

Minutes: Selectmen's Meeting: Monday, December 10, 2012

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

The Meeting was called to order at 7:00PM with all members present. 1st item on agenda Fire Chief Brian Rich – talking about an approach to bring town residents into the Fire Department – thinking if we start with 16 & 17 year olds interested. This morning @6:30 in the morning he was the only one available for a medical call. He noted the state uses this program and he's already looked into cost for insurance coverage: with only 2 would cost \$100, but would like to go up to five (5) to start; which should be \$250 – for the insurance coverage. Program starts with teaching basic fire safety skills, after take certain classes – if larger fire, need aid to write down info, changing air bottles at building fire. Not able to handle hydraulic tools, etc., at scene but make it easier to. He reported at this time there's only one individual who's interested, Frank Wright's daughter who's been interested since she was 13. Will put notice up in Neighbor to Neighbor and hopefully put something at school – but want to limit to Dunstable residents. He indicated that if they get a 16 year old who's interested, will hopefully get a parent interested, if they're not already.

The board basically supported – Selectman Alterisio noted an eligibility requirement for maintaining a 2.0 average and hours are limited...curfew, etc. Selectman Alterisio encouraged Brian to take a look at the technical high schools as well. Brian has already gone to Holden MA who has a similar program – spoken with instructors and youths in the different programs to see what they liked and disliked about the existing programs. He'll also be talking to the wives, etc. for some interest to get an adult female on the team. Lieutenant Ben Simmons, Jeff LaBrie and another of the firefighters have participated in a program themselves. Selectman Devlin asked if there was a financial implication to the project – Brian advised that they'll be able to get used equipment for some and have budget for items that won't be available – like gloves that would fit. The board applauded the effort and the program.

Brian advised it's been a busy year, noting that we've already had around 300 calls, most Dunstable – about 20 for mutual aid. We're about 40% medical whereas a lot of other towns it's around 70%. He feels a lot of it is people driving themselves to the hospital as we have 5 hospitals that are in close proximity. Brian – one other thing – Massachusetts DCR gave him a trailer, and one of their members did all the work on it. – won't require additional insurance, etc. as can just be hooked onto existing. Brian asked his next step does he talk with Finance, etc. The Board is in full support of the program.

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Parks Commissioner Jim Tully being present, Selectman Alterisio asked if the nightlight down at Larter Field was going to be there all winter and Mr. Tully advised the tonic dispenser will remain there. Selectman Alterisio then inquired about the display for Christmas holiday display – what's the deal with the new sled – Jim advised that the gazebo was part of his effort, Christmas tree was donated by Conservation Commission from Flat Rock Hill conservation area and the other was provided by the Vocational School. The effort, including the concert was contribution from Recreation and Summer Concert group, noting the watering trough looks wonderful this year as well. He indicated that they're looking into an "adopt an island program" like the City of Lowell and that there's not a group that does the trough – Mitch does the trough along with Jim's dad (the Guzieka family donates time and money for trough along with his Dad and others the remainder). Jim wants to look into it further as he's concerned there may be some liability that should be addressed.

Selectman Alterisio reported he'd met with Judy Larter with respect to equipment that was in her barn – there was one wooden cabinet that did hold things, possibility for Highway Department, metal cabinets and series of doors from the Town Hall. Uncertain there's any use for the doors – they're old and uncertain whether they go back to 1907; uncertain the veneer is correct. Issue is, would he be crass in saying there really isn't any potential use; Mrs. Larter bought the doors but the remainder of the materials were moved to her barn on her good graces and she'd like to get rid of it. Can have Highway go down and take a look and if there's any value at all, and have a use for it, but if they don't move to the Transfer Station.

Other issue he'd promised to research was flag replacement which was initially funded via donations and after speaking with Mrs. Tully she'd like to resurrect the original program – 1st come 1st served with the original contributors having 1st right of refusal. He noted there was some question as to what type of flags are we looking for – originals weren't expected to be up for as long as they have been and that explains the wear and tear. Bill noted that he had some residents express concern that the flags were left up during Hurricane Sandy and no wonder they were damaged. Dave Crandall advised that if they knew far enough in advance and had manpower available, would definitely make every effort to take them down before a hurricane.

