

Members present:	Kevin M. McCormick	John W. Hadley
	Christopher A. Rucho	Siobhan M. Bohnson
Members absent:	Michael J. Kittredge	

Mr. McCormick convened the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

**Read and Acceptance of Minutes from Previous Meeting**

Motion Mr. Hadley to approve the regular session meeting minutes from November 20, 2013, seconded by Mr. Rucho. Vote on the motion – Messrs. McCormick, Rucho and Hadley yes; Ms. Bohnson abstains as she was not in attendance.

Motion Mr. Hadley to approve the executives session meeting minutes from November 20, 2013, seconded by Ms. Rucho. Vote on the motion – Messrs. McCormick, Rucho and Hadley yes; Ms. Bohnson abstains as she was not in attendance.

**NEW BUSINESS****1. Provide Board with Municipal Calendar for 2014**

Mr. Gaumond informed the Board that a copy of the Municipal Calendar for 2014 was left in the mail slots. It is a document which has been established over a period of time and it will be posted on our website.

**2. Discuss & choose designer selection committee**

Mr. Gaumond noted that the deadline for the RFP for engineering services for the new town hall is set for December 19<sup>th</sup>. As the Board does not have a meeting until January, he thought it would be appropriate to have a member of the Board ready to begin reviewing the proposals so we can have a recommendation for the Board in January. Both Mr. Rucho and Mr. Hadley offered to serve on the committee. Mr. McCormick asked if the Selectmen could vote to have Mr. Rucho and Mr. Hadley contract on behalf of the Board and whatever they come back with the Board of Selectmen will agree with. Mr. Gaumond explained that the Board could authorize the Town Administrator to enter into an agreement on behalf of the town upon the recommendation of the Board of Selectmen. Mr. Rucho added that if there were issues, we could have a meeting after the 19<sup>th</sup>. He also questioned whether a member of the FISP Committee should be on the review committee. As Mr. Gaumond has not asked anyone as of yet, it was agreed to have Mr. Rucho and Mr. Hadley serve.

Motion Ms. Bohnson to designate Mr. Hadley and Mr. Rucho to serve on the designer selection committee, seconded by Mr. Rucho, all in favor.

Motion Mr. Hadley to have the Town Administrator be able to contract for engineering services upon the recommendation of the designer selection committee, second by Ms. Bohnson, all in favor.

**Public Hearing: Re, Classification Hearing in Conformity With M.G.L. Ch 40, §56 to Establish Local Property Tax Rate or Rates for Fiscal Year 2014**

Mr. McCormick opened the public hearing and Mr. Gaumond read the following notice. Notice is hereby given that the West Boylston Board of Selectmen will hold a public hearing on Wednesday, December 4, 2013, at 7:05 p.m. in Conference Room #1 of the municipal offices located at 127 Hartwell Street, in conformity with the provisions of Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 40, Section 56 for the purpose of holding a Tax Classification Hearing so as to establish the local property tax rate or rates to be assessed to each of the following classes of property for fiscal year 2014, the period from July 1, 2013 through June 30, 2014: residential property, open-space property, commercial

property, and industrial property. All interested persons, groups, and agencies are invited to attend and participate. Kevin M. McCormick, Chairman, Board of Selectmen, Town of West Boylston, advertised on November 20, 27, 2013.

Principal Assessor Harald Scheid joined the Board with Chairman of the Board of Assessors Brad Dunn. Mr. Scheid explained that Mass General Laws require the Board of Selectmen to meet once a year to determine whether the town will adopt a single tax rate or a split tax rate for the various classes of properties. Traditionally in West Boylston we have adopted a single rate. If that were the case, our tax rate would be \$17.66, however, if we adopted a commercial shift factor of 1.5 it would result in a 14-15% reduction of residential taxes. The Board of Assessors has historically recommended that the Selectmen adopt a single tax rate. Mr. Dunn noted that he feels it is the appropriate thing to do as a two tiered rate would be more appropriate for a town with a heavier commercial tax base. Mr. Hadley agrees as so many of the business owners are property owners in town. Ms. Bohnson asked about the percentage of commercial. Mr. Dunn advised that it is 22%, with 8% commercial, 5% industrial and 8% personal property. Mr. Rucho also agrees with the single rate as indirectly the residents would have to pay for the increase when they shop at the local stores. Mr. Scheid advised that those cities who have split rates are trying to move towards single rates.

