

BOARD OF SELECTMEN
SELECTMEN MEETING
TUESDAY, MARCH 24, 2015– 7:30 P.M.
SELECTMEN MEETING ROOM

Meeting came to order at 7:30 p.m. with Selectmen Michael J. Schleiff, Kim R. Roy and Troy E. Garron present.

The Chair announced that the meeting is being taped.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Board as well as those attending tonight's meeting stood to recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

The following business was discussed:

AGENDA

The Agenda for Tuesday, March 24th, was unanimously approved without revision.

Schleiff wanted to congratulate Shawn Harkins and Robert Veno for becoming two new Eagle Scouts of Halifax and said it was an honor to attend the ceremony. Garron added that he has been to twenty three Eagle Scout ceremonies and said that the community does not know how much they do for the Town at no cost.

MINUTES

Moved by Garron and seconded by Roy, the Board unanimously approved the following Selectmen Minutes:

Regular Session – February 17, 2015
Executive Session – February 24, 2015

Moved by Garron and seconded by Roy, the Board approved the following Selectmen Minutes with the exception of Schleiff abstaining as he did not have time to review them:

Executive Session – March 10, 2015 (1st session)

Moved by Garron and seconded by Roy, the Board voted as follows to approve the following Selectmen Minutes:

Executive Session – March 10, 2015 (2nd session)

| | |
|----------|-----------|
| Garron | Yes |
| Roy | Yes |
| Schleiff | Abstained |

AFFIRMED WARRANT AND COMMITMENT

Moved by Garron and approved by Roy, the Board unanimously affirmed the following warrant:

| | | |
|----------------|-----|---------------|
| Vendor Warrant | #78 | \$ 202,826.37 |
|----------------|-----|---------------|

APPROVED WARRANTS

Moved by Garron and seconded by Roy, the Board unanimously approved payment of the following warrants with the exception of Schleiff abstaining from the Police Department payroll in warrant #79:

| | | |
|---------------------|-----|---------------|
| Payroll Warrant | #79 | \$ 340,920.77 |
| Vendor Warrant | #80 | \$ 51,942.36 |
| Withholding Warrant | #81 | \$ 124,269.37 |

Moved by Garron and seconded by Roy, the Board unanimously approved payment of the following Selectmen bills dated March 24, 2015:

| | |
|--|----------|
| Charlie Seelig (reim. for certified mailings)..... | \$ 71.39 |
| Express Newspapers (legal notice/Lindy's)..... | \$ 35.00 |

The Board acknowledged payment of the Selectmen Office Payroll for the period March 21, 2015 in the amount of \$ 6,229.64.

The Board acknowledged payment to the Treasurer for the following turnovers:

| <u>Turnover</u> | <u>Amount</u> |
|-----------------|---------------|
| 2015-62 | \$ 10.00 |
| 2015-63 | \$ 1,302.27 |
| 2015-64 | \$ 35.00 |

GENERAL MAIL / DISCUSSIONS

Schleiff read the letter from Barbara Brenton of the Council on Aging regarding” Go the distance 1 Mile Walk Challenge on June 3, 2015. This walk will be the kick off to the COA “Keep Moving Walking Program”. Over twenty seniors have signed up and Barbara is inviting the community to take part in this whether they walk, run or help cheer on the participants. This will start at 3:30 at Pope’s Tavern. Participants will walk down to the Halifax Country Club and loop back to Pope’s Tavern where they will be invited to a turkey burger cookout party.

Roy has talked with Barbara about this and it coincides with 2nd Annual Hops for HOPS 5K and kids 1K run on June 6th. She mentioned that they are going to try and get some of the kids to cheer the COA on.

Building Inspector Letter of Resignation

Schleiff Read the letter from Tom Millias announcing his retirement as of June 30, 2015. The Board thanked him for his service to the Town.

Moved by Garron and seconded by Roy, the Board unanimously voted to send a letter of sincere and heartfelt thanks to Tom Millias.

License Renewals for Billiards and Junk Dealers

Schleiff read the letters that were sent to The Tee Box (billiards), Halifax Gold and Silver Coin Shop (junk dealers) License and Mum’s Secret Closet (junk dealer) regarding their annual license renewals.

