

**TOWN OF GREAT BARRINGTON
SELECTBOARD'S MEETING
TOWN HALL
MINUTES May 2, 2016**

PRESENT:

SELECTBOARD

SEAN STANTON
STEPHEN C. BANNON
DANIEL BAILLY
ED ABRAHAMS
WILLIAM COOKE

TOWN MANAGER JENNIFER TABAKIN

1. CALL TO ORDER:

Mr. Stanton called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m. Mr. Bannon moved to adjourn to executive session to discuss strategic matters involving the Housatonic Water Works Department of Public Utilities (DPU) and Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). The board returned to public session at 7:25 p.m.

2. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT:

Ms. Tabakin said three reserve officers have been appointed for the police department: Olivia Cobb, Robert Sam Hungate and Zachary DeSantis. She said the PD has received a grant to cover health insurance for Yuri, the canine officer. The Lake Mansfield Road design team is completing its report for the Senior Center will cover outreach work. A checklist for 79 Bridge Street Special Permit conditions to be met before a demolition permit is issued have been met.

3. LICENSES OR PERMITS:

- Mr. Bannon moved, Mr. Bailly seconded, to approve beer and wine permits to George Laye for the Guthrie Center, VanDeusenville Road.
- The Jess Cooney application for a driveway permit on Lewis Avenue was withdrawn prior to the meeting.

4. NEW BUSINESS:

Alana Chernila, who now manages the summer Farmer's Market at 18 Church St., said the plan is to close off the street this year. The market will be the same size. It will run through October. Two musical groups have been selected to entertain. Additional events will be held for children. There will be a tomato festival. The Co-op Market will double SNAP benefits, from \$25 to \$50. Parking at the Congregational Church lot remains an issue to be dealt with.

Brian Murphy of Colonial Power Group spoke of the Municipal Choice Aggregation. Essential, Colonial, an energy consulting company, would like to pick up where Hampshire Council of Governments failed in being designate to negotiate electric power rates. National Grid delivers the electricity, and charges for that. The electricity itself is charged separately. National Grid, Murphy said, takes little interest in negotiating the most favorable rates. For its services, Colonial would receive .001 cents per kWh. Townspeople would have the option of accepting the service, or opting out and locating another. Those who have already opted out will remain

opted out unless they want to opt back in. Murphy outlined the steps the Selectboard needs to take, i.e. retain Colonial as a consultant and review and potentially accept a plan once Colonial devises one. National Grid customers would be notified by letter of what's going on. Mr. Bannon moved to authorize the Town Manager to enter into a contract with Colonial Power Group, Mr. Bailly seconded, all were in favor.

5. MEETINGS:

The next Strategic Planning Meeting will be June 13 at 6:30 p.m. at Town Hall.

6. OLD BUSINESS:

Alice Maggio of BerkShares described the Entry to Entrepreneurship program for those ages 14 to 25, which has just graduated 15 individuals. The program will be offered again next January. Mr. Abrahams said he attended the graduation and lauded the program and offered to help promote it.

7. CITIZEN SPEAK TIME:

Christopher Windram and Reed Anderson of Housatonic decried the possibility General Electric would store PCB-contaminated soil from the Housatonic River along a stretch of wooded area between the river and Middle Road.

Carol Diehl of Housatonic gave examples of what she thought were misuse by other police departments of license scanning equipment. She opposed the Great Barrington Police Department acquiring such a device.

Ron Blumenthal complained that the Regional Agreement Committee, which has held discussions with West Stockbridge and Stockbridge representatives about allocating school costs in a different manner. He urged a symbolic no vote at town meeting on this year's Berkshire Hills Regional School District budget. Gabriel Senza, Sharon Gregory and Michelle Loubert made similar statements. Mr. Stanton at one point urged individuals at the meeting to take their arguments to town meeting.

In answer to a question from Mr. Windram, Ms. Tabakin said the town will paint the crosswalk at the foot of Highland Street.

8. MEDIA TIME:

In answer to questions from Eileen Mooney, the chairman said the executive session dealt with the DPU and Housatonic Water's requested rate hike; the Energy Committee has been mothballed; and the open meeting workshop will be held at the new Fire Station June 9 at 6 p.m. In answer to a question from Terry Cowgill, the chairman said the town is negotiating infrastructure needs with Housatonic Water Works, and has not filed a lawsuit.

9. ADJOURNMENT:

The board on a motion by Mr. Bannon, seconded by Mr. Bailly and approved by all members, adjourned the meeting at 8:30 p.m.



Bernard A. Drew
Recording Secretary