

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MINUTES OF DECEMBER 5, 2017**

PRESENT: Mr. James A. Gagner, Jr., Chairman, Mr. Marc W. Richard, Vice-Chair and Mr. Dario F. Nardi, Clerk

ATTENDEES: See Attached List

Opened the Meeting at 7:00 PM

Chairman Gagner Opened the Meeting and led with the Pledge of Allegiance. He notified all in attendance that this evening's meeting was being both video and audio recorded. Ms. Collen Montague from the Ware River News acknowledge audio taping of the meeting. Mr. Michael Baril also acknowledged his audio/video taping of the meeting.

MINUTES

Motion to approve the Minutes of November 28, 2017 as written made by Mr. Nardi; second: Mr. Richard – unanimous

CORRESPONDENCE

1. The office received notice from Springfield Abatement, Inc. who performed testing for the presence of asbestos. The results indicate that NO asbestos was found. - **Noted. The Chief will also forward copies to the Board of Health and Building Inspector for their files.**
2. The office received the monthly report of the Fire Chief for month ending November 2017. - **Noted.**

CHIEF OF POLICE – REQUEST FOR APPOINTMENT OF FULL-TIME OFFICER

The Chief is in attendance this evening to request that the Board appoint a candidate he has brought forth as a full-time police officer. With the impending retirement of our current Sergeant and the anticipated promotion of a patrol officer into that position, the Chief has budgeted for a 7th position for the last half of FY 18. As stated prior on several occasions, there is no funding stream provided by the state to fund the academy training that is required. The next current available academy is late September or early October of 2018. He is requesting that the Board appoint current part-time officer, Alexander Sinni to the full-time position effective February 17, 2018. The Chief along with the Police Chief's in Ware and West Brookfield participated in the final interviews and Mr. Sinni was the unanimous recommendation.

Mr. Richard stated again as he has before, that he doesn't feel that it's the town's responsibility to pay for an individual's education. However, he is aware that although the town is relatively small, it is still 2017 and the requirements apply to all towns. Sadly, this is not unique to Warren and Police Chief's throughout the Commonwealth face the same issues. The issue of the overtime costs have dominated conversations for some time now and Mr. Richard said that he is tired of the nonsense and the time has come to get back to business.

Mr. Nardi did ask Mr. Sinni if he would entertain a request by the Board to sign an agreement in which would allow the town to recoup some of the money expended on the academy should he accept employment elsewhere. A five year time period was suggested. Mr. Sinni fully agreed. Mr. Nardi understood that employees often seek employment elsewhere due to higher wages, however stated that he has a responsibility for the town's fiscal health. Mr. Lavash did question the Chairman Gagner and suggested that he should perhaps step aside from this discussion due to his close relationship with the department. Mr. Gagner stated that it wasn't necessary and both Board members didn't have an issue with Mr. Gagner participating.

With no further discussion, the following motion was made: Motion to appoint Alexander Sinni as a full-time officer effective February 17, 2018 to include a Training Reimbursement Agreement for a period of five (5) years, as agreed by Mr. Sinni made by Mr. Richard; second: Mr. Nardi – unanimous.

The Chief also took a moment to address the overtime figures. He acknowledged that the overtime line item did indeed increase in FY 15 & FY 16 due to officers being out for various reasons, however also stated that not all, but a high percentage of the money was reimbursed to the town. Mr. Nardi questioned the Chief on the overtime issue and recalled when he served as a member of the Finance Committee and the 7th officer position was approved at that time. Mr. Nardi reminded him that his (Chief) position was that if allowed to hire a 7th officer, then overtime would stop. He asked the question once again; will this appointment end the overtime" looking for a yes or no answer. The Chief stated that there is no way to answer that question with a simple yes or no as there are far too many variables that come into play. The Chief did state this evening that in light of his funding for training of part-time officers was taken out of his budget, he will be seeking a RAT from Finance.

And finally, the Chief has requested permission from the Board of Selectmen to dispose of the 2010 Crown Victoria (K9) vehicle. One of the 2015 Interceptors has been retrofitted to accommodate the K9 Unit. According to Chief Spiewakowski, the car has no value and Copart of CT is willing to take the car and auction the vehicle as it is a public site in which anyone can bid on the vehicle. In addition, by utilizing Copart, this absolves the town from any issues. With no further discussion, the following motion was made: Motion to allow Chief Spiewakowski to dispose of the 2010 Crown Victoria as discussed with Copart made by Mr. Richard; second: Mr. Nardi – unanimous.