SCHEDULED APPOINTMENTS***Lindy's General Store******Transfer Alcoholic License******Approval of pledge of license******Approval of pledge of inventory***

Schleiff opened by saying that this was a public hearing for March 24th regarding the application for transfer of License, pledge of license and pledge of inventory. All paperwork has been received. Schleiff asked if Roy and Garron if they had any questions.

Garron asked who would be the manager. Attorney Joe Devlin of Demakis Law Offices who is representing the buyers said that Subhadraben Patel is the manager of record. Her daughter, Falguni Patel is one hundred percent shareholder. Falguni and husband Jay Paul and Subhadraben will primarily be the three who will be working at the store is but there also will be three other family members who will be working there also.

Garron asked if they all have been TIPS trained and Mr. Devlin said that both Subhadraben and Falguni are TIPS certified. Mr. Devlin said that they have a little bit of time between now and when ABCC approves the transfer and he usually tells his clients to get it done before that time.

Mr. Devlin continued to say that he represents about three hundred people with the last name Patel, hence it is very common name. Garron asked if there were related to the other Patel family here in Halifax and her son said no same last name but not related.

Garron also asked if the hours were changing and Mr. Devin said that nothing is changing.

Roy wanted to just reiterate that everybody will be TIPS certified and that they have their license hung so it can be viewed for everyone to see and that the liquor gets locked up and secured.

Garron asked Mr. Worrell (current owner and in the audience) if everything good with him and he said that he is ready for something different as he has been here 18 years. Roy and Garron said that they wish him well and welcomed the Patels to Halifax.

Moved by Garron and seconded by Roy, the Board unanimously voted that the transfer of license, pledge of the inventory and pledge of license be granted.

GENERAL MAIL / DISCUSSIONS (CONTINUED)**Use of Town Hall Green**

The Boy Scouts would like to hold their annual yard sale on June 20, 2015 and are asking to use the town Green. No other events are going on and there have been no problems with previous years.

Moved by Roy and seconded by Garron, the Board unanimously voted to approve the use of the Town Hall Green by the Boy Scouts for their annual yard sale on June 20, 2015.

SWMI Grant

This is the grant to examine the feasibility of putting automatic controls on the Brockton Dam on Stump Brook. A preliminary meeting was held earlier this month and the grant contract has been signed. The contract between the engineering firm and the Town still needs to be signed.

Moved by Roy and seconded by Garron, the Board unanimously voted to sign the grant between GHD Inc. and the Town of Halifax.

SCHEDULED APPOINTMENTS (CONTINUED)***Utility Poles Hearing***

At 8:00 p.m., the Board convened a public hearing for the purpose of considering the three petitions submitted by Massachusetts Electric Company to place 5 new poles (P72 ½, 86-84, 113, 114, & 115) on Monponsett Street and to install 360 feet of conduit. Schleiff noted that public notices had been posted and abutters notified via regular mail at least seven days prior to the hearing. He continued to state the following stipulations; (a) 1 detail Officer (b) work was to be completed ASAP as Highway is planning n doing work late spring early summer on Monponsett Street and (c) water department is requesting a dig safe number. Present for the hearing was Scott Boyce from National Grid. No abutters made their presence known to the Board.

Mr. Boyce explained that National Grid will be placing 5 new poles and 360 feet of conduit is in relation to the solar farm project on Monponsett Street. The conduit will not cross the road and will be installed in the public way underground so that there are no overhead wires. Three of the poles is to extend the line down to Palmer Mill Road another one is to be a stump pole to support an existing pole and the last one is to accommodate additional electrical equipment (Pole 72 ½).

Schleiff asked if they were planning on laying the conduit when the ground thaws and he said yes. Garron then asked if it was going under the ground to the solar panels and he said yes.

Schleiff asked if any of the poles would be in the roadway or the sidewalk and Mr. Boyce said no. Schleiff asked how long did he think it would take and he said that he was not sure as he is not qualified to say but said that a pole set takes about two hours but is unsure with the other replacements.

Moved by Garron and seconded by Roy, the Board unanimously granted the request the installation on Monponsett Street of Poles 72 ½, 115, 114, 113 and 86-84. Schleiff added to the motion to give notification to the Police and Highway of when they will be coming.

