

*BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING MINUTES*

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 6, 2016 – 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

Duncan Phyfe stated that they would add Keith Glenny from the School Committee to the agenda under Presentations & Reports to give the Board an update on the FY17 School Budget. ***Kyle Johnson motioned to approve the agenda as amended and was seconded by Leo Janssens. Motion carried.***

IV. PRESENTATIONS & REPORTS

A. Ken Lombardi – Account Executive, NFP Corporate Benefits

Ken Lombardi from NFP Corporate Benefits explained that Sections 21-23 of the MGL Chapter 32B were the rules and laws on how government supplies benefits to employees and retirees and the local option to negotiate health insurance and how to distribute savings. He stated that he recommends that the Board considers adopting this measure. He noted Blue Cross/Blue Shield offers two options, to either keep the present plan or change to the new plan. He stated that with the current plan, there would be a 4% increase and with the proposed plan, a 4% decrease with the year running from July to July. He stated that the Board of Selectmen should consider adopting the resolution and the proposal as Westminster and the AWRSD has done.

Doug Briggs stated that right now there is a 75% Town and 25% employee cost sharing but they would plan on changing this in the future. He noted that we need to get the new insurance in place in 60 days and to the Insurance Advisory Committee by May 1st. He noted that with the proposed plan, the Town would save \$33,000 which would be split with employees, Water, Sewer and Light departments. He also stated that he was confident that the bargaining units would get this done in a timely fashion and that the letters are ready to go if adopted.

Kyle Johnson made the motion to adopt the resolution and the proposal as presented and was seconded by Leo Janssens. Motion carried.

B. Resolution calling for full funding of the foundation budget for the schools

Ellen Holmes, a member of the AWRSD Committee, was present and read as follows: *“Therefore be it resolved that the Ashburnham Board of Selectmen calls on the Massachusetts Legislature and the Governor of Massachusetts to fully fund and adopt the recommendations of the Foundation Budget Review Commission in the immediate future.”* She explained the

background leading up to this resolution request, stating that this was regarding the health care and special education shortfall. She stated that she was asking for the Town to join the schools to move on this by writing a letter to hold them to this obligation. Kyle Johnson stated that this is critical and it doesn't need to be this way. Leo Janssens inquired if this would help with the school's deficit and he was told that it would. Mr. Janssens also stated that this information should be on the website. Ellen Holmes stated that she would deliver the letters herself.

Doug Briggs noted that with this resolution there really wouldn't be any more money for the schools as it's on a per pupil basis. He added that it's a good thing to do as a combined effort but that it won't happen. Ellen Holmes stated that it may be that we won't get what we are asking for but it's important to say that we're not going to accept the status quo.

Leo Janssens motioned to adopt the resolution and was seconded by Kyle Johnson. Motion carried. It was noted that the letter would be sent to both Senator Gobi and Representative Zlotnik.

C. Keith Glenny – School Budget

Mr. Glenny gave a review of the school's budget process which included cuts due to the deficit. He noted that the cuts include 18.9 equivalent teacher positions and with that they were still short \$166k which means an additional cut of 4.5 teacher positions and extracurricular activities. He stated that he was asking the Town of Ashburnham for \$79,846 in order not to have to cut the 4.5 positions. He also noted that they would not be taking any more school choice pupils because they are starting to worry about capacity. Kyle Johnson stated that after April 13th we'll be out of time so this needs to be resolved and he was prepared to work on this with them. It was noted by Mr. Glenny that the school budget will need to be certified at their meeting on April 26th.

V. OLD BUSINESS

A. Update – DPW Building Committee

Kyle Johnson stated that he didn't have much of an update. He did note that they have scheduled a joint meeting of the DPW Building Committee and the Downtown Focus Committee for Monday, April 11th.

B. Update – Downtown Focus Committee and Regional Agreement Committee

Duncan Phyfe noted that the Committee met last Monday and they discussed the present DPW property, going over the history. He noted that they were ready to meet with the DPW Building Committee on April 11th. He stated that the Regional Agreement was voted on by both Advisory Boards and the Ashburnham Board of Selectmen and that the Westminster Board of Selectmen still hasn't voted as of this date.

C. Authorize posting of the Town Election Warrant

Kyle Johnson read the Town Election 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 John R. Briggs Elementary School Gym, 96 Williams Road, Ashburnham.