Mr. Scheid explained that with a \$17.66 tax rate, the average residential property will increase \$30.00 per year. He added that we had a pleasant surprise at the end of the tax rate setting process. He was calculating the new growth numbers and when they tabulated those he was surprised that the personal property was as high as it was. The substation built out a \$15 million addition and we discovered that this added growth. Had we know about that last year the money might have been spent and this will give us \$318,000 excess levy capacity generated by this addition. It represents a reduced tax rate for the town as it would have been \$18.04. The levy calculation starts with last years maximum, add 2-1/2% plus the value of new growth. We did adopt a policy on how we would spend new growth in the future. Mr. Gaumond noted that if we knew in advance this was going to be the case we would have made an appropriation with some of the money and sent it to the Capital Fund. Mr. McCormick recalled when he first became a Selectman, we did not tax to the maximum. This year when people hear this we have to be careful about spending that excess levy. There is no one present who wishes to speak.

Motion Mr. Rucho to close the public hearing, seconded by Ms. Bohnson, all in favor.

Motion Mr. Rucho to adopt a residential factor of 1.0, seconded by Mr. Hadley, all in favor.

### **Paper street discussion**

Following a presentation by Town Counsel regarding paper streets, the Board asked to have the Assessors comment on when paper streets would be on the tax rolls once adjudicated on by the courts. The agenda package contains an email from Mr. Scheid addressing that question. If it is before January 1, it would be included in the next fiscal year, July of 2014. Ms. Scheid noted that the tax consequence is not big and would add small incremental value. Mr. Rucho feels the win to the property owner is now he owns the property. Mr. Scheid advised that it is a recurring issue and the property owners periodically come in to his office. He would be delighted if they did follow the process to legally own the paper street. Since the meeting Mr. Gaumond did post the information on both the town and DPW websites.

### **Request for Change of Manager for Harold N. Keith Post 204**

Mr. McCormick recused himself. Proposed manager, Bernard Castagnetti, 22 Ashten Street, Worcester, joined the Board. Ms. Bohnson asked if he sees any changing coming up over the next year or so at the American Legion. Mr. Castagnetti believes there will be some changes and he made a few as Acting Bar manager. He is trying to do some improvements to the parking lot, more events for the town and a bigger chicken barbeque. Mr. Gaumond advised that all parties have signed off and have no issues with the requested change.

Motion Mr. Hadley to approve the request for Change of Manager for the American legion 204 to Bernard Castagnetti, seconded by Ms. Bohnson.

Mr. Gaumond asked Mr. Castagnetti to comment on his experience in serving as a bar manager. Mr. Castagnetti shared that he has been an assistant bar manager for the last two years, attends every party to insure that there are no problems and he is just a phone call away. He has no problem overseeing his bartenders and servers. Mr. Rucho asked if there is some type of training certification he would take. Mr. Castagnetti explained that all the bartenders are TIPS certified and it is one of their rules. It is an online training. Vote on the motion – all in favor. Mr. McCormick returned to the meeting.

### **Anthony Sylvia, Director of Public Works**

Mr. Sylvia joined the Board.

1. Concurrence on the hiring of snow plow drivers using town vehicles effective December 5, 2013 at a rate of \$16.70 per hour: Larry Salate, Luis Melendez, Donald MacKenzie, Zach Prendiville, William Mulcahy, William Bennett and Daniel Hochberg

Motion Mr. Hadley to approve the list of drivers, seconded by Mr. Rucho. It was noted that all drivers, with the exception of Mr. Hochberg, are return workers. Vote on the motion – all in favor.

