



Office of the  
**BOARD OF SELECTMEN**  
272 Main Street  
Townsend, Massachusetts 01469

Sue Lisio, *Chairman*  
Andrew J. Sheehan,  
*Town Administrator*

Colin McNabb, *Vice-Chairman*

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**AGENDA**  
**DECEMBER 16, 2014, 6:00 P.M.**  
**SELECTMEN'S CHAMBERS, TOWN HALL**  
**272 MAIN STREET, TOWNSEND, MA**

**I PRELIMINARIES**

- 1.1 At 6:01PM the Chairman called the meeting to order and toll call showed Sue Lisio, Chairman (SL), Colin McNabb, Vice-Chairman (CM), and Carolyn Smart, Clerk (CS) present.
- 1.2 Pledge of Allegiance: The Board observed the Pledge of Allegiance.
- 1.3 SL announced that the meeting is being tape recorded.
- 1.4 Chairman's Additions or Deletions: Items 2.1 and 3.16 were added to the agenda
- 1.5 Town Administrator updates and reports. AS reported on the progress of the handicap ramp at the West Townsend Reading Room. Nashoba Tech finished the handicap ramp and Roger Rapoza and his team started excavation today for the path that leads from the parking lot to the base of the ramp. Weather permitting, it should be completed by tomorrow. AS thanked Nashoba Tech, instructors, students, Roger Rapoza and the cemetery department and Mark Mercurio for coordinating efforts.
- 1.6 Board of Selectmen announcements, updates, and reports.
  - CS asked if siding and windows were also going to be bid out, AS responded that he had met with the committee last week and it should be ready to go in the spring time.
  - CS asked if a survey was done at the police department, AS responded that he believes the police Chief did one, and he will check in with the police chief. SL said that if a survey was done, the board was not a part of it.
- 1.7 Approval of meeting minutes: November 25 and December 3, 2014. CS moved to approve the minutes from November 25, 2014 as well as December 3, 2014. CM seconded. Unanimous

**II APPOINTMENTS AND HEARINGS**

- 2.1 Town Clerk Kathy Spofford announced the availability of dog licenses: \$6.00 for neutered/spayed, \$11 for unaltered, those prices go up March 1, 2015, starting at \$10.00 per dog. If licensing is done before February 1, 2015, dog owners will be entered in to Number One Tag contest, and there will be a blanket for a prize. The winner will be announced at one of the selectmen meetings.

**III MEETING BUSINESS**

- 3.1 Kinder-Morgan Northeast Direct Pipeline: Project Update: AS reported that not much has changed since last meeting: the mainline has been rerouted from Massachusetts to the southern rim of New Hampshire. The main, 36 inch line will not be coming through Townsend, nor will the compression station. A 12" lateral will run north to south through the town coming from Mason, NH in the vicinity of the old landfill, running due south from there, adjacent to Ash Swamp, across Main Street, following the electric right of ways, eventually going down to Lunenburg and connecting with the pipeline system in the Fitchburg area. Kinder Morgan has made their amended filing with FERC, making it a formal change to the route, but nothing prevents another change which they would have to again file for. The

timeline does not change: certificate in about a year, environmentally permitting after that, leading to construction in 2017/2018. SL added that meetings will still have to take place and will now probably include other people. SL also mentioned that the Coalition at no point intended to push this project out to neighbors. AS said that the open houses have not been scheduled as of yet but will most likely be sometime in either January or February. The location of the meetings will also probably change. The Conservation Commission is still on top of what is going on regarding this matter. Kinder Morgan will have to notify abutter to the project of the change. CS asked if the new route would be going through the water department land, AS responded that it was unclear at this point but notification would be received if that were the case. Andrea Wood asked if the auxiliary line would be run at the same time, AS said that the main line would probably be done first and then the lateral line. CM asked if the lateral line was smaller than the main line, AS said yes, it was about 12 inches as compared to the 30-36 of the main line. Andrea Wood asked if Kinder Morgan would be required to obtain town permits to go across Main Street, AS explained that they are exempt as a general rule from permitting at lower levels because it is a federal project making them responsible for federal rules. AS said it is still unclear as to what laws and bylaws apply at lower levels of government.

