

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
MEETING MINUTES - APRIL 14, 2008**

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7:00 p.m. - Selectmen's Meeting Room, 63 Main Street, Northborough, MA

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** William Pantazis, Chairman  
Leslie Rutan, Vice Chairman  
Fran Bakstran, Clerk  
Jeff Amberson  
Dawn Rand

\*Pledge of Allegiance

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES – MARCH 24, 2008 REGULAR MEETING**

Selectman Rand moved the Board vote to accept the Minutes of the March 24, 2008 Regular Meeting as submitted; Selectman Rutan seconded the motion; Selectman Bakstran abstained; all other members voted in favor.

**7:00 p.m. - VIRGINIA SIMMS GEORGE AND LOUISE HOULE  
COMMUNITY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**  
Presentation on Town Clean-up Day.

Ms. Houle stated, for those that wanted to know, that the Town Clean-up Day has been run every year since 1985. It began as part of the Women's Club, and then when she got on the Community Affairs Committee, it continued with her. She indicated that the Clean-up Day is on Saturday, April 26<sup>th</sup> at the Melican Middle School from 8 a.m. to 12 Noon, with a rain date of Sunday, April 27<sup>th</sup>. A cookout follows at Ellsworth McAfee Field at 12:15 p.m. When everyone signs in, they will receive their trash bags, gloves, and a map of the street they are covering. Ms. House reiterated the need to know where everyone was going to be so DPW would be able to ride by and pick up the trash bags. This year, they are allowing residents to clean-up sometime over the weekend if they cannot do it Saturday morning; however, all bags need to be placed on the street they were covering first this Monday morning. Ms. Houle said last year, there were over 150 people, and they ran out of bags. This year, that won't happen – they have more bags.

Ms. Simms-George said they had a new sponsor this year – Loews Home Improvement – who gave them the bags. Others had donated food, which included Lowe's Variety and Meat Shop, Hannaford's, and Stop & Shop. She indicated the "cookers" this year were John Fouracre, Fred George and Dawn Rand. Ms. Simms-George indicated Clean-up Day corresponds with Earth Day which is April 22<sup>nd</sup>. Boy Scouts will also be on hand.

**7:10 p.m. - JOHN CAMPBELL, CHAIR COMMUNITY PRESERVATION ACT  
COMMITTEE**  
Presentation on Community Preservation Act Projects on Town Meeting Warrant.

Mr. Campbell referred to the two documents the Board had in hand: one being an overview of the CPC's projects approved for funding for 2006 and 2007 and proposed for 2008; and a summary of their recommendation on the 16 applications they received.  
**COMMUNITY PRESERVATION CONT...**

All in all, they approved 9 of the 16 applications for a total of \$701,450, with an emphasis on placing a majority of the funds in the three reserve accounts – Open Space, Historic Resources and Affordable Housing. In the early years of CPC, the goal was open space – this time, it was dividing up the funds into the three reserves. Ideally, they were looking for a balance of saving the money for that big project, but also respecting the need to save the funds for when they are needed.

The highlights for the CPC was a strong consensus to support creation of additional Affordable Housing; commitment to those Historical Preservation projects with greatest public benefit; and continued commitment to Open Space reserves and support of the Trails network.

Selectman Amberson asked about the process to get to this point for presentation at Town Meeting.

Mr. Campbell said it begins with the application, developing the criteria, bringing the concept to the appropriate commission first and getting support, applying by the deadline, and having a hearing. He noted the CPC has its own criteria, i.e. the urgency of the request, the presentation, and what kind of support the request is receiving.

## **7:25 p.m. REPORTS**

### Dawn Rand

- Thanked everyone in public safety who assisted at the fire at the Northborough Plaza, including Acting Police Chief Lyver and Chief Durgin. She thanked Michelle Gillespie who worked with the Rotary to get the Fire Fund started, noting donations could still be sent to the Northborough Plaza Fire Fund, c/o St. Mary's Savings Bank, 100 West Main Street. The Rotary will equitably distribute the funds.
- Noted the passing of Bill Maney who was a vital part of the community. She remembered serving with him on the Appropriations Committee, and his special donation to the Town of the Minuteman Statute in front of Town Hall.
- Also mentioned the passing of Ann Jablonsky who had been a dispatcher for the Town for many years.

### Jeff Amberson

- Reiterated what Selectman Rand had stated, but also thanked all the departments who helped in and outside of Northborough, along with Mutual Aid. Felt it was a miracle there was no greater loss.

### Fran Bakstran, Clerk

- Mentioned the fire brought a sense of community to everyone, even the children at Peaslee who raised over \$300 for the fire victims.
- Felt Clean-up Day was another time when residents could experience community.
- Noted Earth Day was from 9-3 on Saturday, April 19<sup>th</sup> at 104 Otis Street sponsored by the Recycling Committee.