TREASURY WARRANTS & INVOICES

Motion to approve and sign Warrant numbers 46 & 47 dated December 4, 2017 in the amounts of \$38,672.47 and \$237,105.47 respectively made by Mr. Nardi; second: Mr. Richard – unanimous.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Richard expressed his thanks to all of the volunteers that made this year's tree lighting a success. He also expressed his thanks to Town Clerk, Nancy Lowell, Lisa Mundell, Grace Schmidt and Morgan and Matt Carney and Brooke and Haileigh Swistak for helping to box up the Holiday for Hero's Gift Boxes. The care packages are a welcomed site when received by our dedicated service men and women.

Mr. Richard stated that he attended the Planning Board meeting on Monday, December 4, 2017 on the Town's application for Site Plan Review for the 980 Main Street parking lot. All went well, however due to the time of year, it most likely won't be completed until the spring. The lot is however open for use by all.

Mr. Gagner stated that due to a motor vehicle accident over the weekend, Verizon customers have been without phone/internet service for several days. Verizon continues to work toward getting all customers back up and running.

Mr. Gagner also announced that the Warren Community Elementary School will be hosting a Spaghetti Supper at Quaboag Regional M/H School on Friday, December 15th from 5 PM to 7 PM. All proceed will go towards scholarships that will be in the names of our three students that we tragically lost in November.

7:30 PM – POLE HEARING – NATIONAL GRID/VERIZON NEW ENGLAND, INC.

Mandy Patenaude from National Grid is in attendance this evening. Ms. Patenaude stated that Nat Grid along with Verizon New England have petitioned the town to install a pole which will be known as Pole # 3-84 and anchor, and install pole #3-2, the work beginning at a point approximately 325 feet north of the centerline of the intersection of Southbridge Road and continues on approximately 25 feet in a north direction. Pole 3-84 with be replaced with a new guy wire and Pole #3-2 will service a new home. With no opposition and with no abutters in attendance, the following motion was made: Motion to close the hearing made by Mr. Nardi; second: Mr. Richard; - unanimous. Motion to approve the installation of the pole as presented made by Mr. Nardi; second: Mr. Richard – unanimous.

SOCIAL NETWORKING POLICY

Mr. Richard requested that this topic be on this evening's agenda. With the adoption of the Social Networking Policy by the Board in June, it is quite clear that some employees have a total disregard for such. He stated that the intent of the policy was quite clear as he assumed we employed adults. That doesn't seem to be the case. In no way is it an attempt to prohibit anyone's rights, however all employees are fully expected to treat their peers with the respect and courtesy that one would expect in return. This should not have to be explained. He further stated that the Police Union had provided a memo of concern to the Board in which the Board fully supported their right to use it as a law enforcement tool. This behavior by some is to stop. It's an embarrassment to the town as a whole. He has had enough and disciplinary action will follow should it continue.

COMMENTS & CONCERNS

In light of the recent report that came out that the Town Hall testing revealed NO asbestos, Mrs. Soltys questioned if the Police Union was willing to post that information to their Facebook page. Also, she stated that the word on the street, is that the FOTTH were responsible for placing the “danger-asbestos” stickers on the front door of the Town Hall. She (as well as the FOTTH) unequivocally denied any claim to that childish behavior. Mrs. Soltys further stated that she was the only one of the FOTTH that received a call from the Chief “investigating” the matter. She questioned if that is how investigations are conducted. Mr. Gagner suggested that she contact the Chief regarding this matter. Mrs. Soltys did ask that anyone with information regarding this matter contact the Police Department. The stickers are alleged to have been placed on the doors somewhere between 2 PM and 2:30 PM on Sunday, November 26th.

Michelle Pavini asked if the office had inquired about having a line painted on Parkview Street, which currently serves as the detour route while the underpass is closed. The Highway Surveyor stated that the road is too narrow to place a line. It does appear that the underpass will be reopened soon and will help alleviate the situation. Mr. Gagner is to speak with the Chief and request that officers be in the area during the school hours (morning/afternoon).

Anne Banville asked if the matter with the Police Union has been resolved. Mr. Gagner stated that there has been progress and once finalized, the outcome will be made public.

Beverly Soltys asked if the Local 404 (dispatch) removed their complaint. Mr. Gagner stated that the matter cannot be commented on as of this evening.

Michael Baril questioned the Board if they were aware that the company that did the retrofitting of the 2015 Interceptor (K9) vehicle also employed one of our part-time officers. He also had a question regarding this evening’s appointment of the officer, however Mr. Gagner stopped the conversation as the officer was no longer in attendance. Mr. Baril apologized.

Next Meeting Date: December 19, 2017 at 7 PM.

Motion to Adjourn made by Mr. Nardi; second: Mr. Richard – unanimous at 7:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca Acerra
Administrative Secretary

Dario F. Nardi, Clerk