WARRANT 2016-2017

Tuesday the 26th of April, 2016

At 9:00 a.m. until 8:00 p.m.

to bring in their ballots for:

One Moderator – For one year term

One Board of Selectmen – For three year term

Two Board of Health – For three year term

One Planning Board – For five year term

Two Library Trustees – For three year term

One Library Trustee – For one year term

One Municipal Light Board – For three year term

Two Ashburnham School Committee – For three year term

Two Westminster School Committee – For three year term

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

Given under our hands this 6th of April 2016.”

Leo Janssens motioned to approve the posting and was seconded by Kyle Johnson. Motion carried.

D. Review and vote to adopt the Remote Participation Policy

Duncan Phyfe stated that this policy covers almost every aspect but he suggested that the IT Committee should come up with tools to support each committee or board. **Kyle Johnson made the motion to adopt this policy with the interaction of the IT Committee and was seconded by Leo Janssens. Motion carried.**

VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. Review and Vote – Annual Town Meeting Warrant and Special Town Meeting Warrant Articles

Doug Briggs went over the ATM Warrant articles. He noted that Articles 1-8 was the consent agenda. He stated that Article 9 was the FY17 Budget, Article 10 was the override for the school budget, and Articles 11 and 12 were the Sewer and Water budgets. He stated that Article 13 is the Capital items. He noted that there's a place holder to possibly expand the capital plan to incorporate the school capital plan, with an additional \$100k for roads which would also include taking \$150k from the Capital Fund. He noted Article 14 was for the proposed DPW facility and Article 15 was the purchase of land by the Light Department which is at the corner of Turnpike and Williams across from their facility and includes 17 acres. He noted that they are looking at solar on this property and to upgrade their system and this property will meet their needs. He noted that Article 16 was put on by an individual who owes a lot of money to the Town and wants relief on the interest. He added that this has to go through the Treasurer and needs to adhere to a strict payment plan and to maintain it.

Mr. Briggs then went to the STM warrant. He stated that Article 1 is to transfer funds (\$30,000) from Article 13 of the ATM which wasn't used to repair the DPW sander and will now be used to complete the engineering study for Route 101 repaving on the TIP. He also noted that \$5,000 on this article would go towards the 100 Main Street project. He stated that the Free Cash amount is \$94,961. He stated that Article 2 is the 250th funds remaining, which is \$21,000 and how \$20,000 will be repurposed to repair the drainage at the Library with the balance of \$1,000 left for a time capsule event. He noted that a trust fund for the 350th celebration cannot be set up which is what the committee had originally proposed. He

stated that Article 3 was for the cost of Phase 1 permitting to repair Watatic Dam which needs repairs. He stated that the Watatic dam spillway is the problem and we need to attempt to start to do the engineering work as this is the highest dam in Ashburnham. He noted that Article 4 is for the engineering work for Route 12 and the storm water drainage and retaining wall. He added that we have been working on this for 7 years.

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

B. Review and vote to adopt “Email Communications Policy” for the Town

Doug Briggs stated that this would be a change with no individual emails and would be i.e. planningboard.com to go to all members of each board or committee. He added that separate emails cost the Town a lot of money. He also noted that someone, probably him, would get a connection to all emails and Duncan Phyfe added that one member of the BOS should be connected as well, like on the Water/Sewer Commission. ***Leo Janssens made the motion to accept this policy and was seconded by Duncan Phyfe. Motion carried.***

C. Appointment – Downtown Focus Committee

Doug Briggs stated that Joe Kalagher has stated that he would like to serve on the Downtown Focus Committee as the Planning Board representative. ***Leo Janssens motioned to approve the appointment of Joe Kalagher to the Downtown Focus Committee and was seconded by Kyle Johnson. Motion carried.***

D. Discussion on Request to hold Downtown Day event by the Lions Club

Doug Briggs stated that he checked with all the departments and they are okay with this proposed event. He noted that this was informational as he has approved the Use of Town Property Application Form that was submitted..

VII. TOWN ADMINISTRATOR’S UPDATE

Doug Briggs began his report by stating that they have applied with Mass Grant for a \$1m grant to pave Harris, Cross, Ferin Roads and Lakeshore Drive. He stated that the money would be available next year with the selection in September. He noted that small towns with rural roads can actually get these grants.

