

Holbrook Board of Selectmen

Minutes of the Regular Session of

Tuesday, October 25, 2011

Present: Timothy J. Gordon, Chairman  
Matthew V. Moore, Vice-Chairman (Arrived at 7:55 pm)  
Brinsley A. Fuller, Clerk  
Richard B. McGaughey, Associate  
Kevin J. Sheehan, Associate

In attendance: William J. Phelan, Town Administrator

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. Sheehan, second by Mr. Fuller, to accept the minutes of the regular session of September 20, 2011, as printed

VOTE: 4:0

It was announced that:

George O'Neill, the Chairman of the PERMANENT SCHOOL BUILDING COMMITTEE is resigning from the committee, but will continue until meetings are held with Abington. The vacancy will be advertised.

The Town Forest Committee is conducting a "HARVEST HIKE" on November 29, 2011, from 1:00 – 3:00 pm.

There is an opening for a part-time HEALTH AGENT. Resumes should be submitted to the Board of Health chairman by November 11, 2011.

There is a full-time opening for a LIBRARY ASSISTANT.

There will be a LEAF & YARD WASTE COLLECTION on Saturday, December 10, 2011.

New England Warrior, Inc. is asking for donations to support WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA, a program that provides wreaths on veterans' graves in Holbrook and Brockton. Mr. Dwight Nelson should be contacted for further information.

COMCAST has notified the town that they will continue providing free cable and internet service to the schools and the library during 2012.

There is a vacancy in the LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES, and a joint meeting will be held to fill that vacancy. Residents interested in filling the vacancy until the April town election are encouraged to submit a letter requesting consideration.

A letter was received from a resident who lives near a SCHOOL BUS STOP. They would like the bus stop moved due because of a family member who is ill. Mr. Phelan will work with the School Superintendent on this request.

Mr. Robert Blaikie sent a letter to the Board of Selectmen and was in attendance at this meeting to discuss a NOISE ISSUE on FARGO ROAD. Mr. Blaikie explained that another resident of the street plays holiday music at Christmas time outside of their home. It begins before Thanksgiving and continues until Martin Luther King Day. The neighbor has been approached to lower the volume, but

has declined. Mr. Phelan said there is a state regulation relative to the amount of decibels allowed, which is enforced by the Board of Health. The town does not have an ordinance that would cover this situation. Mr. Phelan will obtain a copy of an ordinance passed in the City of Quincy regulating the playing of holiday music, and will write a letter to the neighbor asking them to be considerate of their neighbors. The Board of Health will be asked to put this item on an upcoming agenda.

Mr. Phelan reported that the Town of Avon has voted to regionalize the SERVICES OF THE ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICER with Holbrook and has signed the agreement.

Mr. Phelan announced that the Town of Abington has voted to allow Holbrook to do their public safety DISPATCHING starting in April, 2012. They will make payments quarterly. Next fiscal year, the dispatch budget will need an additional \$100,000, but there will be four additional police officers on the street. More towns are considering joining Holbrook's regional dispatch. Mr. Kevin Costa, Chairman of the Finance Committee, said the FinCom is in favor of the regional dispatch, but they are concerned about the costs not being borne by other towns equally. Mr. Phelan advised that the Fire Chief is working toward a regional dispatch center with their own retirement group and employees. The FinCom will ask Chief O'Brien to attend a meeting and explain the financial aspect of regional dispatch.

Mr. Phelan informed the Board that he has had a difficult time locating someone to apply for another COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT by the December 16, 2011 deadline. He has located someone who will come to the next Selectmen's meeting and address the Board. There is money in the grant currently that can be utilized to hire a grant writer. The next grant will be reduced by the amount that is left in there now. The town can apply for grants to be used for economic development, infrastructure improvements, or community service programs, including handicapped accessibility.

Mr. Phelan reported that there have been meetings held about the setting of the tax rate. Now that the town knows how much revenue came in last year, ADJUSTMENTS may need to be made to the BUDGET, or expenses may need to be cut.

MR. COSTA advised that the Board should be considering whether to change the way the town contributes to unemployment, notifying the Group Insurance Commission (GIC) about any changes to the town's health insurance, and the renewal agreement for solid waste pickup and disposal.

Mr. Phelan reviewed the WATER SOURCE AUDIT being done by Environmental Partners and made some changes to the draft report. The report will be finalized and Environmental Partners will come before the Board at the next meeting.

MR. COSTA said that executive session minutes should be available per the open meeting law, and should be posted on the town's website. The Chairman indicated that executive session minutes are available on request through the Selectmen's office.