- 3.2 North Middlesex Regional High School permitting and inspections: Update on permitting, inspections, and fees for the High School building project: discussed updated information as well as the meeting that will be taking place next week with the building department and designers. AS to schedule meeting with building department as well. Update regarding fire department fees and inspection process, FD will reach out to Fire Marshall for help in reviewing the plan. Rob Templeton of the Building Committee had found out that permit fees are not reimbursable by the state. SL requested that after town meeting RH and AS update again. CS asked RH about the inspections regarding the liquor license renewal, RH has completed all of them.
- 3.3 Review and approve annual renewals for auto, common victualler, alcohol, and entertainment licenses. CS asked if the times on the licenses had been changed, AS said yes. CS moved to approve and sign out of session the annual renewal for Class I, II, and III licenses, common victualler licenses, alcohol licenses both sections 12 and 15 and entertainment licenses contingent upon completion of required documentation and satisfactory inspection, effective January 1, 2015 through December 31, 2015. CM seconded. Unanimous.
- 3.4 Special Town Meeting: Review and discuss the Special Town Meeting on January 7, 2015, including the venue. Possibly modify venue due to insufficient parking. Discussed Hawthorne Brook School, the acoustics, and there will be no live TV feed available, and how to make the public aware either with a new warrant or updating the old.
- AS explained that in regards to Articles 4 and 8, which were going to take fund from the tax levy, now that the tax rate is set, that cannot be done. There is some flexibility with insurance as that came in about \$50,000 less than was budgeted. We will do the \$27,000 as a transfer instead of raise and appropriate from the tax levy. The Finance Committee has been notified of the changes.
  - SL asked about email list from town hall and how to sign up to receive emails, AS explained how to sign up for alerts and emails: go to [www.townsend.ma.us](http://www.townsend.ma.us), there is a signup on the main/home page, fill in email and receive notifications.
  - CS asked if insurance coverage was dropped since it came in under budget, AS explained that it was a reduction of premium because Karin Canfield (KC) went through policies for unnecessary equipment and redundancies. CS asked about the workers compensation audit, AS said that KC was able to go through that as well and that resulted in some positions being reclassified at a w/c lower rate.
  - CS reminded about message boards to advertise about the Town Meeting and SL reminded about advertising in the harbor.
- 3.5 Vote to open May 5, 2015 Annual Town Meeting warrant. CS moved to open warrant for annual town meeting to be held on May 5, 2015 annual town meeting. CM seconded. Unanimous.

