

Holbrook Board of Selectmen

Minutes of the Regular Session of

Tuesday, September 27, 2011

Present: Timothy J. Gordon, Chairman
Matthew V. Moore, Vice-Chairman (Arrived at 7:05 pm)
Brinsley A. Fuller, Clerk
Richard B. McGaughey, Associate
Kevin J. Sheehan, Associate

In attendance: William J. Phelan, Interim Town Administrator
Marjorie E. Godfrey, Selectmen's Secretary

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Chairman Gordon, in the Selectmen's Meeting Room, 50 North Franklin Street, Holbrook, MA 02343, and began with the Pledge of Allegiance.

MINUTES:

MOTION: By Mr. Fuller, second by Mr. Sheehan, to accept the minutes of the regular session of September 13, 2011, as printed

VOTE: 4:0

MOTION: By Mr. Fuller, second by Mr. Sheehan, to accept the minutes of the executive session of September 13, 2011, as printed

VOTE: 4:0

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT:

Mr. Phelan explained that Fire Chief Edward O'Brien has indicated that the grants for REGIONAL DISPATCH have been held up because the feasibility study is due out soon. Discussion has taken place with Abington Fire, and a meeting has been scheduled to address the funding issue. A special town meeting will be needed to address the funding for Holbrook.

The Board of Health has announced that FLU SHOTS will only be available this year for the uninsured. Others are being encouraged to go to their primary care physician or a pharmacy.

The MEDICARE budget for the reimbursement of retirees was short \$7,000 - \$7,500 in fiscal 2011.

This issue will need to be addressed at a special town meeting.

Mr. Phelan informed the Board that there is a question about the Group Insurance Commission (GIC) agreement with the Public Employee Committee (PEC). One provision states that because employees have no HEALTH INSURANCE for the first 60 days of employment that the town will pay the employee 90% of the cost of insurance, to be paid as a stipend to the employee. There is a question whether this provision is legal and whether it was removed by the GIC. The Unions are anxious to have this matter resolved.

MINUTES:

MOTION: By Mr. Moore, second by Mr. McGaughey, to accept the minutes of the regular session of July 26, 2011, as printed

VOTE: 3:0:2 (Mr. Gordon & Mr. Fuller abstained)

Chairman Gordon discussed the recent presentation to the Board of Selectmen by NEW ENGLAND FORESTRY FOUNDATION on behalf of a third party landowner. The landowner is planning a project on land off Route 139 on the Holbrook/Abington/Weymouth line, and would like to sell a portion of the property to Holbrook. New England Forestry Foundation would like the land to remain as conservation land. Mr. Phelan said that there are eight parcels, and the real estate taxes are \$12,526, with the potential for a significant increase if the land is developed. The Board took no action on this request.

HEALTH AGENT WILLIAM MURPHY, who will be leaving his position in Holbrook, explained that the Board of Health office needs more staffing. He said there are mandated requirements that are not getting done, like wells. There is no clerical staffing, and it is necessary. The town should be prosecuting landlords for not making repairs. He recommended that, at minimum, the town needs a full time health inspector and a person in the office for 20 hours of clerical work. The health nurse also needs 20 hours because communicable diseases are not getting the attention they need. The Board of Health regulations need to be updated, something that has not been done in 25 – 30 years. Mr. Phelan thanked Mr. Murphy for his work and noted that Mr. Murphy has worked hard to get a lot done in 25 hours per week.

School Committee members present: Barbara Davis, Chairperson; John Flanagan; Louis Pransky
The status of a future SCHOOL BUILDING PROJECT was discussed. Mr. Phelan summarized where the process is at this time. Chairman Gordon explained that the State has indicated that the town needs to look at regionalization, and that the first step is to set up a study committee, and then a school district planning committee. He said that the message from the Mass. School Building Authority (MSBA) could not have been clearer, and that this town-wide issue needs to be addressed at the fall town meeting through an article asking the town to form a regionalization study committee. Mr. Phelan said the town is looking into funding for the study from a state budget appropriation created for this purpose. Mr. Moore said the previous study done with Abington was not comprehensive, and although there was a vote to support a K-12 facility in April, more things have come to light since then, including the letter from the MSBA and a telephone conversation with the Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). It was stressed that going forward, the town needs to have a unified voice, and that a more structured approach needs to be taken. The Chairman indicated that the State has told Holbrook to go back to the drawing board three times since April. He said that setting up a study committee allows us to send a message to our neighboring communities that we are serious, and it sets the town up to move forward in an expeditious way. Ms. Davis said that the Abrahams Group is currently looking at Abington and a K-12 in Holbrook. The School Committee has not heard from Avon, and they have not met with Braintree or Abington recently. She indicated that regionalizing is a difficult process due to the condition of Holbrook's schools, the lack of transportation at the Junior-Senior High School, and the different pay scales for the same jobs in the different towns, and the MSBA wants an answer in 30 – 60 days. Mr. Phelan said that a regional planning board would be set up to resolve those issues. Experts could be hired to assist the town from an objective point of view, and appointments to the committee could be made by the moderator. Members of the School Committee voiced concern over a delay in moving forward if a study committee is formed. Mr. Phelan said a study is needed to decide what is the most educationally sound and cost effective way to educate the children of Holbrook.