GENERAL MAIL / DISCUSSIONS (CONTINUED)**Chapter 32B, Sections 21-23 - Municipal Health Insurance Reform**

Several years ago the State Legislature approved a statute that allows communities to change their health plans as long as the new health plans meet the benefits included in the Group Insurance Commission's most popular plans. However the reforms allow the Town to discontinue the "hold harmless" agreements sign with the various unions when the Mayflower Municipal Health Group approved higher co-pays for its most popular plans several years ago. The hold harmless agreements meant that the Town would compensate employees if

they paid more in co-pays and deductibles over the course of a year then they saved in the lower premiums.

Accepting Sections 21 through 23 does not change any of the plans but allows the Board to change the plans in the future. Certified letters have been sent to the bargaining units stating that a decision would be tonight therefore the Board was asked to accept these sections.

Moved by Garron and seconded by Schleiff the Board voted as follows to take the advice of the Town Administrator to accept Chapter 32B, Sections 21-23:

| | |
|----------|-----------|
| Garron | Yes |
| Roy | Abstained |
| Schleiff | Yes |

Monponsett Pond

Correspondence was forwarded to the BOS by Paul Collis of the Monponsett Watershed Association concerning public health advisories by the Department of Public Health. As stated in Seelig’s notes he did not see any particular action for the Board to take about this.

Blackledge Farms/Chapter 40B

Additional documents have been submitted to the ZBA as part of the hearing process. In Seelig’s notes he asked if the Board was planning to send comments to the ZBA.

Garron said he would like to table this until he has an opportunity to read it and Schleiff said that he does not have any additional comments.

Planning Board - Amanda’s Estates

The Planning Board received a revised site plan from the developer based on permits granted by the ZBA. The Planning Board determined that the site plan has been significantly revised so that the original approval of the site plan is no longer valid. The developer has been notified about this. Schleiff asked if the Board has commented on this and Roy mentioned that the Planning Board does not support the ZBA.

Talent Bank Form

A talent bank form has been received from Derek Bennett expressing an interest to serve on the Finance Committee. He is not running for the School Committee so could serve on the Finance Committee after mid-May.

Talent Bank Form

A talent bank form has been received from Michael Zarrella for a number of committees he is interested in serving on. The committees have All have been notified.

Talent Bank Form

A talent bank form has been received from Thomas Labo expressing an interest to be the Veterans’ Agent Assistant and a Constable. Wil Cory has been notified.

Water Tower Public Safety Antennas

Board of Water Commissioners wrote to say that because bids were opened on March 19th there was not sufficient time to add an “out rigger” for the public safety antennas to the specifications for the project. Interested parties will meet on March 25th to figure out how to proceed. Roy stated that the Fire Chief thinks cost is about \$5,000 and does not know where the money will come from and Schleiff said that if the bids come in lower we can use the money from there.

Snow Plowing Complaint

Mr. Co-Wallis wrote to the Board complaining that a Highway Department employee cleaned out the driveway of a private residence and in doing so moved the snow and trash from the private residence to Mr. Co-Wallis’ residence.

The Highway Department wrote to say that work was done on the sidewalks in Mr. Co-Wallis’ area and that any snow that was re-located onto driveways while that work was being done was then removed. The Department said that if trash becomes exposed as part of this process, then the Department will go to the location and remove it. The Highway Surveyor, who was here this evening, stated that the trash has been removed.

Moved by Garron and seconded by Roy, the Board unanimously voted to write to Mr. Co-Wallis, that we received his letter, is has been forwarded it to Highway Department and the Board have been informed the trash has been removed.

Recycling Complaint

Larry MacDonald has complained that his recycling has not been picked up. He has been told that his FY2013 recycling bill remains unpaid and a copy of the bill has been sent to him. No action needs to be taken by the Board Seelig just wanted the Board aware of this complaint.

SCHEDULED APPOINTMENTS (CONTINUED)***Sue Johnson - New Recycling Truck***

Ms. Johnston came in this evening to give the BOS some information on the new recycling truck they would like to purchase. She began by saying that the new truck will hold more stuff (4-5 tons), will compact and there will be fewer trips to Brockton (save a total of 5 hours a week in travel time). The existing truck, which was bought in 2006 (brand new), has broken down three times so far this year resulting in \$4,300 in repairs. The driver will keep the same hours and will see how it goes as it is going to be a learning curve for him.

