

**Westborough Board of Selectmen  
Meeting Minutes  
November 29, 2011  
6:00 p.m. – 7:15 p.m.**

Present: Chairman Goldblatt, Vice Chairman Dodd, Selectmen Emery, Thompson and Johnson

**Request to Approve the Board of Selectmen's Meeting Minutes**

Selectman Emery's motion to approve the minutes of October 11, 2011 was seconded by Selectman Thompson. Vote: 5-0

Selectman Emery's motion to approve the minutes of October 25, 2011 was seconded by Selectman Thompson. Vote: 5-0

**Open Forum**

**Request to Reappoint a Water Treatment Plant Board Member / Mike Stanton**

Selectman Emery's motion to reappoint Mike Stanton to the Water Treatment Plant Board for a three-year appointment was seconded by Selectman Thompson. Discussion: Selectman Emery, as the liaison for that Committee, stated that Mr. Stanton does a wonderful job as chairman of the Committee.  
Vote: 5-0

**Request to Appoint a Planning Board Representative to the Open Space Preservation Committee / Mark Silverberg**

Selectman Emery's motion to appoint Mark Silverberg to the Open Space Preservation Committee as the Planning Board Representative was seconded by Selectman Thompson. Discussion: Mr. Silverberg informed the Board that he is looking forward to his appointment and Selectman Thompson thanked him for his service to the Town. Vote: 5-0

**Tax Classification Hearing / Board of Assessors**

Present for the public hearing were Linda Swadel, Chief Assessor and Chairman of the Board of Assessors and Mark Silverberg, member of the Board of Assessors.

Ms. Swadel explained that the purpose of the hearing is for the Selectmen to decide if there will be a single tax rate or a multiple tax rate. The Board was provided a packet on November 18, 2011 and there are three options for the Board to consider:

1. Shift more of the tax burden onto the commercial, industrial and personal properties. Page 4 includes a mathematical scenario that explains this option.
2. Shift some of the tax burden off the owner occupied properties as explained on page 5.
3. Shift some of the tax burden off the small commercial properties as explained on page 6.

Ms. Swadel provided in the packet a summary, "Fiscal Year 2012 'At A Glance'" and asked that the Board, as they make their decision, pay close attention to the following: the debt exclusion

amount, which is added to the levy every year to pay for the school construction from several years ago, that it has been reduced by \$155,000; the actual Fiscal 2012 levy is up just over \$2,000,000; the excess levy capacity, which the Board is approving tonight, is \$1,383,278.54; the Town's total valuation has decreased by \$58,239,568, the biggest reduction being in the commercial and industrial property classes. She explained that because of the increase in the levy and the decrease in the value of the tax rate the tax rate will increase by \$0.97 to \$19.21/thousand. The average increase to the single family home will be \$343.17 and the average commercial/industrial tax bill will decrease by approximately \$2,000.

Selectman Emery's motion to continue to hold a single tax rate for the Town was seconded by Selectman Thompson.           Vote: 5-0

**Request to Appoint a Conservation Commission Member to the Open Space Preservation Committee / Andrew Koenigsberg**

Selectman Emery's motion to appoint Andrew Koenigsberg to the Open Space Preservation Committee as the Conservation Commission Representative was seconded by Selectman Thompson.           Vote: 5-0

**Request to Appoint a Board of Selectmen Representative to the Open Space Preservation Committee / Selectman Dodd**

Selectman Thompson's motion to appoint Selectman Dodd as the Board of Selectman Representative to the Open Space Preservation Committee was seconded by Selectman Johnson. Vote: 4-0-1 (Dodd)

**Request to Appoint a Member to the Country Club Operating Committee / Richard Sundstrom**

Selectman Thompson's motion to appoint Richard Sundstrom to the Country Club Operating Committee was seconded by Selectman Emery.           Vote: 5-0

**Request to Appoint a Member to the Historical Commission / Christine Kurtz**

Nancy Galicki, member of the Historical Commission, came before the Board as Ms. Kurtz was unable to attend due to a business trip. Ms. Galicki asked that the Board acknowledge Ms. Kurtz's capabilities and enthusiasm to serve on the Commission by appointing her as a member.

Selectman Johnson's motion to appoint Christine Kurtz to the Historical Commission was seconded by Selectman Emery. Selectman Emery reviewed Ms. Kurtz's background and experience.           Vote: 5-0

**Proclamation – Craig Hillier Day / Chief Alan Gordon**

Chief Alan Gordon spoke about his history with Senior Patrolman Craig Hillier, who has been on the police force for thirty-one years and is retiring as of tomorrow. Chief Gordon pointed out that Patrolman Hillier started the band "Tailspin" and donated his time at many events. Patrolman Hillier told the Board that he has enjoyed working for the Town.