MOTION: By Mr. Moore, second by Mr. Fuller, that the Board of Selectmen place and support an article on the warrant for the next town meeting to create a regional school district

planning committee in accordance with Chapter 71, Sections 14-16I and the Regional School District Regulations, 603 CMR 41.00

VOTE: 5:0

Police Chief William D. Marble, Jr., discussed how he will utilize the additional officers that will be available by July 1, 2012 when CIVILIAN DISPATCH will be complete. He said that at present, the department is running short handed, but his plans include increasing the services available without additional cost, by having three officers on the road at all times, a detective, and a heavier presence in the schools. Fire Chief Edward J. O'Brien explained that the current fire dispatchers will learn the police side once we know we are moving forward, but the key issue is funding. Mr. Phelan said that the goal is to start the hiring process by January. The cost of the civilian dispatch and the financial effect of other towns joining in were discussed. Chief Marble said a lot of communities are interested, and Abington is expected to move forward soon.

Mr. Phelan said that the PAVEMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE was established recently to look at the roads in town and figure out how to best leverage funds from the state. There is still an opening on that committee for a Citizen at Large.

Mr. Phelan explained that there have been meetings with the Town Administrator and Chairman of the Board of Selectmen from Avon relative to SHARING HOLBROOK'S ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICER (ACO). An inter-municipal agreement has been prepared for consideration. The Department of Revenue has advised that a special revenue account can be set up to pay the expenses. The ACO's hours will increase and her salary will increase to \$18.36 per hour. Mr. Phelan met with Ms. Hedges, the ACO, and described her as a hard worker who takes initiative. Sharing these services should provide more opportunity for grants. Mr. Phelan said Ms. Hedges will remain an employee of Holbrook, and that the transition should be smooth.

MOTION: By Mr. Moore, second by Mr. Fuller, that the Board of Selectmen approve the Inter-Municipal Agreement to share the services of the Animal Control Officer with Avon

VOTE: 5:0

MOTION: By Mr. Moore, second by Mr. Gordon, to increase the hours of the Animal Control Officer to 35 and to increase the wages to \$18.36 an hour

VOTE: 5:0

Mr. Phelan advised that the WATER SUPPLY STUDY results are imminent.

Public Works Supervisor Benjamin Ecord reported that the drainage improvements on SPRING LANE are complete. One hundred fifty feet of pipe and two catch basins have been installed by the Public Works Department.

Mr. Phelan explained that an engineering firm should be hired to assist the town in filing the Project Initiation Form (PIF) for the \$1.5 million FEDERAL EARMARK Congressman Stephen Lynch put in place in 2005 for improvements on Route 139. \$1,500 of Chapter 90 money would be used for this purpose.

Supervisor Ecord said the TRAFFIC SIGNALIZATION PROJECT at the Public Safety Building will be started next week and should be complete by the end of November. He reported that there is only one employee left from the SUMMER HELP, and they will be kept until the chipping is done from Tropical

Storm Irene. Mr. Ecord will check into the status of the decorative LAMP POSTS that have been damaged.

Board members individually discussed the three finalists who were interviewed recently for appointment as the TOWN ADMINISTRATOR. The candidates included Mr. William Phelan, the current Interim Town Administrator; Mr. David Marciello, the former town administrator in Rehoboth who was present at this meeting; and Mr. Francis Hegarty, the Chairman of the Board of Selectmen in Avon. It was noted that the town was fortunate to have three outstanding candidates to consider. After four selectmen indicated that Mr. Phelan would be their first choice, discussion took place relative to the number of hours he would be available to the town each week if he were appointed and continued his law practice. It was noted that he has been responsive and resourceful as the Interim Town Administrator, but the issue to be resolved is his presence and availability at town hall. The Board indicated that, although his schedule could be considered flexible, there will have to be a minimum number of hours posted. The Chairman asked that the Board vote to choose their first and second choice candidates for appointment.

MOTION: By Mr. Fuller, second by Mr. Sheehan, that the Board of Selectmen select Mr. Bill Phelan as first choice for appointment as Town Administrator

VOTE: 4:1 (Mr. Moore against)

MOTION: By Mr. Fuller, second by Mr. Moore, that the Board of Selectmen select Mr. David Marciello as second choice for appointment as Town Administrator

VOTE: 3:0:2 (Mr. McGaughey and Mr. Sheehan abstained)

Mr. Moore said the position should be 35 hours, with a flexible schedule, and Mr. McGaughey indicated that it should be 30 hours. Mr. Gordon said that there are meetings out of town that have to be considered. The Board will negotiate a 3-year contract with Mr. Phelan.

MOTION: By Mr. Gordon, second by Mr. Fuller, to appoint Mr. Phelan as Town Administrator for two weeks and meet next Tuesday to negotiate a contract

VOTE: 5:0

ADJOURN:

MOTION: At 10:10 pm, to adjourn the meeting

VOTE: 5:0

Brinsley A. Fuller, Clerk

Documents: Agenda
Draft minutes
Inter-Municipal Agreement
Email re: Dispatch operations

New England Forestry Foundation request
MSBA letter, DESE info, & status report by PSBC