document.

He noted that he met with Steve Nims and Peter Valinski of Tighe & Bond to begin the engineering phase on the Watatic Dam and the process is moving along.

He stated that Weston & Sampson is finishing up the engineering for the TIP project on Route 101S from Corey Hill Road to the Gardner line and our member, Kyle Johnson, will need to push this through for us.

Mr. Briggs stated that as was mentioned at the town meeting, we will be applying for a road resurfacing grant that will open up on June 1, 2016. This is intended to cover Lake Shore Drive, Ferin, Harris and Cross Roads. Total value will be \$1M, and selection will be in the fall with monies available in the spring. He added that once they can they will apply. He also noted that the funds may not cover all four roads, as Ferin Road drainage needs to be fixed.

Mr. Briggs then stated that effective August 31, 2016 he was retiring as Town Administrator for the Town of Ashburnham. He stated that in 2009 he made the decision to change careers and make town government his full time position. He thanked Ashburnham for seeing his potential and giving him the opportunity to pursue his dream. He stated that there are many of you that supported me through my journey and for that I thank you. Ashburnham and its people will always have a spot in my heart.

Leo Janssens thanked Doug for his service. He noted that they would form a search committee and that Doug Briggs has stated that he would serve as interim until a replacement is found. Kyle Johnson stated that Doug Briggs has done a wonderful job and he thanked him. He added that they are big shoes to fill.

Mr. Johnson stated that they should set up a baseline for the Search Committee. After some discussion it was determined that the committee should be comprised as follows:

- (1) Advisory Board Member
- (1) Department Head Member (Police Chief Larry Barrett was appointed)
- (1) General Town Admin Member
- (2) Other Board or Committee Members (Library Trustee Ed Vitone was appointed to serve as Chair)
- (1) School Committee Member
- (3) Citizen Volunteer Members
- (1) Citizen Volunteer Member to serve as alternate

It was noted by Duncan Phye that all meetings would be held in Executive Session.

Duncan Phye made the motion to approve the structure of the Search Committee and was seconded by Kyle Johnson. Motion carried. It was noted that this would be posted on the website.

Doug Briggs mentioned looking into the Collins Center for help in the search although the quality of people on the Committee would be just as good. Bill Johnson stated that they should have the Collins Center come before the Selectmen to let them know what they do as the Board of Selectmen should decide. Doug Briggs stated that he would check to see if a rep can come and also check on the cost.

VIII. APPROVAL OF MINUTES None

IX. BOS CORRESPONDENCE Kyle Johnson stated that the Board of Selectmen received an invitation to attend the Open House at the Brandon Funeral Home on Sunday, May 22nd from 1 to 4 p.m.

X. MAY MEETINGS and ANNOUNCEMENTS

Kyle Johnson read the openings on Boards and Committees as follows: (1) Council on Aging Board; (1) Trust Fund Commission; and (1) Conservation Commission.

He then read the following May meetings:

- Library Trustees will be meeting on May 17th at 4:00 p.m. in the Library
- Zoning Board of Appeals will be meeting on May 18th at 7:00 p.m. Town Hall

- Memorial Day Services will be held on Monday, May 30th commencing at 7:00 a.m. with visits to several locations with a final service at the Town Hall at approximately 9:30 a.m.

Kyle Johnson 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, and closed on Friday.
- June 1st dog license fees are due; after this date there will be a \$10.00 late fee.

The next scheduled Board of Selectmen meeting will be held on June 6, 2016 at 6:30 p.m. in the Training Room at the Public Safety Building.

XI. SOLICIT PUBLIC INPUT (5 minute limit)

Bill Johnson asked if we had made any progress with the Municipal Light Board on how their money is handled. Doug Briggs responded that right now it’s on the back burner. Kyle Johnson stated that we should be meeting with them now. Bill Johnson noted that this was not a new issue and it needs to be resolved. He also asked what the mission was for the Downtown Focus Committee and Duncan Phyfe, Chair of that Committee, answered that it was improving the downtown area and that removing the DPW was the best approach to reach this goal. Bill Johnson stated that if the DPW is not moved then the Committee really has no focus. He added that at least three members of this Committee voted against moving the DPW and he questioned why they should still be on this Committee. Mr. Phyfe responded because they are volunteers. He added that the Committee is tough to work with but they were all volunteers offering to serve. Leo Janssens noted that they can’t remove members if they don’t vote for the DPW move. Bill Johnson ended by stating that the present DPW property is the only conceivable area to develop downtown and that there needs to be more meetings of the Focus Committee in order to accelerate the process.

Joe Kalagher noted the Planning Board’s need for a part-time Town Planner and Leo Janssens noted that it wasn’t a feasible option financially.

XII. EXECUTIVE SESSION None

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

At 8:00 p.m. Duncan Phyfe motioned to adjourn the meeting and was seconded by Kyle Johnson. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Sylvia Turcotte, Executive Assistant