**BOARD OF SELECTMEN**

**MEETING MINUTES**

**January 17, 2017**

**6:00 P.M.**

**Rutland Public Library**

**OPENING OF MEETING BY CHAIRMAN:** Ms. Bacon called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. also live on channel 191.

**PRESENT:** Wayne Walker, Stephanie Bacon, Leroy Clark, Sheila Dibb

**OTHERS:** Margaret Nartowicz, Town Administrator and Abby Benoit, Administrative Secretary

**ABSENT:** Michael Pantos

Mr. Clark moved to approve payroll and treasury warrants #15, Mr. Walker 2nd. Vote unanimous.

Mr. Clark moved to approve minutes from December 17, 2016 as presented. Ms. Dibb 2nd. Vote unanimous.

Minutes from January 3, 2017 will be held for a future date.

**Wachusett Greenways, Colleen Abrams**

Ms. Abrams explained that her purpose is to ask the town for support in a contribution of $1,000.00 for Fiscal Year 2018. The Town’s contribution would be used to support maintenance and care of the rail trail. Wachusett Greenways will be approaching all Wachusett towns plus Oakham and Barre. The goal is to create consistency along the trail and Rutland has the longest portion of trails.

Ms. Abrams thanked the Town and Mr. Kellaher for doing pavement repair work over the Charnock tunnel. Holden and Sterling have contributed in prior years. Wachusett Greenways is trying to increase membership, currently they have over 800 members and the goal is to reach 1000 members. West Boylston has also made prior contributions.

Ms. Bacon stated that it will need to go before town meeting.

Ms. Dibb moved to include a $1000.00 contribution to Wachusett Greenways for trail maintenance as part of budget process to be placed as a warrant article. Mr. Walker 2nd. Vote 3-1, motion approved.

Ms. Abrams explained that there are close to 10 miles of trail in Rutland. They do not seek ownership, but have been granted several permanent easements on properties. Many parts of the trail are owned by DCR, private, deeded easements, Fish and Wildlife and some land is still in the process.

 Wachusett Greenway’s intent will be to come back annually, but not to increase the fee amount.

There was discussion about recording where visitors to the trail travel from.

Since 1995 Wachusett Greenways has received a recreation trail grant. The grant amount doubles to $100,000 if you regionalize your projects. There are currently two major projects, including the trail from Wachusett Street towards Holden and the bridge decking in Sterling. Ms. Abrams asked the town to sign a letter of support for the grant application.

Ms. Dibb moved to authorize the chair to sign a letter of support to DCR for the grant application of Wachusett Greenways. Mr. Walker 2nd. Vote unanimous.

**DPW, Gary Kellaher**

**TIP Project:** Mr. Kellaher explained that the TIP project meeting is January 18, 2017 at 6 p.m., it will be let by CHA consultants. The project includes complete rehabilitation from Main Street to Brunelle Drive, including sidewalks and streetlights.

Mr. Kellaher and Ms. Nartowicz will be attending a meeting at Union Station where the project will be presented to CMRPC.

The original cost of the project is approximately $3,000,000 dollars, the town is responsible for $350,000 in engineering and design costs, which comes out of chapter 90.

**Complete Streets Contract:**

Ms. Dibb moved for the chair to sign the Standard Contract for Complete Streets, Mr. Walker 2nd. Vote unanimous.

**Upper Blackstone Budget:** Mr. Kellaher explained that Upper Blackstone has been going through the budget process. They were originally at a high with 7.1 % increase, the high has been reduced to a 4.1% increase, and it will potentially decrease to a 3.4% increase. This increase will effect sewer rates. Upper Blackstone is reducing the rates by using free cash. Ms. Nartowicz asked if there is a free cash use plan.

Mr. Kellaher confirmed that they have a limit and will not go below the limit.

Ms. Dibb asked about the Wachusett Street and Route 68 intersection. Mr. Kellaher explained that they will mill rumble strips across Wachusett Street and will be installing larger stop signs on Wachusett Street.