Selectman Emery read the Proclamation from the Board of Selectmen. Chief Gordon pointed out that Patrolman Hillier's family is in attendance. Selectman Goldblatt read a letter of congratulations from Senator Scott Brown. Selectman Thompson offered his congratulations

and appreciation for his service and that he made a great contribution to the Town. Selectman Johnson echoed Selectman Thompson's comments and thanked and congratulated Patrolman Hillier. Selectman Dodd expressed his appreciation for Patrolman Hillier's many years of service to the Town that he grew up in. Patrolman Hillier commended the Westborough Police Department and the officers serving the Town. Selectman Goldblatt echoed his comments and that the Town is lucky to have the Police Department that it has and thanked him for coming to the meeting.

### **Request to Approve the 2012 Liquor License Renewal Applications**

Selectman Dodd's motion to approve the 2012 annual Liquor License Renewal was seconded by Selectman Emery. Vote: 5-0

### **Customer Service Initiative / Selectman Dodd**

Selectman Dodd asked the Board to pursue the Customer Service Initiative that he presented in 2008, not necessarily in its current form, but possibly as an internal survey that would not cost money or something similar to what he has proposed.

Selectman Thompson asked to hear, at some point, the Town Manager's comments. He pointed out that while customer service is very important the initiative may infringe on the Town Manager and Department Heads' responsibility for customer service and is also concerned that it is divorcing management's responsibility for Town employees from the evaluative aspect of customer service. Selectman Thompson agreed to keep an open mind.

Selectman Emery disagreed that it may infringe on management's responsibility as she was very much in favor of the scientific survey that the Town Manager proposed. She proposed that the Town assesses its performance by executing certain elements of initiative to get feedback by asking for citizen volunteers who have a background in customer service to advise the Town how it can change things to make them more user friendly and to help assess the customer needs.

Selectman Johnson also supported the citizens' scientific survey and suggested that it is a good idea to form an Ad Hoc Committee that could move forward with an independent, improved proposal, as the Finance Committee's survey was pushed back somewhat and it would be no different for the Board. Selectman Johnson stated that if the Board is to do one, it should be independent and scientific and the Ad Hoc Committee should be charged with developing it and bringing it back to Town Meeting. He pointed out that the initiative has some similarities to the work that the Economic Development Committee (EDC) is doing, but the initiative has a more personal aspect regarding the residents.

Selectman Dodd pointed out that this was developed before the EDC was developed and while there was still a Town Coordinator and agreed that the initiative would need to be updated due to those changes.

Selectman Thompson expressed his concern regarding the reporting of complaints directly on the internet/website instead of addressing them with the Department Head or Town Manager. He also suggested that the Board's evaluation of the Department Heads should include customer service, if they do not already. In response to Selectman Emery's question Board members replied that if there were no survey for public input they would base their evaluation on their day

to day encounters with the residents and their own experiences. Selectman Thompson pointed out that customer service is important to the Board and the emphasis on it is not a product of poor customer service. Selectman Dodd explained that when he first proposed the initiative he received letters of support from Department Heads. Selectman Johnson agreed with the concept of an Ad Hoc Committee and that it should be dissolved after the six-month time frame as it is difficult to fill the current Town Committees. Other suggestions made were to learn more from the Town Manager, to ask Corridor 9 Chamber of Commerce for a volunteer recommendation to speak to the Board regarding understanding the concept in a municipal context and make it a focus of all employee evaluations.

Mr. Malloy stated that there is a big difference between the private and public sector in customer service and was aware of several other communities that have developed customer service programs and developed best management practices that he can obtain through ICMA. He suggested that he would research the topic and report back to the Board two to three meetings from now. The Board agreed with Mr. Malloy's suggestion and that Corridor 9 does not need to be contacted. Selectman Emery's opinion regarding the Board's role is to suggest new, innovative options, and by offering a way to look at how departments are interacting with their customers provides the community with a higher level of service. Selectman Dodd thanked the Chairman for time on the agenda to discuss this.

#### **Request to Approve the Common Victualer License for Bangkok Thai Restaurant / Boung Nong ("BB") Bountkasaysonh/ John Matson**

Attorney John Matson came before the Board to request approval for the Common Victualer License for the Bangkok Thai Restaurant at the former location of the Mandarin Restaurant at 57 East Main Street. He is expecting to open on December 8, 2011 and the approval is dependent on the completion of outstanding items.

Mr. Htway addressed the outstanding issues. Approvals are still needed from the Fire Department, the DPW and the Building Department in order to issue the Certificate of Occupancy and the Certificate of Inspection. Attorney Matson informed the Board that there will be a sprinkler system and fire alarm test tomorrow morning and that the grease trap has been installed but needs grading before the DPW can give their approval. The former Mandarin acquired the liquor license and there is none there currently.

