



Fairhaven Board of Selectmen

June 6, 2013 Meeting Minutes

Present: Chairman Charles Murphy, Vice Chairman Robert Espindola, Clerk Geoffrey Haworth, and Executive Secretary Jeffrey Osuch. Also present: Ronald Manzone.

Chairman Charles Murphy called the meeting to order in the Town Hall Banquet Room at 6:15 p.m.

ASSISTANT ASSESSOR INTERVIEWS

6:15 to 6:55 p.m. – Scott Fahle was interviewed by all members of the Board of Selectmen, Mr. Manzone and Mr. Osuch.

7:00 to 7:45 p.m. – Scott Timulty was interviewed by all members of the Board of Selectmen, Mr. Manzone and Mr. Osuch.

7:45 to 8:35 p.m. – Delfino Garcia was interviewed by all members of the Board of Selectmen, Mr. Manzone and Mr. Osuch.

Following the final interviews, the Board of Selectmen discussed the three candidates that were interviewed, the requirements of the position, and the responsibilities of the Town to complete the revaluation, and relationships with DOR.

Mr. Espindola motioned to interview Scott Fahle and Delfino Garcia as finalists for the Assistant Assessor position. Final interviews are to be held on Monday, June 17 on West Island. Mr. Haworth seconded the motion. Vote was unanimous. (3-0).

Mr. Manzone left the meeting after the interviews.

POLICE DEPARTMENT PURCHASE DISPUTE

Mr. Haworth approached the topic of a \$2,995 “stress free” chair for Police dispatchers, as proposed by Police Chief Michael Myers. General discussion followed. Mr. Osuch indicated that he could not support the purchase of a \$2,995 chair. Mr. Haworth stated that the Chief stated that the chair had a 10-year warranty and that he was buying \$800 chairs yearly for dispatchers and that many people were using the chair each day.

Mr. Espindola motioned to authorize the purchase of the \$2,995 stress free chair. Mr. Haworth seconded. Vote was unanimous. (3-0).

AUDIT

General discussion ensued on a tele-conference with the Town audit firm to review last year's audit. Dates proposed for a conference call were Friday, June 14 at either 1:00 or 2:00 p.m., or Wednesday, July 3 at either noon or 1:00 p.m.

BALLOT HANDLING

Mr. Haworth requested an explanation from Mr. Osuch regarding Mr. Osuch's handling of the ballots within the Town Clerk's office during the April 1 Annual Town Election.

Mr. Osuch explained that on April 1, 2013 after the election results were televised, while in his office, he could hear loud voices from the Town Clerk's office. Standing in the doorway of the Clerk's office, Mr. Osuch witnessed a large number of people crammed in front of the counter with Mr. Methia and Ms. Lowney having an exchange over the ballots that were rejected by voting machines. Also present in the room were Selectmen Murphy and Espindola, Mr. Withington and his wife, Mr. Methia, Beth David from the *Neighborhood News*, Ariel Wittenberg from the *Standard Times* and a number of other people.

Mr. Methia repeatedly asked the same question about how votes in the envelopes were not counted. Ms. Lowney repeated herself and indicated that she had answered his question for the fifth time. Ms. Lowney was showing Mr. Methia and others gathered around the ballots both were pointing at the ballots. A short time later, Mr. Methia, Mr. Withington and others left. Mr. Osuch said that he entered the room and asked what was going on? Ms. Lowney explained that others in the room were asking her about voter totals for both the Planning Board race and the Board of Health race. She had not counted the "rejected" ballots for the Planning Board race between John Farrell and Cathy Melanson. Earlier, she had announced that Mr. Farrell had won by 10 votes. Ms. Lowney was very upset with the questions being asked and Mr. Osuch offered to help her count the rejected ballots.

Ms. Lowney placed the ballots on the countertop and Mr. Osuch started to flip over each ballot counting who the ballot was for. Beth David from the *Neighborhood News* was on Mr. Osuch's right and other people were in the room. As Mr. Osuch counted the ballots, Ms. David recorded the totals for each candidate. Mr. Osuch said that he remembered that the 45 precinct totals were 23 DeTerra, 22 Withington. Counting the other "rejected" ballots left DeTerra overall ahead by one vote.

The same was done with the Farrell/Melanson Planning Board race and the total at the end left Farrell ahead by four votes. The news reporters had their totals. Ms. Lowney placed the ballots back in the envelopes they were taken from and put them in the safe.

Mr. Osuch left after that point.

At 10:15 p.m., Mr. Espindola motioned to enter Executive Session pursuant to MGL Ch 30 § 21:

- To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation – memo from Town Counsel on wind turbines

Mr. Haworth seconded the motion to enter Executive Session for the aforementioned reason. Vote was unanimous. (3-0). Roll call vote: Mr. Espindola in favor. Mr. Murphy in favor. Mr. Haworth in favor.

Respectfully,

Jeffrey Osuch

Executive Secretary

Minutes approved 6/17/2013