



**Board of Selectmen  
Minutes  
Tuesday, December 3, 2013 at 7:00PM  
Town Hall Meeting Room**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Chair, Marie Sobalvarro in the Town Hall Meeting Room. Selectmen Stu Sklar, Ron Ricci, Lucy Wallace and Leo Blair were all in attendance as well as the Town Administrator Tim Bragan and Executive Assistant Julie Doucet.

**EAGLE SCOUT**

On a Wallace/Ricci motion, the board voted unanimously to issue a proclamation for Eagle Scout Ryan Emmett Kennedy.

**DEANS HILL CONSERVATION RESTRICTION**

On a Ricci/Sklar motion, the board voted unanimously to endorse the Deans Hill conservation restriction.

**CIVIL WAR REENACTMENT**

Stu Sklar said he was approached by 8<sup>th</sup> grade teacher Kristin McManus about Harvard hosting a civil war reenactment in June. He explained the 28<sup>th</sup> Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry use authentic uniforms and play the role of union soldiers. He said the event would take place on June 15<sup>th</sup> with the volunteers camping overnight. Sklar expects approvals from the town will be required so he wanted to let the board know about the inquiry.

**PUBLIC COMMUNICATION**

Harvard resident Tina Allen, Sholan Circle, proposed the idea of erecting a Welcome to Harvard sign on the corner of Mass Ave and Woodchuck Hill Road. She referred to signs in Stow, Maynard and many other towns throughout the commonwealth. She explained the signs are not state mandated and are locally created. Allen obtained three quotes for the sign which she designed. The Selectmen asked her to send her designs along with pictures of the location to them electronically. They will make a decision at an upcoming meeting.

**OXBOW WILDLIFE REFUGE FIRE SUPPRESSION**

Leo Blair said Sobalvarro brought to his attention an opportunity for the public to comment on Oxbow's fire management plan and environmental assessment. In light of the recent brush fire in Still River it seems appropriate for Harvard to comment. He said the comment period has been extended to December 20<sup>th</sup>. Blair suggested they draft a response. It is his understanding that in the past residents of Harvard did mow the fields but had been told not to. The board asked Fire Chief Rick Sicard to come forward and comment on how this fire could have been prevented. Sicard said if the field was mowed that would have helped. He said it was lucky the residents in the area had their lawns mowed because it slowed the fire down otherwise we could have easily lost a few houses in Still River. Ron Ricci and Lucy Wallace volunteered to work with the Fire Chief to draft a response. The board will revisit at their meeting on the 17<sup>th</sup>.

**PUBLIC COMMUNICATION**

Deborah Skauen-Hinchliffe, 221 Still River Road, said the Oxbow is not promoted as grassland habitat. She noticed the hayfields have not been cut in years and the brush blows into her property. Skauen-Hinchliffe asked the board to pressure our state representatives and senators to change policies that

destroy this land and endanger the public. She felt the brush fire was handled poorly. Skauen-Hinchliffe remembers promises made when the Watt family donated the land that nothing would change.

### **APPOINTMENT OF PATROL OFFICERS**

Police Chief Ed Denmark was present to explain the process he used to fill the vacant patrol positions and to recommend Timothy Schaeffer and Timothy Miner for appointment. He said the process began back in August and was outlined in a letter to the board. He was pleased to introduce two highly qualified candidates.

First he introduced Timothy Schaeffer who comes with 10 years of full-time police experience in both Shirley and Littleton, holds an associate degree in Criminal Justice and has other significant training in law enforcement.

Next he introduced Timothy Miner. Miner comes with 5 years of full-time police experience in both Northhampton and Hubbardston, holds an associate degree in Criminal Justice and has other significant training in law enforcement.

Liaison Ron Ricci was involved in the interview process. He was pleased with the process and the applicants chosen.

On a Wallace/Ricci motion, the board voted unanimously to appoint Tim Schaeffer and Timothy Miner as patrol officers for the town of Harvard.

Chief Denmark also requested the appointment of Nelson Perry as a Reserve Patrol Officer. He said Perry has been with the department for six years, has academy training and is working part time in Berlin.

On a Ricci/Wallace motion, the board voted unanimously to appoint Nelson Perry as a Reserve Patrol Officer.

### **DEPARTMENT BUDGETS – Operational & Capital**

#### *Finance Department*

Finance Director Lorraine Leonard reviewed her operational budget which is level funded with normal adjustments. She did increase the technology line 5% due to contracts with financial software and Assessing package.

Leonard explained the new item she would like considered is the addition of a part time Human Resource Director. She explained this position would add tremendous value to town and school operations by streamlining a process that now is handled by numerous individuals causing an inconsistent flow. She envisions an 18 hour a week position. Lucy Wallace said considering the number of employees this is probably overdue. Town Administrator Tim Bragan said he and Leonard have spoken about this and he has also given it serious thought. Leonard is also investigating bringing payroll back in-house. She explained outsourcing works functionally but is not good for reporting and tracking. She anticipates an initial cost to doing this but savings down the road.