### **2. Discussion of snow removal policies**

The first policy for review is the Emergency Snow and Ice Removal Policy. It states that when icing conditions are predicted the Director of the DPW will see that all sand/salt spreaders are operational and sanding crews are alerted to the possible call out. When icing conditions develop during non-working hours, the Public Safety dispatch will notify the Director of the presence of icing conditions and location. In the event inability to contact the Director, the Foreman shall be contacted. The person notified shall contact the personnel needed to respond to that condition. The responding personnel should be reporting to the garage within fifteen minutes after notification. Spot icing (condition #1) conditions will be responded by one sander. Spot icing locations will be supplied to the driver upon arrival based upon inspections by the duty police officer. Moderate icing conditions (condition #2) shall be responded by two sander trucks. Severe icing conditions shall be responded by all sander trucks. (condition #3). Priority actions for condition #1 through #3. Condition # 1 covers bridges, culverts and known trouble spots or those reported by the police duty officer. Condition #2 covers major thoroughfares and hills, shall be serviced to include condition #1. Condition # 3 includes major thoroughfares, bills, and school bus routes shall be serviced first. All secondary public roads will be serviced second. All private streets approved by the Board of Selectmen shall be serviced last. All public schools and buildings shall be serviced during the first application. All sanders shall respond to condition #3 as specified in the Ice Control Policies, Section “E” at the first sign of forecasted snow or ice, or when snow or ice impedes vehicular traffic using snow tires.

Upon completion of sand/salt operations in “A” above all sander units shall return to the DPW garage, mount plows and inspect their respective vehicles for fluid level, light and safety equipment operation, tire inflation, and ballast. The Director shall contact all plowing personnel and private

contractors with a reporting time. Snow plowing operations shall not begin until snow accumulation is between 3 to 4 inches deep. Depending on the time of day, rate of accumulation, the Director shall determine the number of private contractors that shall be called for response. Every effort shall be given to allow for a one hour lead time for private contractors. All DPW personnel shall respond immediately when notified. All main thoroughfares shall be cleared as first priority. Secondary roads and developments shall be second priority. All private streets approved by the Board of Selectmen for plowing services shall be third priority. With regard to school parking lots and municipal building parking lots, during storms of 4 to 6 hour limited duration and low accumulation (4 to 6 inches) school parking lots shall be cleared prior to 6:45 am after all primary & secondary roadways have been cleared by one pass. Municipal Office Buildings shall be cleared by 7 am after school parking lots have been completed. The Library Building parking area and walkway shall be cleared by 10 am. During storms of longer duration 8 to 10 hours and accumulations of 6 to 8 inches. School parking lots shall be opened for emergency vehicle passage after one clearing of main thoroughfares, secondary roadways and private streets. In the case of one hour school delay, every attempt shall be made to have all school lots open by 7:45 a.m, and for a two hour delay lots shall be cleared by 8:45 am, including school bus turn arounds. Municipal Office Building shall have one passage for emergency vehicle access. After all main thoroughfares, secondary roadways and private streets have been opened, attempts shall be made to open the Municipal Office lot by 9 a.m. the Library Building lot and passageways shall be cleared by 1 p.m. if possible. Attempts will be made to clear snow from the sidewalks in the school zone within 48 hours of the storms ending. All others shall be in process within 72 hours with the business districts and bus routes given priority. Operations to push back intersections and or snow removal shall begin within 36 hours of the storms completion. Priority shall be given as follows: entrances to main thoroughfares and school zone lots, school bus routes and pre-established school bus turn arounds, business districts and areas of high drifting probability, all secondary public roadways and private streets as approved for service by the Board of Selectmen.

