BOARD OF SELECTMEN

MEETING MINUTES

DECEMBER 11, 2012

The regular meeting was called to order @ 7:36 PM. Present were Chairman Wozniak, Selectmen Haughey, Marchand, and Chamberland, Selectwoman Bik and Town Administrator Keyes.

The Board recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. Haughey accepted the minutes of the regular meeting of December 4, 2012, seconded by Ms. Bik. Vote unanimous. Mr. Marchand stated that the workshop session minutes were not available in the Board of Selectmen packets.

New Business – Chief Atstupenas introduced Mr. Scott Dion as the new patrolman for the Town of Blackstone Police Department. He stated that Mr. Dion is attending Fitchburg University and has recently graduated from Boylston Police Academy. Mr. Haughey made a motion to appoint Mr. Scott Dion, Patrolman, for a 1-year unexpired term to expire June 30, 2013, seconded by Mr. Marchand. Vote unanimous. Mr. Scott Dion was sworn in by Interim Town Clerk, Claudette Dolinski.

Good & Welfare

Department of Public Works - Mr. Michael Catalano, 20 Mendon Street, stated that he has a concern about the release of Mr. Michael Suprenant. He stated that Bellingham Road improved 100%. Mr. Catalano expressed his concerns about the future of FY 2013 Budgets without a Town Accountant.

Extended Time - Ms. Paulette Boyko, 96 Federal Street, stated that she would give the five minutes she is given for Good & Welfare to Mr. Catalano to continue. Chairman Wozniak asked if any Selectman would like to respond. Selectman Chamberland stated that he would have responded if he knew the content of Mr. Catalano’s continued conversation. Selectman Haughey, Selectman Marchand and Selectwoman Bik did not comment. Mr. Keyes stated that he is not the Acting Department of Public Works Director; he has only taken on additional responsibility.

Property Taxes - Mr. Paul Muller, 3 State Street, stated that property taxes were discussed at the last meeting. He stated that he went onto the Department of Revenue website to compare the Town of Blackstone to other towns with similar populations. Mr. Muller stated that the town’s tax bill is below comparable towns. He stated that he was a former member of the Finance Committee and that the reserve fund is exclusively in place to pay for ambulance expenses. He stated that appropriations must be made for transfers at an Annual Town Meeting.

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Correspondence

Cable Insurance - Administrator Keyes stated that MIIA has asked that cable television insurance coverage for those who are not town employees be implemented. Chairman Wozniak asked that Attorney Costello be contacted and stated that he disagrees with the decision. He stated that he does not want to restrain any opportunity to public access cable. He stated that if the Town of Blackstone follows MIIA’s recommendation we will not be able to air school band concerts or church services. Chairman Wozniak asked that Jacob Video be instructed to run the programs as previously recorded. Ms. Bik stated that we cannot be the only town that is being asked to obtain insurance. Mr. Keyes stated that the Board of Selectmen will have an answer during our next scheduled meeting. Mr. Chamberland asked that Town Counsel review the policy. Mr. Keyes stated that Town Counsel will review the policy; however, the original Board of Selectmen meeting was rescheduled from December 18, 2012 to December 11, 2012. Chairman Wozniak stated that the Board should vote to give an immediate opinion. Mr. Haughey stated that other towns do have independent programs with a statement of disclaimer stating that the town will not be held responsible. He asked for the issue to be placed on the Board of Selectmen agenda of January 8, 2013. Mr. Marchand stated that we should inquire about Bellingham programing insurance with MIIA. Mr. Haughey made a motion to keep the public programing in place as-is, seconded by Ms. Bik. Vote unanimous. Mr. Haughey amended the vote to include “a disclaimer must be in place stating that any and all statements are not the views of the Town of Blackstone and that the town will be held harmless”, seconded by Ms. Bik. Vote unanimous.

Hearings & Meetings

Continuation of Public Hearing – Tax Rate – Ms. Salamone stated that at the Board of Selectmen meeting of December 4, 2012 the Board of Assessors made a recommendation to maintain a single tax rate. Ms. Bik made a motion to continue to maintain a single tax rate, seconded by Mr. Marchand. Vote 4-1 in favor. Ms. Salamone stated that she provided a packet to the Board explaining a comparison of tax rates in surrounding towns. Chairman Wozniak asked why the information was given just prior to the meeting. Ms. Salamone stated that the Assessor’s office is available for questioning at any time. Administrator Keyes stated that the miscellaneous cost on the chart provided by the Assessor consists of health insurance and retirement. Chairman Wozniak discussed the chart provided by the Assessor regarding the tax rate. Ms. Salamone stated that we have minimal growth in commercial projects. Chairman Wozniak stated that if we raise the taxes on commercial projects it would generate taxes onto the commercial side of the ledger and help with the financial burden on home owners. Mr. Chamberland stated that we should offer Tax Increment Financing (TIF) to attract commercial properties. Mr. Chamberland asked if we have a list of