Garron asked how are we paying for it and how much does the truck weigh because it could have an effect on the roads and. Ms. Johnson said it will be coming out of retained earnings and will cost \$215,277.

The totes (2,900) cost \$48 plus \$4.25 for the delivery of each one. There is a grant from the State that will bring the totes down to \$20 each but there still will be a balance of \$93,525 to purchase them. Garron asked where the totes would be placed for those who live on narrow streets and she said in their driveways. He then asked what if you do not have a driveway. She said that was a good question.

Ms Johnson continued to say that the totes are 96 gallons and will be on two wheels and everything will go into the one tote and seeing as we will be doing single stream. With that being said regarding single stream there will be a minimum additional cost of \$58,000 in disposal fees.

Schleiff asked how do you prevent other items from going into the bins and she said they will target one neighborhood at a time and the driver will have to watch. Schleiff then asked if the residents pay for it. Ms. Johnston said that she has not thought that out.

It was asked where the money for the truck will be coming from and Ms. Johnson said they were thinking about leasing for 5 years for a total of \$244,855. Roy then said if we had money in retained earnings she would not want to lease. Town Accountant, Sandy Nolan, said that we do not have enough in retained earnings and suggested we could ask the residents for \$9 for bins.

Twenty-nine hundred household have been factored in with the figures that Ms Johnson has provided however she did say that she thinks more residents will participate because it is easier for them but there still will be a percentage that will not do it.

Schleiff asked what the trade in for truck would be and she said they can take \$10,000 off the top. Garron then asked if anyone wanted our truck and Ms. Johnston said no because everyone is doing single-stream now. She added that the truck will not be ready until October and Garron said it will have to be voted on at Town Meeting. Roy said that it is on the warrant.

Ms. Johnston said we can still use the buckets we have now as we will still save time but the driver will have to look better. She stated that the totes are great because they have a cover if the homeowner was to keep them outside and said she can come back and talk about the buckets. The Board thanked her for coming in.

SCHEDULED APPOINTMENTS (CONTINUED)

Chapter 32B, Section 21-23 Acceptance

Schleiff asked if there was anyone in the audience who was here tonight to talk about this and no one made themselves present.

Garron thought that they should vote on this and then have Seelig talk with them on this in depth.

Moved by Garron and seconded by Schleiff, the Board unanimously voted to re-affirm the vote they took earlier this evening regarding the acceptance of Chapter 32B, Section 21-23.

Ambulance Abatement Correction

The incorrect figure (\$11,938.19) was submitted for the February 2015 abatements, therefore will need to be re-voted.

Moved by Roy and seconded by Garron, the Board unanimously voted to abate the following amount from the Ambulance Account:

| | | |
|---------------|-----|--------------|
| February 2015 | FOR | \$ 11,938.18 |
|---------------|-----|--------------|

Pothole Damage Claim - Joshua Derouen

Joshua Derouen of 19 Palmer Mill Road has filed a claim for a loss incurred on February 22nd. The insurer declined to pay the claim as the Town had not previously been notified about the pothole.

Fire Station Sign

The Chief would like to replace the sign on the building. He will be working with the Historic District Commission on this but would like any comments from the Board. Garron asked if there were any pictures and Roy said that he still in process and as soon as Historic District Commission provides their comments, he will bring back to the Board. Schleiff asked why he wanted to change the sign. Garron said that anytime we can make improvements on the buildings he thinks it is okay. Schleiff would like to find out why the Chief wants to replace the sign.

Pothole Damage Claim - Frank Bartolomeo

Frank Bartolomeo of 54C Hemlock Drive, Bridgewater, MA, filed a claim for damages caused on March 16th. The claim has been forwarded to the Town's insurer.

Chapter 61A Land

Kozhaya Nessralla has notified the Town of his intent to lease nine acres of land for a solar field on his property at 69 Summit Street next to the soccer fields. Even though it is not being sold, because he is taking it out of Chapter 61A, the Town has the opportunity to purchase the land. Seelig needs direction from the Board as to whether they want to proceed to hire an appraiser for the property. If the appraisal is not done within 30 days then, in essence, the Town has relinquished its rights for the property. If an appraisal is going to be done Seelig would have to ask the Finance Committee for a transfer from the reserve fund. Also the Board would have to place an article on the warrant of the Annual or Special Town Meeting on May 11th to purchase the land. If, by that point, there was no interest, the article could be passed over.