He also noted that we should be receiving our approved FEMA monies from the January 2015 storm in the amount of \$32,717 which will go to free cash next year. He noted that it was a good job by all involved getting these funds. When asked about this year’s Snow & Ice, he stated that any deficit would be covered by transfers at the end of the fiscal year.

Mr. Briggs stated that the Capital Planning Committee met on March 30th and that Supt. Mazzola and Sherry Kersey were present at this meeting. He noted that the School’s capital plan will be funded by reducing their budget and our assessment will not increase. The Capital Planning Committee reviewed the assets for the Capital article as well as the articles for the STM and is in agreement as to what is being presented.

The Energy Committee met with Kelly Brown from the Energy Commission and reviewed the current project status as well as looking into future funding and projects. Ed Vitone did a great job on his report on the work required at the Library. Projects proposed are the outside lights at the Public Safety Building, the Town Hall lights and the boiler and heat pump at the Library. He noted that they have already spent all the grant funds and are now applying for the competitive grant. He stated that this Committee is made up of a good group.

He stated he met with Steve Nims and the Joint Water Authority to review the contract for Veolia and after discussions about whether we wanted to look to take over the operation of the plant, it was determined not at this time and they entered into a five year contract with the next contract to go out to bid. He stated that we have been in discussion with the Winchendon Town Manager about taking over ownership of the Sherbert Road water line. Currently it is owned by Winchendon and we would take over ownership and Winchendon would reimburse us for the cost of installing a new line. They would be billed off a new meter at the town line area and there are currently over three hundred water users billed off this line. He added that this is only in the discussion phase and that this has delayed paving Sherbert Road because we're waiting to put in the new waterline.

He stated that he would recommend that the Board vote at the end of this fiscal year to reappoint the Water/Sewer Commissioners. He noted that he would suggest staggered terms. He stated that he met with them and had a good meeting. He noted that Leo Collette stepped down as Chair and Val Daigle took over. He noted that their duties include to oversee the operations of the Water/Sewer Department; to set rate increases or reductions and abatements; and to run the Joint Water Authority.

Duncan Phyfe inquired about the status of the Hazardous Mitigation Plan from MRPC and Mr. Briggs stated that he would check on this and report back to them.

VIII. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. March 21, 2016 Minutes – Joint Meeting with Advisory Board

Kyle Johnson motioned to approve the minutes of March 21, 2016 and was seconded by Leo Janssens. All in favor.

IX. BOS CORRESPONDENCE Kyle Johnson stated that the Board received a letter from a concerned citizen voicing his concern regarding overhanging and dead trees in Town. Mr. Briggs stated that when we pave a road we do take care of these issues and we also work with the Light Department regarding this issue with the powerlines.

X. APRIL 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 April meetings:

- April 12 – 6:00 p.m. – Water/Sewer Commission – Lower Level Town Hall
- April 13 – 5:00 p.m. – Board of Assessors – Assessors Office at Town Hall
- April 18 – PATRIOTS DAY HOLIDAY
- April 26 – AWRSD Meeting

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.
- Wednesday, April 13 is the final registration of voters for the Town Meeting – Town Clerk's office at Town Hall.
- Monday, April 25 12:00 noon deadline for filing applications for absentee ballots for voters who will be out of town for the Town Election.

- Tuesday, April 26 – 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.
- Tuesday, May 3 – Annual Town Meeting at 7:00 p.m. at Oakmont Regional High School in the Auditorium, 9 Oakmont Drive.

The next scheduled Board of Selectmen meeting was discussed and it was decided to move it to April 14, 2016 at 6:30 p.m. in the Training Room at the Public Safety Building. It was noted that the new meeting date would be posted on the website.

XI. SOLICIT PUBLIC INPUT (5 minute limit) None

XII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 8:10 p.m. the Board of Selectmen entered into Executive Session to deliberate upon matters which, if done in open meeting could detrimentally affect the position of the Town regarding strategy with respect to contract negotiations for non-union employees (Town Administrator) and to reconvene into open session only to adjourn. Role call was taken.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

At 8:40 p.m. Leo Janssens motioned to adjourn the meeting and was seconded by Kyle Johnson. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Sylvia Turcotte, Executive Assistant