- 3.6 FY16 budget: preliminary discussion including timeline, deadlines, employee compensation (CPI adjustment, COLA, step, etc.), and consensus revenue meeting. AS said that a revenue estimate is being put together to be discussed with SL as well as chairman of the finance committee. State aid will be an unknown factor until about March. Budget instructions will be going out to department heads. AS advised department heads to factor a 2 ½% increase for non-union personnel, which can be adjusted as needed.
- Departments have until January 21 to get their budgets in. Finance committee has requested to review the budgets as they come in.
  - Tentatively looking at February 10 to make a presentation on the first draft of the FY16 budget. Looking to publish the budget about four (4) weeks prior to town meeting.
  - SL asked about 2 ½% increase for non-union employees being the same as a level increase, AS said yes, either way the effect is the same.
  - CS discussed budget projections. AS explained that better than 50% of the budget is the schools and that information will not be provided until at least March. CS suggested making certain assumptions in regards to the schools based on past expenditures. SL and CM both agreed that AS's plan is acceptable.
- 3.7 Sign proclamation declaring January 2015 as Senior Appreciation Month. CS read proclamation. CS moved to approve January 2015 as Senior Appreciation Month. CM seconded. Unanimous.
- 3.8 Review guidance document for vacation accruals. AS explained that the current policy is contradictory and confusing. Currently states that a person is eligible for two (2) weeks' vacation on the fiscal year (July 1) following their five (5) year anniversary. AS would like to add guidelines so that time is accrued by anniversary date as opposed to fiscal year. CS and SL discussed the different aspects involved in tracking and accruing. CS said that it is a new policy that had to be signed off by all elected boards and committees, AS disagreed saying this was a guideline not rewriting the policy. SL requested 5 minute break at 7:09PM. CS moved to table agenda item 3.8. Unanimous.
- 3.9 Continue review of goals. Discussed meeting schedule for January which will be the 13<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>. Discussed setting up a meeting with the Board of Selectmen, Capital Planning and FinCom, potentially January 29<sup>th</sup>, time to be determined.
- AS discussed the top goal categories adopted by the Board: financial sustainability, policies and procedures, employees - existing, and information technology (IT), and the top tasks in each category.
  - Continue with financial sustainability, balanced budgets, investigate new area of revenue/resources, delinquent tax collections, five (5) year budget projection and retiree health insurance.
  - SL discussed fixed assets, as what is owned by the town, the value and the life expectancy, considering depreciation. Database that would include buildings, maintenance, projected maintenance, etc.
  - CS said that the accountant had the software and database to maintain that information, discussed getting access to that information to discuss in a work session. Requested that AS remind department heads to make sure that the database is up to date and contains the most up to date information.
  - SL brought up existing employees and annual performance evaluations including training for supervisors. AS said in order for evaluations to be effective they have to be consistently done across departments. CM agreed with AS that consistent performance evaluations are important, and suggested conducting exit interviews when employees leave. Training for employees and committee members could be done by Kopelman & Paige, EAP, insurer, and others, as well as professional trainers. Training improves transparency and compliance with laws and ethics. AS to put a plan together to accomplish annual performance evaluations for March 1.

- SL asked the members if they were on board with AS moving forward with list of goals as is; all agreed.
- 3.10 Vote to approve 2015 holiday schedule. CS moved to approve holiday schedule for calendar year 2015. CM seconded. Unanimous. SL asked when next BOS meeting was, decided it would be January 6, 2015, as the special town meeting is scheduled for January 7, 2015. January 13, 2015 would be the regular scheduled meeting.
  - 3.11 Review and approve request from Highway Superintendent Ed Kukkula to declare surplus sweeper brooms with estimated value of \$945. EK would like to trade the sweeper brooms with town of Lunenburg for their screening plant to be used as needed. CS moved to declare surplus sweeper broom worth an estimated value of \$945. CM seconded. Unanimous.
  - 3.12 Review mandatory referral from the Planning Board regarding amendments to the Board's rules and regulations. The full text of the amendments is available in the Selectmen's Office. No comments, agreed it looks good.
  - 3.13 2014 year end summary. Town Administrator Andrew Sheehan will summarize the accomplishments for the year. AS highlighted the positive accomplishments that have taken place in town this year. In short, 2014 has been a very good, strong year. We continue to work towards greater transparency: agendas and minutes are getting put up on the website calendar by Kathy Spofford. The West Townsend Reading Room ramp is nearing completion as noted earlier. VADAR finance software is fully implemented, and the staff in the finance departments continue to work with that. We are continuing to explore efficiencies and improvements in the area of financial management and ease of operation as well as transparency for the public. The Energy Committee is making progress on the Green Communities, receiving an extension to make more progress. Projects are underway at the Town Hall, insulating the basement to cut down on heating costs. The compensation and classification plan has been adjusted and further analysis contemplated; we have labor peace with all collective bargaining units. Town Meeting will hopefully support funding for IT improvements, helping move upgrades forward. North Middlesex High School Project and debt exclusion vote is an incredible investment and one of the biggest accomplishments that happened this year. The year saw significant staff transitions in the Town, with more to come. The Town's financial standing is very strong, with balanced budgets for quite a few years, retaining the essential services that are important to residents; and strong free cash for last several years. If the transfer for stabilization article goes through at the Town Meeting, will have about 6 ½% in general fund stabilization account, which is a very good number. SL asked what the recommended number is, AS said that 5-10%. AS would like to be between 5 and 7½%. The bond rating was restored to Aa3, which demonstrates very strong credit worthiness. We made great progress on capital investments with \$840,000 in FY15. Roads, highway equipment have been updated as well as some of the facilities. Helped by the state earmark in the FY15 budget and indebted to Representative Harrington for working so hard on Townsend's behalf. Savings on property and casualty insurance as noted earlier; awarded a 2% reduction on health insurance rates. The Collector/Treasurer office saw notable transitions with Kathy Rossbach retiring and Beth Ann Shied and Kate Stacy coming in. They have done a good job on delinquent tax accounts; improved efficiency with the lock box service for property and excise taxes; pending transfer of Water collections to Town Hall and the Water Department's move to a lockbox; identified historic staff shortage in the Treasurer-Collector office and benefits that would be wrought with additional staff if voted on at Town Meeting. The town is in a strong financial situation and AS is confident going forward. He gave credit to the Board, committees, Department Heads and staff.
  - 3.14 Discuss and approve request to close Town Hall and non-continuous operations departments to the public on December 26, 2014 and January 2, 2015 and allow employees to use personal or vacation leave. CS moved to approve request to close Town Hall and non-continuous operations departments to the public on December 26, 2014 and January 2, 2015 and allow employees to use personal or vacation leave. CM seconded. Unanimous.

