



**Board of Selectmen
Minutes
Wednesday, May 12, 2011, 9:30am
Town Hall Meeting Room**

The meeting was called to order at 9:30AM by Chair, Marie Sobalvarro in the Town Hall Meeting Room. Selectmen Marie Sobalvarro, Peter Warren, Ron Ricci, Bill Johnson and Tim Clark were all in attendance as well as the Town Administrator Tim Bragan and Executive Assistant Julie Doucet.

Town Administrator Tim Bragan opened the meeting by providing a brief description of the selection process approved by the Board of Selectmen on March 15th. Marie Sobalvarro invited Lt. Chuck Nigzus and Firefighter Bill Barton to come forward and provide a recommendation from the Firefighters Association.

Nigzus began by thanking the Board of Selectmen and Town Administrator for involving the firefighters in the process from the beginning. He expressed the association's disappointment no internal candidates made it through to the final stage. He expects that development of a succession plan to promote from within will be a top priority moving forward. He said the association met several times to discuss who of the three candidates would be the best fit for the town and the department. Nigzus announced the association's recommendation of Richard Sicard from Ashburnham. Sicard's training and professional development experience will be vital in energizing the department and recruiting new members. He thanked liaison Ron Ricci and Town Administrator Tim Bragan for strengthening the lines of communication between the town and the department.

Marie Sobalvarro then opened the meeting for discussion among the board members. Tim Clark said he appreciated the commentary from the association and requested the board discuss candidates Richard Sicard and Stephen Slarsky as they seem to be the best fits. The board members agreed. Peter Warren decided to refrain from discussion or voting on the Fire Chief position.

Richard Sicard, Ashburnham, MA

The Board of Selectmen touched on the following key points:

- energy and enthusiasm
- experience in pursuing grants
- willingness to find creative avenues for alternative funding
- focused on determining goals and how to achieve them for each member of the department
- leadership by mentoring
- communication outside of department (town/community)
- ability to work well with and alongside the department

Stephen Slarsky

The Board of Selectmen touched on the following key points:

- strong candidate based on long term experience
- served community in other volunteer capacity (Board of Selectmen)
- significant emergency management training
- strong knowledge and relations in mutual aid district
- good connection with department during interview

On a Ricci/ Johnson motion, the board voted to appoint Richard Sicard from Ashburnham as the new Fire Chief subject to negotiation of contract and pre-employment physical.
(Warren, abstain)

Tim Bragan reported background checks were completed and in good standing. Bragan indicated Interim Fire Chief Don Hurme will stay on until June 30th and he anticipates an overlap of the two will enable an easy transition. Chuck Nigzus commented on the positive influence Hurme has been on the department and thanked him for his enthusiasm and commitment. Nigzus wanted to thank Hurme publicly on behalf of the department.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:00am.