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commercial property available within the town. Ms. Salamone stated yes. Chairman Wozniak asked if a feasibility study would be beneficial to the Town. Ms. Salamone stated yes. Chairman Wozniak expressed his concerns about attendance and votes at the Annual Town Meeting regarding recommended articles. Chairman Wozniak discussed the importance of collecting rents on various leased properties using a solar farm as an example. He asked that the Water & Sewer Commission be invited to attend the January 8, 2013 Board of Selectmen meeting. Ms. Mary Jane Lee, 31 Hoyle Circle, stated that she understands how we can utilize land within the town and is interested in being a member of the Industrial Commission and will give her name to the Town Administrator. She asked if the town could purchase houses that may be abandoned on Main Street. Chairman Wozniak stated that the house on Main Street is owned by Sallie Mae. Ms. Boyko asked if more information could be given regarding the meetings of revitalization. Chairman Wozniak stated that Northeastern University will be returning to a Board of Selectmen meeting in the near future. Ms. Bik made a motion to close the public hearing, seconded by Mr. Haughey. Vote unanimous.

Old Business

Financial Operations – Chairman Wozniak removed this item from the agenda.

New Business

Board of Selectmen/Conduct - Chairman Wozniak stated that the behavior at the last board meeting will not be tolerated. He stated that no one should feel uncomfortable during a meeting and that he will run all meetings in an orderly manner.

Town Counsel – Chairman Wozniak asked that this item be placed on the January 8, 2013 agenda.

Appointment – Paul Muller – Mr. Haughey recused himself from the meeting. Ms. Bik made a motion to appoint Mr. Paul Muller, 3 State Street, to the JFK/AFM School Building Committee for a term to expire upon completion of objective, seconded by Mr. Marchand for the purpose of discussion. Mr. Marchand stated that he has great respect for Mr. Muller; however, stated that Mr. Muller once worked for a roofing company and asked if there is a conflict. Mr. Muller stated that he was on the Middle School Building Committee and recused himself when they discussed roofing materials. He stated that his company does not bid on the roof or property; only on the materials. Chairman Wozniak stated that JFK/AFM Roof is not just roofing material it will also include structural changes. Administrator Keyes stated that Mr. Muller can file a 268A with the Town Clerk and that the project is being run by the MSBA. Vote 4-0 in favor. Mr. Haughey returned to the meeting.

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Class II License – Ms. Bik made a motion to approve the application to transfer a Class II license from Al J. Motor Sales, Inc. 150 Main Street, to Robert E. Perrault, d/b/a REP Motor Sales, 150 Main Street, seconded by Mr. Marchand. Vote unanimous.

Payroll Warrant - Mr. Haughey made a motion to approve payroll warrant #12EWA51 and #12PW51, seconded by Ms. Bik. Vote unanimous.

Vendor Warrant – Mr. Haughey made a motion to approve Vendor Warrant #12EW51, seconded by Ms. Bik. Vote unanimous.

Good & Welfare

Selectman Chamberland - Mr. Chamberland wished all residents and Board members Happy Holidays.

Selectman Haughey - Mr. Haughey asked all to continue to contribute to Toys for Tots and the food bank this holiday season. Mr. Haughey thanked his family for being there throughout good and bad times. He wished everyone a happy holiday.

Selectman Marchand – Mr. Marchand thanked the Department of Public Works and Administrator Keyes for their assistance at Goulet Field. Mr. Marchand wished Happy Holidays to everyone. Mr. Marchand thanked John Wozniak for his wonderful traditional light show. He expressed his condolences on the loss of Ms. Bik’s cat.

Selectwoman Bik – Ms. Bik stated that a craft class will be held at the Blackstone Public Library and reminded everyone of the great programs offered. She thanked all employees for the work that has been done throughout the town. She wished all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Selectman Marchand - Mr. Marchand thanked the Department of Public Works their hard work utilizing the new/used tractor and mower. He stated that the streets look phenomenal. Mr. Marchand thanked the municipal employees for their service.

Chairman Wozniak wished everyone Happy Holidays.

Mr. Haughey made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:10 PM, seconded by Ms. Bik. Vote unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandy Nadeau-Lemoine