

**Board of Selectmen Meeting  
March 7, 2012**

**Present:** Selectmen: Mark Gilmore, Elizabeth Clarke, Carolyn Shores Ness (arrived late)  
Town Administrator: Bernie Kubiak

**Minutes:** Ms. Clarke made a motion, seconded by Mr. Gilmore, and voted, to accept the minutes.

**Public Comments:** none

**Selectmen's Comments/Announcements:** none

**BOH:** none

**Appearances before the Board:**

**Capital Improvements:** Tom Clark

Mr. Clark presented a list of possible improvements which he reviewed with the Board. There are minor items for town offices - money earmarked for IT updates Ms. Clarke asked about planned closing in of some windows in town hall. Green Energy funds are expected to be used for this. The amount planned for a replacement police cruiser has been increased in anticipation of increased cost for a vehicle and equipment. Mr. Clark explained that money reserved for a tractor has been repurposed to come up with a total of \$77,000 to purchase a brush cutter attachment to be mounted on one of the loaders. A paper compactor, partially funded with a state grant (DEP), is planned for the transfer station. This will allow changes in hauling, which is expected to reduce costs. Radio upgrades, part of changing communication systems, are planned. Another \$25,000 is planned for future ambulance replacement. Deerfield Elementary School is now twenty years old. There was discussion of generators to run the systems (refrigerators, etc.) during emergencies at the school. There is a need for working generators at town hall and the new highway building, as well.

Mr. Clark asked about the garage meetings to which Mr. Kubiak replied that the committee had been meeting on Friday mornings, but would be changing to Tuesdays at 10:00 am. Ms. Clarke said there are drawings that are fairly well along. Mr. Clark requested copies of minutes and to be kept in the loop. He was concerned that there had been no request to meet with the Capital Committee. He asked what site had been chosen and was told that a portion of the Oxford property would be used. The idea being to use only 2 - 3 acres of the 16 acre site, leaving the rest for sale/redevelopment.

Mr. Clark said there is \$50,000 set aside for a new roof on the elementary school. There is a request for \$10,000 for engineering work, as there may be some other issues. There may be some money available from the Energy Committee. The elementary school improvements include replacing three main entry doors, partly because they need to be replaced, as well as, for energy savings.

In summary, the capital request is \$231,262.

**VFW Post Present:** Hale & Clapp

The VFW Post plans to hold a 5K & a 10K road race on May 22, 2012 at 10:30 am. Maps of the routes which begin and end in the center of town are available. Mr. Gilmore said the details of the routes should be cleared with the Police Chief. It will be a sanctioned race, insured by USATF, open to anyone who wishes to enter. Fund raising will be largely from the entry fees, but there will be some sponsorships. Mr. Kubiak said notification could be posted on the town's cable channel. At a future time the Post is considering offering a chicken barbeque.

**FCAT:** Present: Joyce Palmer-Fortune

Ms. Fortune was present to talk about the FCAT budget. This year, they're considering creating an Executive Director position. To do this, the FCAT budget would be raised \$28,000 which would be split between the towns and subscribers. The FCAT Board is comfortable with the candidate who has been working at the station 25 hours a week now. She said there is a job description for the position. The FCAT budget is funded by Comcast. Hatfield is interested in coming on board.

Ms. Fortune said there is growing interest in a program called, "Local Lense". Generally, a high school senior prepares a 20 minute show about things that are of interest, such as a play at the school. She said Mary Wheelan, Director at the South County Senior Center, is encouraging presentation of things that would be of interest to seniors. Mary helps with finding the talent and the students do the filming.

Another area under development is video-on-demand. There is interest in getting more of the town government meetings and activities available for viewing.

The Board was supportive of the plans presented.

**Police Department:** Present Chief Wozniakewicz

Emergency Notification System - The Chief said he'd reviewed the Code Red program, commenting that it sounded like a very good program at a reasonable cost.

Extra duty detail increase – The current rate of \$37.00 has been in place for 5 years. A survey of neighboring departments revealed a range of \$37.00 - \$46.00. At a department meeting, the officers voted to request an increase to \$39.00. Mr. Kubiak said the town adds a surcharge of 10%. He also said the revolving fund, which is used to manage detail monies, is in good shape.

Part-time patrolman – He requested that John Paciorek, Jr., a former Deerfield resident, currently living in Fiskdale, be appointed as a part-time officer. He is currently employed full-time in Sturbridge, and is available to work 3 – 6 shifts per month. He holds a masters degree from Western New England College. [Ms. Ness arrived at this point.] **A motion was made by Ms. Clarke, seconded by Ms. Ness, and unanimously voted to appoint Mr. Paciorek, Jr. as a Special Officer.**

Retirement - The Chief then announced his retirement, effective April 20<sup>th</sup>. He thanked many people for their support. He suggested that the Board approach Deerfield officers with a minimum of 10 years on the Deerfield department about possible interest in being interim Police Chief. Those interested would be interviewed by the Board and one selected to serve during the interim. He would be available to assist in the process. He was given an ovation by those present.

### **Discussion/Decision Items**

**Dean Property on Eastern Avenue** – Ms. Clarke reported that council recommended that the Board take another vote to sell the property. The Town has voted to sell the property at a Special Town Meeting. Mr. Kubiak said the only new wrinkle that has been discovered is that the lot was laid out before zoning and thus could be considered a building lot. However, this was not recommended.