- 3.15 Review request to hire temporary part-time help in the Collector's Office. Discussed temporary employees/agencies and the need in that department. 10-15 hours a week, 4-6 weeks, staff position paid out of wages or an account temps, just need adequate staffing to bridge to town meeting. CS moved to approve request for additional temporary help in the Collectors office, consistent with past practices. CM seconded. Unanimous.
- 3.16 Review and approve request from Highway Superintendent Ed Kukkula to award a bid to Nutmeg International Trucks, Inc., in the amount of \$48,500 for a used six-wheel dump truck. CS asked about award notice, AS said that it was done. CS moved to approve the recommendation from the Highway Superintendent to award the contract for a used 6-wheel dump truck to Nutmeg International Trucks Inc. for \$48,500 and to authorize the Town Administrator and/or Highway Superintendent to set award letter. CM seconded. Unanimous.
- CM offered his condolences to the Roberts family for the loss of his wife, Carol, Carol was a wonderful person. Thoughts and prayers to the entire family.
- SL would like AS to remind all the boards and committees that the minutes need to be submitted to the Town Clerk to be posted on the website in a timely fashion to maintain transparency.

#### **IV APPOINTMENTS OF PERSONNEL/OFFICIALS**

None

#### **V WORK SESSION**

- 5.1 Review and sign payroll and bills payable warrants. CS moved to review and sign the payroll and bills payable warrant out of session. CM seconded. Unanimous.

- VI EXECUTIVE SESSION:** Executive Session under GL c. 30A, 21(a)(3) to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining. SL read email from Jonathan Sclarsik, Assistant Attorney General, to CS. CM moved to open Executive Session under GL c. 30A, 21 (a)(3) to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining and employee benefits because having the discussion in open session will have a detrimental effect to those negotiations and strategies; and to adjourn directly from Executive Session. CS seconded. Unanimous.

#### **ADJOURN FROM BOS MEETING AT 8:25PM**

*Note: documents used or referenced during the meeting are available at [http://www.townsend.ma.us/Pages/TownsendMA\\_BOSAgenda/](http://www.townsend.ma.us/Pages/TownsendMA_BOSAgenda/) or in the Selectmen's Office.*