

Minutes: Selectmen's Meeting – Monday, January 17, 2012

Present: Chairman Walter F. Alterisio, Daniel F. Devlin, Clerk and Procurement Officer and Member Kenneth J. Leva

The meeting was called to order at 7:00PM with quorum present. Kevin Welch provided update on school union negotiations – he advised he'd coincidentally seen in the Lowell sun that teachers were planning to protest – none of the negotiation team had been advised there was any issue until their protest. He advised that school committee voted unanimously to file complaint with the labor board over unfair labor practices. Negotiations had been in continuance – has never been suspended. He reported they'd gone back & forth, teachers union basically wanted to suspend during summer, indicated they'd get back to school officials with the next meeting date but never did. Kevin indicated he'd suggested to Superintendent to contact their representative & let them know they were in violation but he reported rep was right out there with them.

Chairman Alterisio reported that police union contract has been signed and extended thanks for Kevin's diligence on that project.

Road Commissioner Tom Dumont inquired as to police department plans for recycling cruisers this year, advising the highway department is interested in retiring the one they have and replace it with one of the discarded cruisers and put theirs on the block for bid. Fire Chief suggested it was fit for vehicle extrication training. Chairman Alterisio reported the board would be meeting with the chief on his revised budget – advisory board schedule indicates Police Department's interview is the 13th of February meaning that BOS wants to wrap things up with him prior to that. Fire & Highway are on Fincom's schedule for the 27th.

Tom Dumont advised that recently learned of Highway garage has some problems, maintenance needed – is there a fund for maintenance of buildings. Chairman Alterisio advised there are provisions for emergency repairs – recommending they get 3 quotes for the repairs.

Chairman Alterisio introduced Andrew Gould, candidate and choice for Town Accountant, unanimous amongst committee to appoint him. Chairman Alterisio has checked his references and all four gave high marks for Andrew and supported his capabilities to undertake this position. Chairman Alterisio requested that CORI be waived for Andrew in consideration of his present references and changes to the CORI process.

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Chairman Alterisio asked for motion to appoint Andrew Gould as Town Accountant for position thru September 30th – Selectman Devlin made motion to appoint Andrew Gould for term from henceforth thru September 30th; 2nd by Selectman Leva and voted with all in favor. Chairman Alterisio will contact Dick Choate tomorrow and ask him to set up meeting & timetable for transition. Chairman Alterisio further reported that Ruth Rogers has agreed to stay on until the end of March which should allow Andrew to decide what type of clerical support he'll need moving forward. Dick has contacted Eric from DOR who confirmed that Andy has been working with Town of Salisbury and was very supportive of his work.

Chief Rich advised that his budget has been prepared and would like to meet with Board to go over review. – Repairs etc. & maintenance budget around \$150K – some of which is what the insurance company wants done.. two items exhaust system for diesel @39K plus \$5k to do electrical and covers for hose was \$10K. – Chairman Alterisio indicated that no later than mid-February should sit down with Chief Rich. Budget templates are due 1/23. Chief Downes advised he'd spoken with Dana last week & asked if could move to a Tuesday or Thursday. Chief Downes indicated that he'd advised Fincom Chair that his budget request was being revised. Schedule Chief Rich for February 6th.

Chairman Alterisio reported he'd spoken with counsel – concern that bylaw requires dog under control – issue of common drive needs to be addressed – dog needs to be under control, under these circumstances – however our authority in this particular area are somewhat limited because of this particular circumstance – counsel suggests that a letter be sent to dog owner urging control but if someone is injured, MGL will give the Selectmen additional authority.

Minutes of 1/9 were reviewed – Selectman Leva provided motion to accept, 2nd by Selectman Devlin and voted with all in favor.

Bev Woods & Jay Donovan from NMCOG provided update on regional 911 project which has been underway for a couple of years. First attempt was unsuccessful. Chairman Alterisio invited Chief DePalma & Chief Downes and Mark Haddad to clear the air that this has nothing to do with present relationship with Groton – project hasn't made any decision but as commissioner Chairman Alterisio has his biases & has had opportunity to attend reviews & meetings when discussed. Dunstable supportive of service with Groton, are not displeased with

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service received over the years, but if state comes down and recognizes our regionalization but requires participation in wider scope. Chairman Alterisio's read is that state could play hardball if there's enough investment of monies required to maintain smaller region. Primary argument is that going to lose control and no-one knows the town – all are looking at the same thing. This is just informational, nothing set in stone.

Bev provided background on the project – advising on grant process – awarded \$100K for the analysis into what it would cost to create regional centers. She advised on the process, pursuing project not just for financial reasons but because there other ways regionalization could benefit the communities. She advised in a number of communities dispatchers are taking on other responsibilities including washing vehicles. She advised on the additional requirements coming on line for dispatchers. Most dispatch centers don't have capacity to handle large events – if you're a dispatcher lack of career path whereas there is in regional center. She advised some of the advantages of regionalized center is that would have multiple dispatchers on duty at the same time. Dedicated dispatch staff to meet emergency medical requirements going on line July 1st – equipment can be shared; lots of centers that state has put in place to entice regionalization. Are some disadvantages in regionalization – lack of control for some although Dunstable has given theirs up to Pepperell & Groton. In this study, they looked at communities for various combinations – seems to be critical population of about 70k people to make regionalization work. She referenced the numbers uncovered in the research and possible savings. None of the existing centers have capacity to take on the regional aspect – state will fund 100% of formation costs but would require public property – two parcels that have been looked at are Billerica House of Correction and Tewksbury State Hospital. She has met with the Middlesex County Sherriff who's expressed interest. One of the issues that will need to look at is transitioning existing dispatchers to the regional dispatch center – from time you look at transition will be about 5 years. So far, Billerica, Tewksbury & Chelmsford have been receptive. Westford & Pepperell wanted more time to get input from their departments – talked with 911 people who are doing some of the analysis into citing. By agreeing to move on to next phase aren't looking for authorization to move forward toward regionalization but to authorize continued research. Chairman Alterisio noted if there isn't a Dracut, Tyngsboro in with Chelmsford, Tewksbury and Dunstable might find themselves looking into another alternative area. Bev advised that they can run any kind of numbers that Town would like – can have consultant run