Selectman Emery's motion that the Board approves the Common Victualer License for the Bangkok Thai Restaurant at 57 East Main Street subject to the items that the Fire Department, DPW, Board of Health and Building Department have was seconded by Selectmen Johnson. Discussion: Mr. Bountkasaysonh, known by his nickname "BB", spoke about the plans for the new restaurant and pledge to support the community. He is hoping for a December 8, 2012 grand opening.                      Vote- 5-0

#### **Comprehensive Fiscal Management Policies / Town Manager**

Mr. Malloy explained to the Board that the comments from the AFC have been incorporated in the document and all their issues have been addressed. There were no dramatic changes in response to the AFC's comments.

Selectman Emery's motion that the Board approves the Town of Westborough Comprehensive Fiscal Management Policies dated November 8, 2011 was seconded by Selectman Thompson. Discussion: The Board thanked Mr. Malloy for the work he did and acknowledged the value of the document. The Policies do not directly relate to the School Committee. Vote: 5-0

### **Town Counsel Report**

Attorney Franks was asked by Selectman Thompson at a previous meeting to do a public records request from the State House for documentation in regard to the redistricting, and he was informed that the Public Records law does not pertain to the legislature and he was unable to get the records. Attorney Franks asked Representative Peterson if he could read any comments that were submitted in writing and was told that he would not find any as the work that they had done was by lobbying orally for Westborough.

### **Town Manager Report**

Mr. Malloy had attended an MMA Workshop today on Regional Cooperation and Collaboration and he spoke about the Town's agreement with Ashland sharing building inspection services. He distributed to the Board a summary, copy of a newspaper article when the agreement was first reached, a copy of the agreement, and a copy of the Metro-West article reporting that Ashland had hired a full-time building inspector. Mr. Malloy explained that he met with Mr. Htway and Ashland on a monthly basis and they were receiving the services and inspections were being completed and they will now likely be paying much more to have the same level of services. Mr. Malloy will meet with the Ashland Town Manager, whose intent is that the contract with Westborough provides the overall management of the building inspections and they will retain a part-time inspector to do the inspections. Mr. Malloy will bring the amended agreement back to the Board. He pointed out that he views the situation as a semi failure and semi success and that it does lay the ground work for other similar programs and he will continue to look for these types of opportunities.

### **Issues and Correspondence of the Selectmen**

In response to Selectman Johnson's question regarding Warren Street, Mr. Malloy informed the Board that he is waiting for the legal descriptions and layout of the easements has spoken with the property owners regarding where the easement needs to be. He will discuss in Executive Session the value of the easements in order to restore the properties. Mr. Malloy will meet with the residents when he has received the actual easement layout and Attorney Franks has forwarded to their attorneys the proposed easement language. Selectman Johnson thanked the Town employees for the work and the services provided during the storm and thanked E.L. Harvey's for opening the transfer station extra days to accommodate residents.

Selectman Dodd pointed out that the School Department is sponsoring a documentary at Mill Pond School this evening called "A Race to Nowhere" and recommended seeing the film. Also tonight at Mill Pond the library is launching the Community Reading Program.

Selectman Emery thanked Tim Novak for producing the meeting and the Town, on behalf of the Garden Club, for displaying the notice for their Christmas event.

Selectman Thompson announced that the Town elections will be held on March 6, 2012 and candidates may pick up nomination papers starting December 5, 2011 in the Town Clerk's

office. He stated that there are two Selectman positions whose terms are up, his and Selectman Goldblatt's and that he has decided not to run, so his position will be open. Selectman Thompson encouraged residents to consider this opportunity to serve the Town.

Selectman Goldblatt received a letter from a resident wondering why the Town does not have a volunteer Fire Department and she has spoken with the Chief and the Town Manager regarding the letter and they will follow up with the resident. Selectman Goldblatt attended the Thanksgiving Eve service at the Congregational Church and stated that it was beautiful and asked that the men and women far from home be remembered in everyone's thoughts and prayers.

#### **Adjourn Open Session / Executive Session**

Selectman Emery's motion to enter into Executive Session for the purpose of collective bargaining as an Open Session would have a detrimental effect on the Town's bargaining position and the Board will not reconvene Open Session was seconded by Selectman Thompson. A roll call vote was taken: Selectman Thompson – yes; Selectman Emery – yes; Selectman Goldblatt – yes; Selectman Dodd – yes; Selectman Johnson – yes.

*Submitted by Paula M. Covino*

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**Chairman Goldblatt**

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**Vice Chairman Dodd**

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**Selectman Emery**

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**Selectman Thompson**

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**Selectman Johnson**