#### *Council on Aging*

Director Debbie Thompson said her personnel budget includes only step increases. She noted the Program Coordinator position had gone down a step due to hiring of a new employee. She thanked the town for the additional hours that were given to the receptionist position. She acknowledged the increase of visibility and interaction with seniors has certainly had a positive impact. She noted the funds from MART and the

Formula One grant that assist in funding of other positions in her department. Her expense budget is unchanged.

Thompson would use any additional funds to add five more hours a week to the Program Coordinator. She explained the trips organized by the Program Coordinator create a gateway to the CoA social services for seniors. Lucy Wallace asked if Thompson anticipates needing more hours for outreach in the future. Thompson is in favor of more hours for this position. She did comment on the difficulty of adding more hours and keeping the position non-benefited.

#### *Fire Department*

Fire Chief Rick Sicard said he included the step increase but noted he is in a contract year. He explained the Administrative Assistant position was removed from his budget and incorporated into the Police Department's as it will be a shared position. He included a 2% COLA for the Firefighter call pay and level funded the officer stipend. As far as his expense budget, Chief Sicard said he has spent about half of this year's budget on truck repairs. If additional funds are available, he would like to increase this budget. He is interested in recouping funds from repairs to purchase new equipment.

#### *Police Department*

Police Chief Ed Denmark explained the increase in his personnel budget was due to administration cost after the move to regional dispatch. There will be a full time daytime admin and another admin position for coverage until 8pm daily. Ultimately, his budget decreased with the retirement of two higher paid officers. Chief Denmark will have an increase in his expense budget for telephone and associated communications equipment previously included in the communication budget.

Chief Denmark expressed his pleasure with now being able to provide full coverage on all shifts and with the recent upgrade to new software.

### **TOWN ADMINISTRATOR REPORT**

Tim Bragan informed the board he and Leo Blair are working with Park & Recreation on their capital request to increase the parking area for boats and trailers.

Bragan reported he has received quotes back on the Powder House repairs and is working with the insurance company on this.

Bragan said he received a request from Mass Bike Pike Tour to hold a four day event in Harvard. He shared the request with the Police Chief and is awaiting his feedback.

Bragan is working on replacing the Veteran's agent. Veteran's Agent Mike Detillion from Ayer and Shirley will assist in the interim.

Bragan said he received a document from the Department of Housing and Development related to the Elms property. The Planning and Zoning Boards will need to be included in the review.

#### Holidays

Bragan announced the Transfer Station will be closed on Christmas and New Year's Days but open the Thursdays after for normal hours and the Town Hall will close at 1pm on Christmas Eve.

#### Town Hall update

Bragan reported he will be meeting with the asbestos removal company next week to finalize the details for the schedule and staging. He did confirm the removal will take place the week of December 30<sup>th</sup>. He also has a roofing company coming out on Friday to assess repairs. He said Lorraine Leonard is working on the surplus equipment.

### **TOWN HALL PUBLIC FORUM FORMAT**

Stu Sklar informed the board Monty Tech would only be available to handle pieces of the project. They could not do the entire project.

Marie Sobalvarro asked the board how they envision the format of the upcoming public forums and if any information should be distributed. They decided to use flip charts to capture ideas. They will also distribute plans of the building layout currently and with renovation proposed. Leo Blair said a fundamental question to be answered is will the town hall be used for: administration only, social center or both. The board agreed the Building Inspector should be present.




\*\*\*\* On a Ricci motion, the Board voted unanimously by a roll call vote: (Sobalvarro – Aye, Ricci – Aye, Wallace –AYE, Sklar – Aye, Blair - Aye) to enter into executive session at 8:48pm, as authorized by Chapter 30A, Section 21.3 of the Massachusetts General Laws, at a meeting for which 48-hours' notice has been given, to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigating if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the chair so declares. . Following the executive session, the Board will reconvene into open session only to adjourn. \*\*\*\*

The meeting was adjourned at 10:15pm.


### **Documents referenced:**


Eagle Scout request – dated 11.01.2013  
Deans Hill Con. Rest. – dated 11.14.2013  
Appointment of Patrol Officers request letter - dated 11.25.2013  
Department budgets – operational & capital – FY2015

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From:  d.skauen <d.skauen@verizon.net> Thursday, February 06, 2014 2:14:51 PM  

Subject: Fwd: ?

To:  **Julie Doucet**

Attachments:  Attach0.html 3K

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Begin forwarded message:

**From:** "d.skauen" <d.skauen@verizon.net>

**Date:** February 4, 2014 2:27:01 PM EST

**To:** Tim Bragan <tbragan@harvard.ma.us>

**Bcc:** "ron.ricci Ricci" <ron.ricci@1968.USNA.com>, Leo Blair <blairleof@hotmail.com>

**Subject:** ?

Hi Tim, How can the 3 December minutes be corrected to reflect what I said? I did not use the word "remembers" I stated the Lucy was part of the group that promised that there would be no changes when the Feds bought the land. I stated that the land has been destroyed from the the way it was when the Watts owned it. I did not say that the Watts "donated" the land. Can you make the corrections administratively? Thank you for your assistance. Deborah Skauen-Hinchliffe