

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING MINUTES - NOVEMBER 23, 2009**

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

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

*Pledge of Allegiance

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – NOVEMBER 9, 2009 REGULAR MEETING

Selectman Rand moved the Board vote to approve the Minutes of the November 9, 2009 Regular Meeting as presented; Selectman Rutan seconded the motion. Vote: 4-0-1 (Selectman Amberson abstained due to his absence at the meeting).

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – NOVEMBER 17, 2009 SPECIAL MEETING

Selectman Rand moved the Board vote to approve the Minutes of the November 17, 2009 Special Meeting as presented; Selectman Amberson seconded the motion; all members voted in favor.

7:00 p.m. **VIRGINIA SIMMS GEORGE, CHAIR**
COMMUNITY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
Presentation on Holiday Trolley Program.

Virginia Simms George and Patty Murphy announced that the 5th Annual Holiday Trolley program will be held on December 5th from 11:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The tree lighting ceremony in the Town center is scheduled for 5:30 p.m. that same evening.

Selectman Rand moved the Board vote to authorize the operation of the Holiday Trolley on December 5, 2009 from 11:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., and to authorize the proposed trolley stop locations; Selectman Rutan seconded the motion; all members voted in favor.

7:10 p.m. **ROB THEVE, FIRE DEPARTMENT CAPTAIN**
Presentation on Fire Department Collection for "Toys For Tots"
Program.

Fire Captain Rob Theve announced that the Northborough Fire Department is again an official drop-off site for the USMC Toys for Tots Collection Program. An additional drop-off site is located at the Northborough Town Hall. Toys can be dropped off at either location on or before December 15, 2009.

7:15 p.m. - **BILL FRAHER, TOWN AUDITOR**
Presentation on FY 2009 Audit Report.

Bill Fraher, CPA made a presentation to the Board on the completed Final Audit Report for FY 2009.

Mr. Fraher informed the Board that the Town is in a good overall financial position with approximately \$3.45 million in the stabilization fund. The Town has approximately

BILL FRAHER, TOWN AUDITOR CONT. . .

\$4.4M in combined free cash and stabilization fund balances. Despite these reserves, the budget process for the next few years will continue to be challenging. He suggested that the Town monitor the trend of tax revenues, local aid and other receipts and to ensure that annual operating budgets are kept within available revenue and other funding sources.

Mr. Fraher reviewed his Management Letter Comments, noting that no material weaknesses or reportable conditions were found. He commended the Town management and staff for their efforts in resolving issues presented in prior year management letters.

Mr. Fraher discussed the Town's obligation under GASB 45. Although the Town has fulfilled its obligation under GASB 45 for its financial statements, he suggested that the Town continue to address a long-term funding strategy for post employee benefits. Mr. Coderre added that the recent plan design changes in health insurance has helped to reduce the Town's unfunded liability from 90 million to 34 million. He assured the Board that he will continue to address a long-term funding strategy as recommended by Mr. Fraher.

Members of the Board thanked Mr. Fraher for his presentation.

REPORTSWilliam Pantazis

- In response to a number of inquiries from residents, he requested an update on the Senior Center. In response to a question from Selectman Rand, Mr. Coderre assured the Board that the project is within budget and that the sewer work currently being done was included in the original plan. Mr. Coderre added that the project is nearing completion. He will provide a more definitive update to the Board at their meeting on December 7th.
- Attended the ceremony at the Purple Rose where a monument was unveiled in honor of Edwin Lewis Mitchell who died as a POW in 1951.

Jeff Amberson

- Reminded the public that the Winter Parking Ban is in effect from December 1st through March 31st.
- Congratulated the Varsity Girls Soccer Team for winning the State Title Championship.
- Congratulated the Student Council for their efforts in raising funds and collecting food donations to benefit families in need in Northborough and its surrounding communities.

Leslie Rutan, Clerk

- Congratulated the Varsity Girls Soccer Team and their coaches for their terrific accomplishments this year.
- Congratulated the Varsity Boys Soccer Team as well.
- Thanked the Police and Fire Departments for escorting the Girls Soccer Team through the center of Town following their winning the State Title Championship.