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multiple options for towns to look at. In the past state wouldn't fund Directors salary prior to center opening – now looking at funding costs for developing and building centers. Monies that pay for surcharge would require legislation for it to go away. Chairman Alterisio moving forward decision process for Dunstable – could elect with vote of support from this board, to continue on with the process that when it's all said & done Dunstable might not be part of 9 communities within NMCOG but part of another region. Chairman Alterisio indicated he felt it was a good move. Bev advised that as move forward, basically needs to be governing group for the center, and towns would be fairly represented – somewhat like the current situation – probably chiefs. Chairman Alterisio indicated he felt the new design & input would be similar. Chief Downes advised he'd asked Don to come over and describe what's received on regional basis – Chief advised that he thought we're in good partnership right now with Groton. Chief DePalma – relationship goes back 30 years – since then as work flow required more, have maintained relationship with town of Dunstable. One of the things that came out is that state has no intention to take away their center. He advised that their equipment has been updated over the last couple of years. Have been given ¾ of million dollars – increased dispatchers – have overflow dispatchers – are generally speaking 2 dispatchers on at all times. Have had long standing relationship with Town of Dunstable – unique relationship – 4 departments seem to almost function as one. State continues to fund their grants – haven't been told by State E911 that they're looking at them any differently, anticipates before the end of career – will be some changes. They have the ability to expand the service – they share a lot – provide lockup. If go to regional lockup that's another story – if have to send two men to House of Correction for lockup that's a problem. Provide lockup, dispatch after hours, and coordinate with Pepperell for Fire & EMS. Dispatching is 7 hours of boredom & an hour of straight out terror. Comfortable relationship – have been given money moving forward from state E911 for improvements & operation. Because of the region with Dunstable, Groton has reaped benefit but has kept costs down – would like to keep Dunstable with them and plans to at some point have heart to heart with Chiefs in Pepperell.. all know about Quinn Bill that would never go away and this may fall into the same. Chief Downes referenced his written document on the subject – looking at data – 91 dispatchers down to 55 dispatchers can't see where quality of service would be maintained with that number. Non-emergency calls – understands they won't be dealing with those – people stop in all the time – there'd be a loss there would need to have someone at station to answer those calls. Crust of what he'd really like them to consider is that we have

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something right now that works very well, need to be cautious that don't jeopardize relationship with Groton nor put them in peril because of our decisions. Bev advised that she suspects that Groton would be realized as a regional dispatch center if state looks at closely – population much different than other centers – discussion continued on impact, groundwork and relationships & service that needs to be protected. Chairman Alterisio advised that he felt it would be in Dunstable's best interest to promote Groton regionalized center rather than champion a regional center with areas with such different communities. Communication capabilities are already here; multiple forms of communication. Jay Donovan advised not asking for commitment to participate in regional dispatch center or to advocate for a transition of that type. Chief Rich advised he worries about losing connection and support that have now with Pepperell & Groton. Bev advised with present situation, call is processed based on the urgency of the call and will continue to be. Discussion continued on the different forms of communication and efforts put forth by Town of Groton to coordinate with Dunstable; point that people are people is true but the fact is that there's a relationship and things will change when you become part of large regional center. Part of what is going to be lost is the rapport that is available now – no personal contact. Cell phones, radios fail at the worst possible time – making sure that computers continue to talk. Chief Downes reported on the response and support received from Groton and Pepperell – looking at things open minded, from a business model, the way it stands, can't come back & say as business model this looks good, not compared to the service and relationship and support they have available today. Chief Rich further supported the Chief's position – can't beat the relationship that have available with Pepperell & Groton. Chief Rich asked what's going to happen with individuals of Pepperell dispatch who aren't union...would be very upset if union people were able to step over individuals with the same seniority, etc. Bev reported from Town of Norwell – that when the transition took place, no-one lost their jobs. Discussion continued on the potential for losing the state funding which is supposedly designated for regional E911 centers, can be changed at a later date as has happened with so many other projects.

Bev Wood reported on the executive summary for the document – basically worked with each community to focus on where within the community they wanted to focus their economic development – future housing site was MUD, preservation areas largely drawn from open space plan, many along waterways. If you haven't had a chance to look at them, asked them to do so within next couple weeks, is an opportunity to amend the plan so if the town finds anything that's

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incorrect or not on there, let them know and they can amend. Strong inference that if and when you did apply, would be looking for supportive .. big one for Dunstable would be the water line extension. One of the things they were asked to do was to present the plan to communities and ask that the community endorse the plan. Secretary was asked to include on the agenda. The board agreed to endorse and Jay will forward recommended language on to board's secretary for processing.

The board briefly discussed the opportunities with solar and noted request from Commissioners to Expend Proctor Parkhurst Trust Funds and voted unanimously to appoint Carol A. Vaillancourt to serve in that capacity until the next election, at which time she'll need to submit nomination papers to appear on the ballot.

Treasurer's warrants and were reviewed and signed; the Board signed the Presidential Primary warrants as presented by Town Clerk with her memo of 1-12-2012 and the meeting adjourned at 8:45PM after appropriate motion and vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Danice N. Palumbo,
Board Secretary