Selectman Alterisio and Bill referred to the final consensus for the Town Administrator – suggested 27th of December for a presentation to the Boards – 6 or 7 PM. Bill will put together a power point and secretary will send out feelers to see which works best.

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Town Clerk Carol Skerrett reported she'd spoken with David – have come to an agreement as to the best thing to do. Voting election equipment was her priority not specifically booths. Because the booths are broken and need to be addressed, she put out a feeler to town clerks on portable booths, etc. She advised she's received input and looking at an investment, if they can't be fixed would have to buy approximately 30 of them; her concerns were for the equipment, and the tampering, etc. She advised that they had someone push it out of the Library last year and call her up advising they had her equipment. Selectman Alterisio asked if Tech School could repair – how many are we talking about? Dave Crandall advised we're looking at junk plywood – there's not much room, going into the side of ½" plywood. Discussion continued on whether it made sense to have them all repaired. He indicated the way plastic is made today, seems it would be a more durable system, lighter and easier to carry but still the same amount of time ... just a matter of getting the voting equipment sometimes not a problem but would it make more sense to get a number from a moving company that does this type of thing.

Carol advised that she hasn't found a town around that hires outsiders – it's all handled by the DPW. Question of location of the polling place was discussed – parking limited here – still more logical to keep at Library for access, etc. Mike Martin advised it's not a problem – all boils down to time – Selectman Alterisio agreed but noted that he's pretty sure that can assure there aren't many towns which only have 2 employees on the Highway Department. Selectman Alterisio advised will explore along with participation of the Highway Department with the Advisory Board. Logistics issue: voting, monitoring, etc. Selectman Alterisio advised they will follow up – problem being, if in fact, this impending election coming up, will try to target that time frame. Carol hasn't yet spoken with Fincom as she wasn't certain whether would be purchasing new booths or how best to approach. She advised the people who sell and service voting equipment will provide her the necessary information. Booth required for every 125 voters. Selectman Alterisio suggested getting prices to the Advisory Board – as there may be the need before the next town meeting.

Road Commissioner Mike Martin then advised of an issue with the road leading down to Lake Massapoag off Lake Street, a private road, however noting it should be common practice that it's graded before the winter by owner of the road. Chairman Leva advised it sounded like we're having more occurrences of this type of problem with private roads, Sky Top Lane being one. Selectman Alterisio suggested the best approach might be floating the concern to one of the residents – don't want to put two communities at risk – either the people who live down there or those who are helping out. Highway Department has been trying to help them out

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but they have to protect the Town's equipment – doesn't want to get to the point of refusing to assist.

Board applauded the work of the Road Commissioners. Mike Martin provided update – well was empty – the general contractor is in agreement that it needs to be addressed and is looking at how to best address, as without a doubt nothing of any considerable weight will pass over it in present condition.

Selectman Alterisio referenced the latest communication from MIIA noting reimbursement for totaled cruiser – received today; along with DOR certification for our tax rate in last week's mail.

Selectman Alterisio referenced discussions and news articles pertaining to school budgets, etc. with Groton Dunstable Regional School District and Selectman Devlin provided information on presentation made by the interim Superintendent re: technical upgrades, etc.

Selectman Alterisio referenced reviewing the minutes and provided motion to approve minutes of December 3rd as written, 2nd Selectman Devlin and voted with all in favor.

Chairman Leva confirmed that secretary will be trying to pull something together for 12/27, checking availability of boards and officials; see what kind of response we have then; hopefully to get buy-in from multiple departments – plan to approach a group which has multiple retirees who would work in interim. – Chairman Leva noted there's also a pretty good pool of assistant town managers – Selectman Alterisio noted issue is to try to get a senior person in to look at what we have and define what's needed and once defined, bring in someone long term who can grow with the town.

The Treasurer's warrants were reviewed and signed, and meeting adjourned at 8:07PM after appropriate motion and vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Danice N. Palumbo,
Board Secretary