Representatives of HOLBROOK/AVON YOUTH SOCCER, Mr. Terry Carter, President, and Mr. Fred White, Vice-President, spoke to the Board about putting soccer fields in at the Brookville Playground. Youth Soccer will fund the improvements. It was noted that the men's softball league uses that field on a regular basis. Mr. Sheehan said that it is anticipated that the streets and sidewalks in that area will be

repaved. Mr. Phelan said that Community Development money may be able to be used also to improve the field. Mr. McGaughey mentioned the \$100,000 the Mullins Company offered toward soccer fields when they were proposing the Old English Square Project. Mr. Carter said there is currently no field for the older kid that is manicured and dry, and Mr. White asked if the town would consider leasing the field. The possibility of using artificial turf, and using a combination of funding sources, were discussed. (Mr. Moore entered during this discussion) Mr. Phelan will set up a meeting with Thomas Cummings, the Public Works Superintendent, Holbrook/Avon Soccer, and himself.

Treasurer/Collector Paul Digirolamo explained that town-owned property at 98 ABINGTON AVE. did not sell at a recent auction. The minimum price was set at \$125,000, and with taxes, water and other expenses taken into consideration, the town has \$85,000 into the property, not including interest. The Board indicated that an auction should be held at the property, not at the town hall.

MOTION: By Mr. McGaughey, second by Mr. Moore, to re-auction 98 Abington Ave. for a minimum bid of \$110,000

VOTE: 5:0

The Treasurer/Collector explained that 109 WOODLAWN ROAD is in foreclosure, and that a deed-in-lieu of foreclosure has been offered. The Board indicated that the Treasurer should take the deed-in-lieu of foreclosure.

Mr. Digirolamo will contact the attorney regarding the property on ARNOLD STREET to get an update. That property is also in foreclosure. Mr. Phelan said there is an issue of whether that property should be declared unsafe and torn down or whether the town should wait and take it in foreclosure. The value of the house lot will be minimal without a house on it. The property would have to be declared “structurally unsafe” by the Building Inspector. Mr. Phelan will have the Building Inspector go look at the property.

Mr. George Woodbury and Mr. William Repoff were present to discuss the town’s acquisition of the STREETLIGHTS FROM NATIONAL GRID. It was discussed that this issue is addressed under Mass. General Law, and the history and the procedure the town would follow were explained. The town can buy the streetlights and maintain them for considerably less than they are paying for them now by eliminating the depreciation cost that the utility charges. As consultants, Mr. Repoff and Mr. Woodbury would assist the town with the process, do an analysis of the purchase price, make sure the town is properly billed, and make sure that the process runs smoothly. At this time, 75 communities have taken over their lights, and everything has been funded through the savings. The purchase could be completed this fiscal year, but the utility company has been difficult lately in providing the preliminary information necessary. A presentation on the savings and procurement issues could be prepared.

The Chairman asked Mr. Phelan to speak to the Public Works Superintendent about re-mulching and replacing the fence around CASTLE CANYON, the playground at the Sumner Field.

Mr. Phelan said the PAVEMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE has been considering various projects, and the funding and coordination of the projects. They will be discussing the acceptance of roadways. Mr. Phelan said there needs to be an evaluation of the sections of town by a company that will analyze the information and advise how the town can best use the money that is available.

The Town of Abington will be paying \$25,000 per quarter for REGIONAL DISPATCH. The town will receive more 9-1-1 money from the state if another community joins with Holbrook after Abington. There are grants available for technology and facility upgrades for dispatch, but not for salaries. There will be an article at town meeting to address the shortfall in the dispatch budget.

Mr. Phelan discussed the timelines for either a November 29<sup>th</sup> or December 15<sup>th</sup> special town meeting. He reported that the town is close to certifying the retained earnings and the free cash, but there is an issue with the water and sewer enterprise funds that was caused by basing the projected income one year on what was received by the town during a year when the town collected a lot of old outstanding bills. The projected revenue did not come in, so the Board raised the rates. The problem may be corrected by using some of the town's retained earnings.

Mr. Phelan said he has asked the McCormack Institute to come to the meeting on the 8<sup>th</sup> of November.

MOTION: At 9:10 pm, to adjourn to executive session to discuss strategy as it relates to collective bargaining with union personnel (Firefighters), and strategy as it relates to contract negotiations with non-union personnel (Town Administrator), and to conduct negotiations with non-union personnel (Town Administrator), and return to open session

ROLL CALL VOTE: Mr. Sheehan – Yes  
Mr. Fuller – Yes  
Mr. Moore – Yes  
Mr. McGaughey – Yes  
Mr. Gordon – Yes

10:27 pm: Return to open session

The Chairman announced that the Board would be voting on the Town Administrator's contract.

MOTION: By Mr. Fuller, second by Mr. Sheehan, that the Board of Selectmen ratify the contract between the Town of Holbrook and Mr. William Phelan, as amended

VOTE: 5:0

MOTION: At 10:30 pm, to adjourn the meeting

VOTE: 5:0

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Brinsley A. Fuller, Clerk

Documents: Agenda, draft minutes, leaf & yard waste collection notice, letter from Mr. Blaikie, town meeting timeline information and motion.