Garron asked what we would do with the land if they purchased it. He suggested sending to the other departments to get their input. Roy did not think there was much of an appetite at the Special Town Meeting in February for the purchase land. Schleiff that was true but that was because they did not want a cemetery and agrees with Garron to send out to the departments. Departments will be notified asking for their comments by next Tuesday.

SCHEDULED APPOINTMENTS (CONTINUED)***John Shiavone - Non-Binding Referendum***

Mr. Shiavone began by saying that this is a request to put a question on the May 16th ballot not an article in the warrant. He continued to say that several people on the Republican Town Committee are interested on this issue and they want to be pro-active in getting some feedback for our legislators. The way it works is that the bills for PARCC and Common Core are presented in January and is voted on sometime this year. His objective is to have a forum so that we can see how Town and voters to see if they are in favor of or against these particular laws so that we can let our legislators know their feelings on this. He added that we are not going to have another opportunity to poll the citizens as to how they feel on this unless there is another Town Meeting. The only other thing that can affect

this particular subject is an executive order from the Governor as he cannot put in any more bills. If these laws are voted on this year they could have an impact Halifax financially. He then asked the Board if they had any questions.

Schleiff asked what cost was he talking about and Mr. Shiavone said one particular bill talks about reimbursing the Town for PARCC compliance. His understanding is that the PARCC testing has to be done by computer therefore IT upgrades would be needed, which means if this bill is passed then the town would be reimbursed some of the money. He said some towns do not care about the reimbursement but thinks Halifax would want the reimbursed because we are so tight with money. He would like to know this so that they can direct the legislators as to what Halifax wants to vote.

Mr. Shiavone then mentioned that one of the bills talks about exempting individual school districts taking the standardized exam and/or use Common Core. Right now we would be mandated to do such if that particular bill passed that would give us the opportunity to do another type of less expensive testing then the PARCC testing. Schleiff asked if they were giving us an alternative and Roy said no.

Roy said that Common Core has been around for many years and remembers when MCAS came along and people were up in arms now they are trying to hold on to MCAS as it appears to be the best thing. The only issue she has is that we do not typically put non-binding questions on the ballot because we have to follow the Massachusetts Framework. It is her understanding that the decision would not be made until the fall and without having some sort of curriculum it would be left up to Halifax themselves to develop their own curriculum. She asked if any other towns have done this and Mr. Shiavone said last year Lakeville did an Article and Wilbraham is posing a ballot question at their Town Meeting this year.

John Tuffy, Superintendent, said that the School Committee has not voted or taken a stand on this. He said that the Board of Education is required by law to come up with curriculum frameworks on a regular basis. A lot has been said about Common Core and the curriculum they are following is the Massachusetts curriculum frameworks. In terms of PARCC at this time Massachusetts is in year two of a *test drive* and no decisions have been made.

He continued to say that the Board of Education, who makes the decision, was charged to come up with a decision this fall and Governor Baker has asked the chair of the Board of Education to conduct a thorough overview and hold at least five public forums around the State. Right now we are using MCAS, which is a seventeen year old test and is a paper and pencil test and PARCC at this time is both paper & pencil and online test. The future of testing will be online just because test designs are so much different and the results are quicker. Right now MCAS are done late spring and the results are not available until the following fall so the information is not available to us in terms of trying to group students and if changes need to be made there are not a disruption if we had the results sooner. Mr. Tuffy said that Mr. Shiavone was correct stating that the law does have to be changed but that is major change in how we conduct education in Massachusetts.

Mr. Shiavone said he would set up a forum to get the voter's feedback and said the problem is that there has not been proper debate on both sides of the issue. There is a lot of miss information on both sides and the forum will help clear

things up. Roy said the question themselves are difficult to understand and is concerned as this is a lot of information to give out and does not want to feel rushed as they only have until May to inform the public.

