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Present: Heather M. Billings, John F. Fairbanks, Wayne R. Walker

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Billings called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. in the Selectmen’s Office at Town Hall. She announced that the meeting was being recorded by Ashburnham Westminster Community Access TV.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- The Fire Department will host an Open House at the Public Safety Building on Saturday, October 11<sup>th</sup> from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. There will be demonstrations on how residential sprinklers can save lives. The Police Department will also be having car seat demonstrations and other safety items.

APPROVED MINUTES/WARRANTS

Mr. Walker moved that the Board approve the minutes of September 15, 2014 as printed. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Board members reviewed and approved the following warrants:

October 6, 2014	Accounts Payable #16A	\$2,649,481.71
	Payroll #16B	\$ 167,338.82
	Deduction #16C	\$ 147,383.67

BORROWING -- SENIOR CENTER BAN RENEWAL

Treasurer/Collector Melody Gallant was on hand to request the Board’s approval of a Bond Anticipation Note renewal for the Senior Center in the amount of \$2,580,100.

Mr. Walker moved that the Board authorize the issuance of a BAN renewal for the Senior Center in the amount of \$2,580,100 with Greenfield Coop with an interest rate of .45%. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

BORROWING -- SEPTIC MANAGEMENT PLAN

Ms. Gallant also requested that the Board approve the borrowing of \$300,000 from the Massachusetts Pollution Abatement Trust for the Community Septic Loan Program as authorized at the May 4, 2013 Annual Town Meeting. This program offers loans to qualified homeowners for the repair or replacement of septic systems and will be administered by the Board of Health.

Mr. Walker moved as follows:

1. That the Town shall issue a bond or bonds in an aggregate principal amount not to exceed \$300,000 (the “Bonds”) pursuant to Chapters 29C and 111 of the General Laws and a vote of the

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Town passed May 4, 2013 (Article 20), which authorized a total borrowing of \$300,000 for a community septic management loan program (the “Project”);

2. That in anticipation of the issuance of the Bonds the Treasurer is authorized to issue an interim loan note or notes (the “Notes”) from time to time in an aggregate principal amount not to exceed \$300,000
3. That each Bond or Note shall be issued as a single registered security, and sold to the Massachusetts Clean Water Trust (the “Trust”) at a price determined pursuant to the Loan Agreement;
4. That the Treasurer is authorized to determine the date, the form, the maximum interest rate and the principal maturities of each Bond and Note, and to execute a Loan Agreement or Agreements with the Trust with respect to the sale of the Bonds and Notes, such date, form and maturities and the specific interest rate or rates of the Bonds and Notes to be approved by a majority of the Board of Selectmen and the Treasurer and evidenced by their execution of the Bonds or Notes;
5. That all action taken to date by the Town and its officers and agents to carry out the Project and its financing, including the execution of any of the Loan agreements by the Treasurer, are hereby ratified, approved and confirmed; and
6. That the Treasurer and the other appropriate Town Officials are hereby authorized to take any and all actions necessary or convenient to carry out the provisions of this vote, including execution and delivery of the Loan Agreement or Agreements and the Project Approval Certificate and Regulatory Agreement or Agreements relating to the Project.

Mr. Fairbanks seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

APPROVE STATE ELECTION WARRANT

Mr. Walker moved that the Board approve the State Election warrant for Tuesday, November 4, 2014, as presented. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

POLICE CHIEF REQUEST TO SUPPORT COMMUNITY INNOVATION CHALLENGE GRANT FOR FITCHBURG FIREARMS TRAINING FACILITY

The City of Fitchburg Police Department is applying for a Community Innovation Challenge Grant which will provide a regional indoor firearms training facility. They have invited the town to participate in the program and are requesting that the Board vote to support the grant.

Chief Albert explained there is no monetary investment and it would be a trailer which is parked outside the Police Station in the parking lot. This will allow his department to utilize the trailer. At present, there is only one outdoor firearms training location. If there is a fee for maintenance, it would be minimal. In addition, the Town’s support of the grant application does not obligate Westminster’s participation in the program.

Mr. Walker moved that the Board vote to support the Community Innovation Challenge Grant Program application of the City of Fitchburg Police Department. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

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TOWN ADMINISTRATOR REQUEST TO SIGN MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH COMMUNITY SOFTWARE CONSORTIUM FOR IT SUPPORT SERVICES

Ms. Billings explained to the Board that the Division of Local Services is offering an opportunity through a Community Innovation Challenge Grant to participate in a program that will provide on-line backup for some of the Town’s computer servers (up to 250GB). Our IT team agrees that it would be worthwhile to try this out as an initial step in implementing a stronger disaster recovery program. There is no charge for the service through October, 2015, which is when the grant cycle ends.

Mr. Walker moved that the Board authorize Town Administrator Karen Murphy to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with Community Software Consortium. Mrs. Murphy explained that this is an ongoing program with the Division of Local Services and at present ten towns have signed up. They have more grant money available and are offering it to additional towns. It is perfect for us because it will allow us a disaster recovery for some of our servers. It does not have enough capacity to put all our servers on but some of the smaller ones will have a chance to see how it works over this next year. This will allow IT personnel to develop a better backup plan for the town’s computer system.