## **REPORTS CONT...**

- Stated that "Take It Or Leave It Day" (formerly known as Junque Day) would also be

- held at 104 Otis Street, with a time and date to be announced.
- Noted the Solid Waste Advisory Committee will be holding a public hearing before submitting their final proposal to the Board of Selectmen. They hope to be completed with their task in mid-June.
- The Historical Commission utilized their first process of demolition delay on Hudson Street. While the house will be torn down, the Commission members were able to go into the house, with the permission of the owner, and salvage certain items in the house and take pictures.
- Attended the Court of Honor for Eagle Scout Christopher Houston.

#### Leslie Rutan, Vice Chairman

- Also noted the overwhelming response of the various Fire Engine Companies, including Stowe and Sudbury who covered for our department. She felt it was an amazing coordination of effort and fire personnel, and personified the term "brotherhood".
- Mentioned that Mr. Brenner and Mr. Coderre had a follow-up meeting with the business owners a few days after the fire, and offered any assistance and contacts that were available.
- Thanked Chief Durgin for the individual letters he sent out to all the Towns and various people and businesses who helped out. She asked Chief Durgin if he had any comments. The Chief stated it was a combined effort, and a community effort by all public safety departments including Public Works. The Selectmen were there too for support and all Town departments. He indicated the investigation is active.
- Thanked the Trails Committee for the cover of this year's Annual Town Report, and for all that they are doing for the Town. She suggested that possibly different departments could be offered the option of designing their cover in the future.
- Went to the opening of A. Duie Pyle on April 3<sup>rd</sup> and an informative presentation.
- Mentioned the High School musical that was held over the weekend.

#### Barry M. Brenner, Town Administrator

- No report.

#### William Pantazis, Chairman

- Since no one else mentioned it, wanted to remind residents of the Annual Town Meeting being held in the High School Auditorium on April 28<sup>th</sup> and probably April 29<sup>th</sup>. He asked people to come and express their views and vote.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

No comments.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

- Mr. Brenner brought up the request of the Northborough Garden Club's Christine Cobb to hold their annual plant sale at the corner of Main and Blake Streets on May 17<sup>th</sup> from 8:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. Selectman Rutan moved that the Board vote to grant permission to the Northborough Garden Club to hold their Annual Plant Sale in the

### **NEW BUSINESS CONT...**

center of Town on Saturday, May 17, 2008 between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 11:30 a.m.; Selectman Bakstran seconded the motion; all members voted in favor.

- Mr. Brenner asked the Board members to review the list of Annual Town Meeting Warrant Articles and identify which ones the Board members would like to select to make the motion for. The Board indicated their choices to Mr. Brenner. He reminded them of a short meeting beginning at 6:30 p.m. in Room B120 at the High School prior to the Annual Town Meeting beginning at 7:30 p.m.
- Mr. Brenner brought forward the list of 2008 Reappointments of all whose terms were up for renewal. They were all contacted to see if they were interested in serving another term. Also included were any comments from Board chairpersons and/or Department Heads that were received, and a listing of those who were not seeking reappointment.

Selectman Rutan requested that, in the future, chairpersons of committees be asked to take the time to send an email with a comment about the individual up for reappointment. She felt it important to get some feedback. Chairman Pantazis indicated they were all volunteer positions. Selectmen Amberson agreed with Chairman Pantazis stating, when he was a chairperson of a committee, he did not send

a comment back saying no comment was a vote of confidence. Selectman Rand agreed with Selectman Amberson, although we could possibly be a little stronger in our message to the Chairs. Selectman Bakstran was not sure if she ever responded when she was chair. It was good to strive for perfection. Possibly, saying, “in order for reappointment”, the Chair is required to respond via email. Selectman Rutan still felt it didn’t take that long to give a comment. Chairman Pantazis agreed maybe a stronger request next time.

Selectman Rand moved the Board vote to reappoint those individuals who appear on the 2008 “Reappointment List” to the corresponding Boards, Committees and Commissions; Selectman Amberson seconded; all members voted in favor.

- Selectman Bakstran moved the Board vote to approve/execute Cemetery Deed A-769; Selectman Rand seconded the motion; all members voted in favor.
- Mr. Brenner stated, after 35 years in municipal management including eleven years in Northborough, this evening he was announcing his intent to retire as Town Administrator of Northborough. He expressed his appreciation to the many Boards of Selectmen he has had the opportunity to work with over the years as well as the Town Department Heads, Town employees and many dedicated officials on various Boards, Committees and Commissions. Mr. Brenner said his retirement date would be effective this Fall, but his practical last working day would be in July.

Chairman Pantazis expressed his gratitude for Mr. Brenner’s dedication and felt there would now be a void in that chair.

#### **NEW BUSINESS CONT...**

Selectman Rutan thanked Mr. Brenner for everything he had done, especially his

work on the Budget. She felt he was instrumental in teaching the Board what they needed to know year after year. She also felt he worked with many State officials making sure Northborough was covered.

Selectman Bakstran noted Mr. Brenner had been here for the 11 years she had been here. He had been here for all the budgets she could remember and to always provide the history. His first and now his last Town Meeting would be in the auditorium.

She

felt everyone should be appreciative for all that he had done.