Robert Slager – Halifax School Committee

The only recollection he had of this coming up in conversation was he believes it was either right before or right after Governor Baker was elected and the thought was that they would wait and see what changes the administration might implement before they dealt in deeply into this conversation. He personally thought this was a responsible decision until he heard about this ballot measure on Monday and thinks this is premature as the process is working. He thinks we sent a message to the governor when Halifax helped elect him into office and it is pretty clear what the attitude is with several of our citizens regarding Common Core. As a school committee member he would like to take a stab at this with his colleagues first as they have not had the time to review these changes. Because of the change in administration it did not seem reasonable that Governor Baker was going to make changes to something that is so complicated within two months of being in office. He suggested again take a wait to see what changes are being made and if we don't like the direction then maybe the School Committee contacts our elected leaders or state officials and voice our views.

Linda Twiss Gioscia

This is too big of an issue to wait and see what happens as we need to let people know what it is all about. Residents have done some research on this issue and are frustrated that people do not understand it.

Lori Costa Kline

She attended the School committee meeting in October when the curriculum and Common Core was discussed and there were many parents who spoke up with their concerns. The school committee said that they needed to wait and see and made it clear that they were powerless to make any decisions or changes because it was in the legislator's hand. They were adopting the Massachusetts Frameworks, which the sub title says, Common Core. Our children are being taught common core and as parents whose children are learning under this framework, are concerned. We want to know what are options are and need an understanding of this. Ms. Kline thinks it should be on ballot so that the parents/residents can give their input and have the forums so that people are educated on both.

Mr. Shiavone said that he wants input from the voters so that our legislators will be able to make a decision and if not on the ballot having the forum is a waste of time. He continued to say that by putting it on ballot it will galvanize people to the forum knowing that they will have to make a decision on May 16th otherwise he does not think people will get involved on this subject or the decisions. These bills are coming whether we vote for or not and he wants to know how Halifax feels whether for or against it.

Garron said he has not heard whether this is good or bad for the kids and asked if this will prepare them better to go to college or going into the world or will this put them behind if other States have this testing. Putting the question on ballot is a good way of getting comments as these are the same questions voters are going to ask if put on the ballot. Garron said we need to have a forum for the voters. Shiavone agreed with Garron and said that he wants both sides involved in the forum as there are many questions he has himself.

Roy said typically to get a question on the ballot it requires 10% of the voters or the other way is having the Selectmen put it on. She is concerned as this is controversial subject and she just does not want to set the standard that any question can be put on the ballot.

Mr. Tuffy said that the School Committee is not going make any changes because as the law is now they can't make any changes without legislative process. He continued to say that we have been on this course since 2011 and will continue to do so until we get a new direction from the Department of Education.

Robert Slager

There was a very brief discussion either at their December or January meeting where one of the members brought up the possibility of discussing this issue and perhaps writing something to our legislation in support of challenging Common Core. His thoughts at that time was wait until Governor Baker gets settled in office and see what he offers and biggest concern is what the alternative is. He continued to say that the School Committee voted not to implement it this year because we had concerns about it. He wished they had the opportunity to have this discussion with the Board before it got to this point but nobody asked to put this on an agenda or have a further discussion on it.

Bob Johnson – Halifax School Committee

Massachusetts is the traditional leader of education in the country and when you take a curriculum and combine it with Massachusetts and the curriculum with Missouri Farm Boys and shake it up and dump it out you get Common Core.

Roy said this is an important topic and does not want to diminish the importance of it by throwing a question on the ballot without people really understanding what it means. She continued to say that most people have heard negative things on social media and she knows it is up to people to be informed but what does it mean to Halifax. If we take control over the curriculum away from the State then doe we need to hire more curriculum coordinators. I think it goes beyond these questions and we need a plan.

Carol Lydon

Charlie Baker is looking for public input on this and she thinks it is important that we get together on this issue to let them know where Halifax stands. He has to make a decision in the fall as to whether or not we accept PARCC in Massachusetts and there is not enough time to wait. There have been forums for both sides and the side that is for it never shows up.

Bob Johnson

We had a forum that was well attended a year ago and it has been shown repeatedly on TV. We have people opposed to Common Core at our meetings (10 or 15 people). We have talked about this at meetings in the past. I myself would remove Common Core and keep the curriculum we had in the past, as it made us the highest standard in the nation.

Shiavone said the problem is if we don't put it on the ballot now then the alternative would be having another Town Meeting at another time which will cost more money to do. If it does not get on the ballot nothing is saying that one hundred citizens could not force a Town Meeting. It had to be done this way because the time table getting the referendum to the Selectmen has already passed for this Town Meeting. Shiavone is proposing this to see where the Halifax voters stand and this will also show the legislators the direction the town in leaning towards.