After October, 2015, the Town can decide whether to continue with them. If so, there would be a fee for this.

The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

PAYROLL AUTHORIZATION ~ FIREFIGHTER

Mr. Walker moved that the Board approve a payroll request authorization for a full time Firefighter position created when Kyle Butterfield was promoted to Captain. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

ENERGY ADVISORY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS – POWER OPTIONS

Ms. Billings explained to the Board that the EAC is recommending that the Town become a member of Power Options, and that the Board authorize them to begin the process of obtaining quotes for electricity and gas prices.

Doug Hurley, EAC Chairman, was on hand to explain that the Town had a contract through Constellation Energy for several years which expired. Once the contract expired the service defaulted to National Grid whose rates were reasonable. Starting next month, the National Grid rates will be going up, thus the recommendation to become a member of Power Options.

Power Options pre-negotiates contract rates for their members. Presently they have forty other municipalities as well as Health Care, Cultural or Scientific, Post-Secondary Education and Disability Agencies.

Once a member, we get price quotes for electricity as often as we would like. Once we find a price we like, we can sign a contract.

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In addition, membership would also allow the EAC to pursue a contract for solar net metering credits with Sun Edison (something the EAC has been working on).

Membership would also allow working with Sun Edison in getting solar panels installed on one of the Town buildings.

The EAC met with Power Options and unanimously agreed to recommend to the Board of Selectmen that the Town become members of Power Options.

Mr. Hurley disclosed that he works for a small consulting firm of which Power Options is one of their clients.

Mr. Walker moved that the Board accept the disclosure of appearance of conflict of interest filed by Doug Hurley Chairman of the Energy Advisory. Further that the Board believes Mr. Hurley will be able to perform his duties objectively and fairly. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Mr. Hurley confirmed for the Board that signing with Power Options does not exclude the town from pursuing a solar farm.

Mr. Walker moved that the Board sign a membership form with Power Options and authorize the EAC to begin getting quotes for gas and electricity prices. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Mr. Walker moved to amend his motion to include authorizing the approval of both the BOS Chairman and the EAC Chairman to accept the quotes for gas and electricity for a contracted time period. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

**RE-ACTIVATE PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING NEEDS COMMITTEE**

Ms. Billings explained that the Capital Planning Committee recently met with the Police and Fire Chiefs to review their capital plans. Both chiefs brought up the need for additional space at the public safety building. A Public Safety Building Needs Committee was appointed by the BoS in 2005. The Committee has been inactive for the past several years, but the Chiefs believe most of the members would be willing to renew their efforts to assess the building needs of the two departments.

Mr. Walker moved that the Board reactivate the Public Safety Building Needs Committee and appoint the following individuals; Chris Mossman (Engineer), Keith Sullivan (IT person), Ray Landry (Citizen-at-Large), John Fairbanks (Selectman), Sam Albert (Police Chief), Kevin Nivala (Fire Chief), Mike McDonald, and David Monty. The motion was seconded and passed with two in favor and one abstention (J. Fairbanks).

It was agreed that an Architect would be recruited to join the Committee as well.

The Board also agreed to add to the PS Building Needs Committee charge to look into any interim problems regarding the PS building.

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**DISCUSS HOME HEATING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

After a discussion, the Board agreed to put an article on the Fall Town Meeting for the use of an amount to be determined by the Board from the Giles fund to fund the Home Heating Assistance Program for the 2014/2015 winter season.

Mr. Walker moved that in the meantime, the Board authorize \$1,000 for a potential emergency which cannot be covered by any other sources from the Fred Smith Poor Fund to be handled through the Emergency Home Heating Program. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

**PUT TOWN-OWNED PARCEL UP FOR SALE ON STATE ROAD WEST**

Ms. Billings explained that Town Meeting voted on November 19, 2013 to transfer the care, custody and control of the town-owned parcel off State Road West (3.14 acres) to the Board of Selectmen for purpose of disposing of the parcel. The property is assessed at \$8,200 and we were advised that both abutters may be interested in purchasing it.

Mr. Walker moved that in accordance with provisions of MGL Ch. 40, s. 15A to vote to declare that this property (Assessors Map 103, Parcel 7), which is held for general municipal purposes is no longer needed for such purposes and may be made available for rent conveyance, or other disposition. Further the Board set a minimum bid amount of \$8,200 (assessed value). The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

**DEPARTMENTAL QUARTERLY UPDATES & BOARD/COMMITTEE MINUTES**

After a discussion the Board agreed to address the idea of requesting quarterly updates from Department Heads and copies of all Board/Committee minutes at their next meeting.

**7:00 P.M. ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Walker moved that the Board vote to adjourn. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Wayne R. Walker  
Clerk  
(Prepared by B. Kazan)