A question raised at the previous meeting, was whether or not there was a hurry about selling this parcel. The town was interested in selling because: 1) there had been a request to sell by someone who had a use for it, and 2) it would be prudent to get it back on the tax roles. This led to a discussion of when to sell, i.e., was this the right time. Mr. Kubiak reported that the assessed value of the property is \$12,200. If it is purchased and attached to another lot or as a building lot, the value could be greater. He then explained that he and Mary Stokarski, the Town's Treasurer, have been reviewing parcels that the town owns with the plan of selling them to recoup the money for use in the 2013 budget. To be counted as free cash it has to be done before June 30<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Gilmore noted that property values are low at this time; should the town wait until the property might become more

valuable. Mr. Kubiak presented some statistics of the value of the parcel over the past several years, noting the value was fairly constant.

An individual, not identified, but an abutter to the parcel, stated that her interest in the property was to have the space to expand her house. She needed a decision in order to know whether to make plans to expand her house or move to a different location. Her husband said they had made this request more than a year ago.

Another resident, also not identified but also an abutter, stood and said he had asked that there be a delay. He said there are a couple of issues that will have to be addressed. His sons, who are farmers, have been using the property with access from the back for over 50 years. His boys are in the process of moving their operation over to North Main Street. They really do not know if they will be able to use the property on Eastern Avenue any more. He doesn't know if "they would want to bid on it or not. He was asking the Board for some kind of delay so that the sons could have time to decide whether or not to bid on the property.

The first abutters stated they had contacted who they thought were the owners of the other property with assurance that access would not be denied. But the gentleman who spoke said they had not spoken to him or his sister, who are the owners. He thought he needed until fall to make a decision.

Ms. Clarke asked if there was enough room for the house addition and the access and egress being discussed. The response was that the first party would be willing to sign a legally binding agreement allowing for the dual use for an agreed upon period of time. Their immediate need was for the portion of the lot next to the driveway, leaving plenty of room for the farmers.

A woman, who was not identified, but apparently the mother of the farmers spoke about moving greenhouses. She said the addition of more building would make moving them (the greenhouses) more difficult. This was refuted by the first couple, who explained that it would be some time before actual construction would begin.

Ms. Ness said it sounded like some sort of compromise could be made. She felt that within a short time frame something could be worked out that would be favorable to both parties, plus the town. The farmer said he didn't think it could happen in a short time. Mr. Gilmore explained that he couldn't be a mediator and urged that the abutters work out an agreement. Ms. Clarke suggested that the Board delay a decision for a week. Mr. Kubiak reported that some individuals had a habit of coming into town office making all sorts of noise about law suits and other obstacles. To which Mr. Gilmore responded that it was inappropriate for persons to engage in this sort of behavior with town employees. Ms. Clarke said one solution might be to bid enough to buy the property. The Board will have this item on it's agenda for the next meeting.

**Fee schedule** - Mr. Kubiak presented a proposed list of adjusted fees. The licenses for this year have already been issued, so if adopted, the new fees would be effective next year. Ms. Clarke noted that there didn't seem to be any consistency between electrical and building fees. However, she was mainly concerned that they be publicly announced, consistent, and available to everyone. Mr. Kubiak said current practice is that the electrical, plumbing, and gas inspectors are allowed to set their own rates. Mr. Gilmore will review the schedules and report back next week.

**Emergency notification systems** – Mr. Kubiak had some information on two systems – Code red and cctv. The low price for budgetary purposes is \$4,200. This is based upon 3,000 users, which is slightly high as Deerfield has 2,148 homes. Mr. Gilmore, who works with emergency notification systems, explained how these systems work. He discussed the importance for there to be someone who oversees the system on a regular basis and a limited number of persons who have access for making announcements. He thought the cost of the system could be charged out to Comcast. He

thinks it should be because it's for communications and it's not in competition with what Comcast does.

**Deerfield Emergency Medical Services application for Advance Life Support – A motion was made by Ms. Ness, seconded by Ms. Clarke, and voted, to support the application for intermediate certification.**

**Regional Dog Kennel** – Ms. Clarke said this is a badly written contract for a very good idea. She thought there should be an assessment up front for a pool of funds for operation. She suggested going with the contract and then holding their feet to the fire to redo the agreement. Ms. Ness wants to know if Greenfield and Montague have agreed to participate in this effort, as Deerfield currently participates with them on dog issues. This issue will be tabled until next meeting.

**Deerfield Watershed** - Ms. Ness said it is difficult to get money for hazardous mitigation projects without having a river assessment. She proposes a letter of support for an effort to get money to do a Deerfield watershed assessment. Ms. Ness read a sample letter which would go to all legislators, urging support. **Ms. Clarke made a motion, seconded by Mr. Gilmore, and voted to sign letters of support.**

**Transfers from Reserve Fund** – Mr. Kubiak had two requests: \$7,500 for legal expenses for union contract negotiations and \$3,400 for benefits for an additional veteran. **Ms. Clarke made a motion, seconded by Ms. Ness, and voted, to transfer the funds requested.**

**Appointment to Personnel Board – A motion was made by Ms. Ness, seconded by Ms. Clarke, and unanimously voted to appoint Joanne M. Carney to the Personnel Board for the balance of the year.**

**Other business** – Ms Ness had some thoughts which she wanted to discuss about sending a letter of support regarding digital messaging by MEMA. This is a topic for another time.

A motion was made by Ms. Clarke, seconded by Ms. Ness, and voted to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,  
Priscilla Phelps