Schleiff asked if sending out mailings and getting input that way would help and Shiavone said the legislators are looking for a vote and you can write letters but his opinion is that this would give a clear indication on where people stood. Schleiff then asked if there is enough time to get these forums set up and educate the people before town meeting.

Garron said that as a Board can say let's do a ballot question but it is up to the people who want to inform the public and set up the forums. Schleiff then said that they have spent forty five minutes on this and thinks they are close as to what we want to do as they have not heard a lot of different things this evening. We now need to ask what direction the Board wants to go.

Lori Costa Kline

Respects that this uncharted territory for the Board and asked if part of their concern was the wording of the question and if the language was refined would the Board be more comfortable reviewing the question again? Schleiff did not think that would help because he still cannot wrap his head around Common Core. Ms. Kline continued to say that there are four questions and it is confusing and she gets it because she has been trying to figure it out for a while but knows enough to send a message to our legislators to hold of this and try a different path.

Mr. Slager

Said that he has his own concerns about PARCC and common core and thinks the issue is what is the best course of action to take to address these concerns. He heard it said/suggested that the School Committee wasn't willing to discuss these issues but he does not recall anyone ever asking to be put on the agenda to discuss them. He asked why would you by-pass the School Committee and bring your concerns to the Board of Selectmen.

Garron said he has no problem with referendum he has the same concerns as Roy has but thinks we should treat each situation as it is. More than anything else the education of the people is important. Garron would love someone to explain to him why is the change to Common Core is necessary.

Cassandra Hansen - Halifax School Committee

We have been talking about making these changes to Common Core since 2010 and there has been discussion at Halifax School Committee level as to what was coming and what it would entail for the town. The committee has never been given a choice as to whether we wanted this framework or that framework as the decision lies with the State. We cannot change it we can only adapt our curriculum materials to what the State tells us to teach, good or bad this is what it is. In 1993 when Edgar Form came around, whoever was sitting on the Halifax Elementary School Committee and the town had to adapt to those changes. MCAS came about in a different way there was a lot more talk and forums across the State before it was implemented. When the first set of curriculum came around in 1999 we lived with that for a while and adapted then changes were done in 2001 and 2004 in ELA and math. When the State decided to make curriculum changes to the ELA and math standards the Common Core standards were beginning and those two things merged. If you look at some of the standards and compare what we had and what we have they are very similar in a lot of ways. No matter what we do it is going to cost the town money. She did not think it needs to be a ballot question but have to get people involved and be more vocal to our local legislators.

Linda Twiss Gioscia

A lot of people are now waking up and there needs to be more conversation. We need the voters to open up the conversation because we do not want PARCC coming into Halifax.

Roy said that just because Ms. Gioscia does not want PARCC coming into Halifax other people may and said that it is about balance and does not want to make it less important than what it is.

Bob Johnson had respectfully requested that the Board of Selectmen trust the people who have elected them to have their opinion heard by the legislature. Garron said with all due respect they could contact their legislature themselves.

Schleiff said that seems everyone is talking about this but do not know all facts and wanted to make it clear that it this could be a push to get things started for those for or against.

Moved by Garron and Roy seconded for the discussion, the Board voted to put a non binding referendum on the ballot.

Roy stated that she is afraid of setting precedence and Garron agreed with her. She continued to say that if on ballot, she would like to work on the questions so that they are simple enough for people to understand as they are complicated and do not want to send the wrong message. In addition she would like both sides represented and said the elders needs to understand it. This has an impact on our children's education and I know you say it is non-binding but in her mind it does not feel non binding. This is bigger then what it seems and where we didn't get the necessary signatures it sort of is sponsored by the Board of Selectmen and she takes a heavy responsibility in that and personally does not want to support this but it is clear that it will happen so if it happens she wants to be abler to have it on the terms. Schleiff agreed and said he does not want to see it used as a hammer one way or another to our legislators.

Moved by Roy and seconded by Garron, the Board unanimously voted to open the warrant on the terms that it is opened and closed tonight.

Schleiff stated that the warrant has been was opened to place non binding referendum on the ballot but before going in the warrant the Board will approve the questions and look over the wording.