Leslie Rutan Report Cont...

- Requested an update on the results of the Open Space survey. Mr. Coderre will ask the Town Planner to provide a report.
- Requested an update on the Avalon Bay project and 9@20 Shops.

Dawn Rand, Vice Chairman

- Thanked the Boy Scouts for their efforts in helping to stock the Food Pantry.
- On behalf of a resident, requested that the DPW Department look into whether or not they can install reflectors on the road's center line in an unlighted section on Church Street.

Fran Bakstran, Chairman

- Congratulated Daniel Incorvaia and Jake Vancour for their recently being awarded the rank of Eagle Scout.
- Congratulated the Junior Woman's Club for winning this year's Spelling Bee.
- Attended the November 17th meeting of the Regional School Committee where the Committee voted to move forward with the reimbursement issue in order to achieve a favorable resolution for the Towns of Northborough and Southborough and the School District.
- The Solid Waste Subcommittee will be meeting soon to discuss additional ways to reduce, re-use and recycle. She encouraged members of the public to attend the meeting and offer ideas.

John Coderre, Town Administrator

- In response to the favorable Audit report heard earlier this evening, Mr. Coderre recognized the efforts of the Financial Team, especially those efforts of the Town Accountant Jason Little.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

UPDATE ON FY 2010 TRENNIAL CERTIFICATION (REVALUATION)

Principal Assessor Diane O'Connor, along with Board member Arthur Holmes provided an update on the ongoing FY 2010 revaluation, as well as the anticipated schedule for the Tax Classification Hearing. Ms. O'Connor spoke briefly about several critical changes under the DOR requirements that have negatively impacted the amount of time and work required by the Board of Assessors to complete this year's revaluation. Also, reductions in State agency funding and mid-year cuts have impacted the amount of time required for DOR to perform their review of information submitted by municipalities.

Ms. O'Connor informed the Board that the Town has submitted its data and information to the DOR and is waiting for their review. She discussed the possibility that the Town may not receive the DOR's final review in time to get actual third quarter tax bills out. The result would be another estimated bill for the third quarter.

ADOPTION OF COMPREHENSIVE FINANCIAL POLICIES

Mr. Coderre presented the final version of the Comprehensive Financial Policies for the Board's adoption. Both the Appropriations and Financial Planning Committees have reviewed the policies and have unanimously recommended their approval.

Selectman Rutan expressed her concern that the language under the enterprise fund clearly state that the goal of the enterprise fund is to recover costs and not to generate a profit. Following a brief discussion, Selectman Rutan agreed that the language as presented is fine, as long as people understand that the purpose of this fund is not to accumulate excess funds, but to simply recover the cost of the services provided. It was also clarified that any surplus could be used to offset the following year's budget for the enterprise fund.

Mr. Coderre reminded the Board that these policies should be reviewed on an annual basis.

Selectman Amberson moved the Board vote to adopt the Comprehensive Financial Policies as presented by Town Administrator John Coderre and recommended by the Appropriations and Financial Planning Committees; Selectman Rutan seconded the motion; all members voted in favor.

APPROVAL/EXECUTION OF DECEMBER 8, 2009 SPECIAL STATE PRIMARY ELECTION WARRANT

Selectman Rutan moved the Board vote to approve and execute the December 9, 2009 Special State Primary Election Warrant; Selectman Pantazis seconded the motion; all members voted in favor.

APPROVAL/EXECUTION OF JANUARY 19, 2010 SPECIAL STATE ELECTION WARRANT

Selectman Rutan moved the Board vote to approve and execute the January 19, 2010 Special State Election Warrant; Selectman Rand seconded the motion; all members voted in favor.

APPROVAL/EXECUTION OF CEMETERY DEEDS A825 & A826

Selectman Pantazis moved the Board vote to approve and execute Cemetery Deeds A825 and A826; Selectman Rand seconded the motion; all members voted in favor.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane M. Wackell
Executive Assistant to the
Board of Selectmen