**Public Comment**

Steven Sherman, Paddock Road, expressed concern about the tax increase. His taxes have increased $1313.76 in the past two years and it is all going to school.

Ms. Dibb confirmed that a lot of people have expressed concerns and the Town will be behind until the debt exclusion goes away. The state formula is hurting Rutland, the state needs to look at the tax base, both Holden and Sterling have a large commercial tax base which comes with no students.

Ms. Nartowicz stated that it will be an enormous task to try to protect Town services. Ms. Dibb encouraged residents to go to the assessor’s office so they know what opportunities are available for abatements.

Dick Williams, Overlook Road, discussed additional road access in the center of Town to the schools and that the town consider making private roads into public roads in the center of Town.

He also asked if there is land for a new cemetery because the existing one is filling up.

The upcoming state zoning reform proposal would remove a lot of local control and take away a lot of land. They want multifamily dwellings by right and it will tell the town what the town cannot do.

**New Business**

**ADA Grievance Policy:** Ms. Nartowicz stated that the Open Space and Rec Committee came to her and asked to update the ADA Grievance Policy.

It will require the Board approval. There was discussion about changing language to reflect how the town is structured. A draft was presented to the Board for review.

**2017 Board of Selectmen Objectives** – Ms. Nartowicz made an initial request for the board to set annual goals and objectives. She recommends that the Board consider developing a list of goal categories with specific measureable objectives.

Ms. Bacon suggested incorporating CIPC.

**RDIC Appointment, Dick Williams**

Mr. Clark moved to appoint Dick Williams to RDIC. Ms. Dibb 2nd. Vote unanimous.

**CAC Disclosure** - For a Cable Committee member to serve as a director they are required to file out a disclosure form under the conflict of interest law. Paul Mattson disclosed that he currently serves as a non-compensated position and has taken a compensated position.

Ms. Dibb moved to accept the disclosure by special municipal employee and authorize chair to sign the acceptance of disclosure form. Mr. Clark 2nd. Vote unanimous.

**Old Business**:

**Drug Free Workplace Policy Review**: The Board was previously provided the policy for initial review. Given changes with recreational marijuana laws, Ms. Nartowicz recommended waiting to approve the policy.

**Fire Chief Search and Selection Process:**

Mr. Nartowicz confirmed that preliminary interviews have been completed, she thanked all of those that participated. Based on scoring, individuals will be moved forward for a mini assessment, then ultimately to the board for final interviews.

Ms. Nartowicz confirmed that the assessment will be done by fire professionals and payment will be made out of her account. The assessment will include scenarios and questions focusing on different areas of expertise. Ms. Nartowicz confirmed that she is following the recommendations set forth by the task force and the Board, she also thanked the task force for their contributions.

**Budget Updates**:

One on one department head meetings have been completed they are starting to tighten up numbers.

WRSD was informed at the school committee meeting that their preliminary numbers would have huge impacts on Rutland. They have proposed a 4 .9 % budget increase, which would be an 8.3% increase for Rutland’s assessment.

Ms. Nartowicz stated that she was very clear that she cannot recommend another override or debt exclusion to the Town this year because of what the town had to absorb for fiscal year 2017. She will be attending next meeting scheduled for January 24, 2017.

Ms. Nartowicz will reach out to other towns to see other boards and finance committees would like to meet to discuss the school budget.

Mr. Kellaher said that he met with FinCom and believes there was prior discussion about school committee members attending budget meetings so they know what is happening, Ms. Nartowicz will circulate the meeting schedule.

Ms. Dibb moved to enter Executive Session for Reason #3: To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an opening meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the chair so declares, only to return to open session for the purpose of adjournment. Mr. Walker 2nd. Roll call vote: Mr. Clark aye, Mr. Walker aye, Ms. Dibb aye, Ms. Bacon. Aye.

The Board moved to executive session at 7:08 PM.

The Board returned to open session at 7:27 p.m.

Ms. Dibb moved to adjourn. Mr. Clark 2nd. Vote unanimous.

The meeting adjourned at 7:27 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Abby Benoit

Administrative Secretary

Board of Selectmen *Approved\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*