Selectman Amberson said he had been a Selectman for over 8 years. He remembered his first year – there was so much to learn. Mr. Brenner was always there to lead the way. He was always available to explain things over and over. He thanked him for his efforts and patience.

Selectman Rand said she had the pleasure of working with Mr. Brenner for all 11 years. She noted it had been a split vote in hiring him, but all their concerns were for naught. They could not have found a fairer person to make the inner workings of Town Hall run smoothly. The Town of Northborough is very lucky the Board selected Mr. Brenner as Town Administrator. Selectman Rand stated, on behalf of the first Board and the last Board, thank you.

She noted they have a special bond after working together for 11 years, and as a courtesy, Mr. Brenner called her on Friday to tell her in advance. She had thought about this all weekend. They have an Assistant Town Administrator who has worked for the Town for 5 years. He lives in the community. He is raising his family here. Why go out and look for someone for the position of Town Administrator when we are in a fortunate position to have a man who can do the job, who already works for us and lives in Northborough. Having been involved in searches for the Police Chief, Fire Chief and Town Administrator, this would be a savings to the Town both in money and time.

Selectman Rand suggested, at this point in time, that the Board accept Mr. Brenner's notice of retirement. She also wanted to propose, through Mr. Brenner and the Chair, for them to see if Mr. Coderre was interested in the position by approaching him privately. If so, they could negotiate a contract so that Mr. Coderre could be appointed Town Administrator.

Selectman Amberson stated that, normally, he would say they should get a search Committee together, but this Board has known that Mr. Brenner was a candidate for other positions. He agreed with Selectman Rand. The Board knows what is out there.

They know Mr. Coderre is interested in the community and in raising his kids here. We know he is capable of doing the job. He has gone through the good and bad times. He felt they were in an enviable position.

Selectman Bakstran quipped that the void next to Chairman Pantazis didn't last long.  
**NEW BUSINESS CONT...**

She noted she respected Mr. Brenner and Mr. Coderre, and with trying to maintain a picture of fiscal health, she did not see why the Town should spend additional money going through the process if they already have someone qualified to do the job.

Selectman Rutan agreed that the Board should pursue this route. She liked the relationship between Mr. Brenner and Mr. Coderre, felt it was an advantage to the Town, and agreed that Mr. Coderre should be approached to replace Mr. Brenner.

Chairman Pantazis stated he had worked with Mr. Coderre since he was a Selectman, and worked hand in hand with both Mr. Brenner and Mr. Coderre. He was very impressed with the job Mr. Coderre was doing, and felt he was a perfect fit for the Town.

Mr. Brenner said she would like to share a few things with the Board. The issue of finding new Town Administrators is an issue nationally with the ICMA. Many City and Town Managers around his age are retiring, or will be, and wondering where is the next generation of Town Administrators coming from. They are working with grad schools to see if future candidates could be there, but there are really not a lot of people out there. He was asked to be on a committee looking for their first Town Administrator, and he was amazed at the limited applications received. It seems as if he sees the same names all the time for various Towns – there is a limited pool. Mr. Brenner stated he has always lived in the community where he worked, residency requirement or not. Many Towns in Massachusetts do not have residency requirements. Since the Northborough Town Charter does have a residency requirement, that may pose an obstacle in recruiting for a Town Administrator.

Mr. Brenner noted he has had outstanding Assistants to work with from Stacia Smith, to Jill Meyers and John Coderre. They all displayed quality, performance and dedication. He has a high regard for Mr. Coderre, and they both share something in common – they both worked in Windsor, CT. Because of that, he knew he had good training and ethics. Mr. Coderre is very well qualified and the Town would do well to consider him.

Selectman Rand moved to authorize Mr. Brenner and Chairman Pantazis to approach Mr. Coderre privately to see if he is interested in the position of Town Administrator, and if so, to work out a contract agreeable to both sides, which can then be presented to the Board of Selectmen for ratification; Selectman Bakstran seconded; all members voted in favor.

### **8:30 p.m. - EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Selectman Amberson moved the Board vote to enter into Executive Session pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 39, Subsection 23B, Subsection 3, Personnel Matter; Selectman Rand seconded the motion. Mr. Brenner asked if the motion could be amended to add labor negotiations, and that the Board would return to public session for action on the labor negotiations. Motion was so amended. The roll call vote was taken as follows:

**EXECUTIVE SESSION CONT...**

Bakstran	“aye”	Pantazis	“aye”
Amberson	“aye”	Rand	“aye”
Rutan	“aye”		

Chairman Pantazis announced that the Board would return from Executive Session only for action on labor negotiations and to adjourn.

**9:35 p.m. – RETURN TO OPEN MEETING**

Mr. Brenner announced that the Board of Selectmen in Executive Session had approved and signed a new three-year contract with the Patrolmen’s Union. The contract is effective July 1, 2007 and provides increases of 3% in the first year, 3% in the second year, and 3% in the third year.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Selectman Amberson moved the Board vote to adjourn; Selectman Rand seconded the motion; all members voted in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 9:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

M. J. Fredette  
Executive Assistant to the Board of Selectmen  
and Town Administrator