It shall be the responsibility of the West Boylston Water District to provide marking flags where necessary on fire hydrants by November 15 of each year. The District shall also be responsible for snow removal at all hydrants. The DPW shall make every attempt to minimize covering hydrants during wing pushback operations. The DPW shall promptly notify the Water District if obscure hydrants are encountered or flagging is missing. When roadway banks exceed 30" motor grader operations may be required to reduce and pushback banks. In such operations a backhoe shall accompany the grader to assist in reopening curb cuts which may become blocked during such operations by accumulations of heavy frozen snow. The policy also covers repairs and maintenance during winter months operation the following repair and maintenance priorities shall be observed. It shall be the responsibility of the DPW to be kept aware of the weather conditions in the community. School closings shall be the responsibility of the Superintendent of Schools to determine school closing and/or delays after conference with the Director.

Information for school closing or delays shall be the responsibility of the School Superintendent. The School Superintendent shall notify the Director through Central Dispatch as soon as possible of any decisions for delay or cancellation of school. All other information shall be released through the office of the Town Administrator. In the event of a Declaration of Snow Emergency by Federal, State or Local officials the following local co-ordination shall be necessary. The Director shall meet with the Town Administrator, Chief of Police, Fire Chief, Municipal Light Manager and Water Department Superintendent to prioritize and co-ordinate snow removal needs to best serve the safety needs of the public. Mr. Sylvia commented that the policy gives the residents a very good idea of the operations of the DPW and Mr. Gaumond will send out a blog on the policy.

Mr. Rucho asked about the Housing Authority as the Board did offer assistance to them. Mr. McCormick noted that the Housing Authority did say that in the past when their maintenance man was not able the town stepped in and did it. Maybe after everything else is done. Mr. Sylvia's understanding is the DPW would do the plowing through the facility, however, it would be difficult for them to do so. They have assisted with sanding and to some degree they are willing to help.

Mr. McCormick suggested a couple of days after the snow storm we could have a day when everyone moves their cars and we move the snow. Mr. Gaumond did speak with Housing Authority Director Anita Sullivan about these issues and one of the big issues is the removal of the large quantities of snow. Mr. McCormick suggested using the new Kubota equipment for that task. Mr. Rucho suggested amending the snow and ice removal policy in the future to include this area. Mr. Sylvia stated that any appreciable amount of work they would do for the Housing authority he would like to have some compensation back to the DPW budget. Mr. Gaumond noted that if there is something we could handle within our budget without an adverse strain to the DPW and their budget we would be willing to do. Mr. McCormick does not see this as an overtime scenario. Mr. Rucho asked if they changed their priorities when the school closes because of the bad weather. Mr. Sylvia indicated that they do.

This will be the first winter with the Mailbox Replacement Policy. The purpose of this policy is to outline the process the town will follow for the repair or replacement of mailboxes and/or posts damaged by town equipment. Plow operators are urged to take precautions to avoid hitting mailbox posts, however, often during a storm reduced visibility makes it difficult for a driver to see a mailbox post in time to avoid striking it or pushing it over with plowed snow. Owners are encouraged to install mailboxes at the maximum usable distance from the edge of the roadway. Posts should also be checked for deterioration by the property owners on a regular basis to reduce the possibility that the weight of the plowed snow may simply break the post. If it is determined by the Public Works Director or his designee that the Town equipment has made physical contact with the mailbox and/or post, with a plow or vehicle, the Town will replace and/or repair said mailbox and/or post. If it determined that the mailbox is broken from the weight of the snow, ice, or slush, then the Town will not be responsible for repairing, replacing or reimbursing the resident for the damage. Replacement of mailboxes is not in-kind but a standard mailbox and pole (valued at not more than \$40.00 combined) is provided. Any person(s) who have something other than a standard mailbox, (upscale ornamental mailboxes and/or posts) will be required to submit for reimbursement or claim through the Town's insurance carrier or may request a flat reimbursement payment of not more than \$40. Any mailboxes damaged along Routes 12 and 110 will be subject to reimbursement, replacement, or denial of claim by the Massachusetts Department of Transportation since the Town does not contract for or plow these roadways. The exception to this claim would be if only a mailbox is damaged after regular plowing operations have ended and is damaged as a result of the Town plowing the sidewalks or traveling back to the DPW headquarters. Then the other provisions of this policy may apply.