Garron made a recommendation that we invite our Legislators to one of their meetings before Town Meeting to discuss that we had this conversation.

Moved by Roy and seconded by Garron, the Board unanimously voted to close the warrant.

Fieldstone Farm

Mr. Clawson has changed the date in April to July because of the snow. Appropriate departments have been notified.

Randall/Hilliard Property/Conservation Restriction

State has indicated that it is good to go. The Wildlands Trust has indicated that it will need to vote again, which likely will be in early April.

Pothole Money

The State has released \$30 million state-wide, Halifax will be receiving \$40,641. The Highway Department has been notified.

Beautification Committee – Flower Garden

A preliminary plan has been brought in by John Kessinger for the flower garden located on the side of the Town Hall. Amy Troup was disturbed that Seelig asked the Board to give permission to the Beautification Committee to develop a plan because she stated that the Beautification Committee as a whole did not ask for permission.

Schleiff stated that the Board did not give permission for them to dig it up and Garron said he thought they had.

Opioid Listening Tour

The MA Task Force is holding one of four *Listening Tours* on March 26th at Memorial Hall in Plymouth from 4pm to 6pm.

Code of Conduct for Visitors

A discussion on this did not take place this evening. Schleiff thought that there was going to be one for employees also.

Oak Place/Easements/Road Work

Seelig is waiting to hear back from Highway Surveyor.

Halifax Country Club Wetlands

No change

Wetlands/Fieldstone Farms

No change

Traffic Lights

No change

Consolidating Buildings

Waiting to hear back from Highway and Recycling. Recycling has indicated that they would need a new building for the baler, equipment and inventory but what was not mentioned was that the Town would need to establish a traffic pattern and security.

Elementary School Roof

Several weeks ago, Seelig reported to the Board that an application for state assistance for the elementary school roof project had not been submitted. He then had suggested the possibility of placing an article on the warrant to contract with an architect for the project so that during the next funding round, the Town would have plans developed. However, he checked with the Massachusetts School Building Authority which said that in order to obtain assistance from the MSBA, it needs to be involved from Step 1. The staff mentioned that the deadline for one of the grant programs that would provide financial support for the project still was about three weeks away. Given that Seelig talked with the Superintendent of School and the Elementary School Committee Chair about applying this year.

Seelig was told that some individuals (unknown) wanted to wait until the Town had a proposal that would cover all possible renovation/repairs including windows, doors, etc. However, no one has spoken to him about this and therefore he has asked the Superintendent and Chair to start the process of applying for funding for this year's grant round.

John Tuffy said they were able to submit an application and that the roof is not an emergency at this time and the idea behind the repair last year was to buy us some time.

Roy asked if an appropriation would be needed at Town Meeting and Mr. Tuffy said that it is his understanding that it would not. He wanted to thank the Town in advance for coming together to help. He then wanted the Board to know that the district has a new Superintendent as his last day will be June 30th. He continued to say the transition will be smooth as the Assistant Superintendent will be taking his place. He said it has been a pleasure being in this position for the last fourteen years and said that he has seen good things move forward for the three towns over that time.

Petting Zoo at the Plops for HOPS

The friends of HOPS would like to have other activities including a petting zoo and pony rides at their event on April 11th. Seelig wanted the Board aware that the person(s) providing these services are not insured and the committee remains a Town entity until it is recognized by the secretary of State's office as a separate entity and has its own insurance, therefore is suggesting that they meet with HOPS committee to get the okay for these additional activities.

Roy stated that Terry Carman will have two people for the pony rides one leading and the other holding the child as well as the parent beside them. She will have cones designating the area, provide fencing around baby animals, has volunteers to help with the animals and will clean up after the event. There will be piglets, lambs, bunnies just to name a few.

Ken Bartell

A letter has been drafted to Kenneth Bartell regarding the grievance decision for the Board to review. Roy, Garron and Schleiff were all in agreement with the letter.

Moved by Roy and seconded by Garron, the Board unanimously voted to uphold the Highway Surveyor's decision to terminate Mr. Bartell and that he not be reinstated.

MEETING ADJOURNED

There being no further business, moved by Garron and seconded by Roy, the Board unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 11:05 p.m.

Thomas Millias
Clerk

/pjm