Ms. Bohnson asked if we lost many mailboxes and that is why we have this policy. Mr. Gaumond explained that a lot of other communities have such a policy and losing mailboxes is not a regular occurrence.

### 3. Public Service Announcements

Mr. Sylvia shared the following public service announcements, which will also be posted on the police department and public works websites. Winter parking ban began on November 15<sup>th</sup>, no parking from midnight to 5:00 a.m. He requests residents to please remove obstructions, such as

basketball hoops, from the edge of the roadway. Plowing operations could damage the personal property, damage DPW equipment, and become a safety hazard. Residents snow blowing or shoveling from driveways should not land in the streets or sidewalks, but rather into a resident's front yard. Please repair any weak or leaning mail boxes that could become damaged by flying snow during plowing operations. On trash pickup days, place trash barrels and recyclable containers by 7:00AM near the end of their driveways, and not in sidewalks, during snow plowing operations. Please sign up for "DPW News" on the Town's website, in order to stay informed of changing services during snow storm operations, such as, trash day cancellations. The DPW has a new method of roadway deicing – GREEN SALT. This method will no longer use sand, and is better for the environment, DPW equipment, and our roadways and storm drains. Our street sweeping will be 10% of what it has been in the past. Mr. Rucho asked about the sand/salt pile we offer to the residents at the DPW parking lot. Mr. Sylvia advised that we will continue to mix sand and salt and provide a pile for residents.

#### 4. Report on Transportation Bond Bill Earmark Inclusion

Rep. O'Day has successfully included \$205,000 to be used to fix the shoulder failure at 325 Worcester Street. This will help us make our Chapter 90 funds go a little further.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### 3. Discuss January meeting schedule

It was agreed to meet on January 8 and 22 and then return to the first and third Wednesdays in February.

#### 4. Discuss date for Board retreat

The Board agreed to schedule their retreat for January 18<sup>th</sup>.

#### 5. Sign contract for demolition project

The signature file contains the contract and the contractor has already installed fencing to secure the Mixter building. Mr. Rucho asked how the site will be left after the building demolition. Mr. Gaumond advised that it will be loamed and seeded. We will also be taking some steps to shred any documents in the building as the demo company does not want paper floating around. Mr. Bohannon asked what will happen with the storage containers currently on the site. Mr. Gaumond stated that right now he is up in the air about that, and in the next 18 months he will begin the transfer of those documents into the basement of the new building so they are not in a non-climate controlled building.

### **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

Mr. Rucho was looking through the department reports and noticed that the DPW does not provide a report any more. Mr. Gaumond explained that he is working with Mr. Sylvia on that and they will be included very shortly.

### **MEETINGS, INVITATIONS & ANNOUNCEMENTS**

1. December 6, 2013 – 9-1:00 p.m., department managers' training – Management Skills for Municipal Department Heads. This is an employee training which will be opened up to the Municipal Light Plant, Water District and Housing Authority.

2. December 11, 2013 – next Board of Selectmen's Meeting

**BOARD REPORTS**

Mr. Hadley thanked everyone for their involvement on the closing for our new town hall and congratulated everyone.

With no further business to come before the Board, motion Mr. Rucho at 8:25 p.m. to adjourn, seconded by Ms. Bohnson, all in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Approved: December 11, 2013

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Nancy E. Lucier, Municipal Assistant

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Kevin M. McCormick, Chairman

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Christopher A. Rucho, Vice Chairman

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John W. Hadley, Clerk

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Siobhan M. Bohnson, Selectman