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DESIGNATE SUPERINTENDENT SEARCH COMMITTEE MEMBER

Ms. Billings explained that the School Committee has asked that each Town designate an elected or appointed official to serve on the Superintendent Screening Committee.

Mr. Walker moved that the Board vote to authorize John Fairbanks to be the Board of Selectmen’s designee to serve on the Superintendent Screening Committee. The motion was seconded and passed with two members voting in favor and one abstention (John Fairbanks).

PAYROLL AUTHORIZATION ~ HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT

Mr. Walker moved that the Board approve a payroll request authorization for a full time Highway Working Foreman; vacancy created due to the retirement of the previous Foreman. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

APPOINTMENT – OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE

The Board agreed to pass over this item at this time.

CONTRACT FOR TOWN PROMOTIONAL MAPS

Ms. Billings explained that the Town Planner is working with Talon Graphics of Leominster to design and print 5,000 promotional maps of the Town. The town has received a grant for \$3,750 for this project from the Johnny Appleseed Trail Association. The project is expected to be completed by the end of April 2015.

Mr. Walker moved that the Board execute a contract for the design and printing of the Town promotional brochure between the Town and Talon Graphics of Leominster, MA in the amount of \$3,750. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

CONTRACT AMENDMENT – SENIOR CENTER PROJECT MANAGER

Ms. Billings explained that the Sr. Center Building Committee is recommending that the Board of Selectmen approve an amendment to the contract for the Sr. Center Project Manager, Atlantic Construction & Management, Inc., to provide an additional \$9,375 for extra services rendered beyond the base amount of the contract for the re-bidding of the general contract for the Senior/Community Center.

Mr. Fairbanks moved that the Board approve the payment. The motion was seconded.

Mr. Walker noted that he would vote for this under protest as he understands these services have already been provided by the Project Manager and he has billed for these services but has been unpaid because we were in the midst of a near deficit in the budget. He is objecting to the performance of the Project Manager and others during the course of the project, but realizes the Town is liable for these costs.

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The motion passed unanimously.

AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION – REQUEST TO ESTABLISH AGRICULTURAL GIFT ACCOUNT

Town Administrator Karen Murphy explained that the Agricultural Commission is proposing the establishment of a gift account to support local farming. Town Counsel advised that the account may be set up by the Treasurer upon receipt of a donation, but any requested expenditures would have to be approved by a vote of the Board of Selectmen in accordance with MGL Ch. 44 s. 53A.

M.L. Altobelli, Chairman of the Agricultural Commission, explained that this would be a “Support Local Farming Agricultural Gift Account”. The sources of funding for said account will be donations, gifts, bequests, contributions, endowments, grants, etc., to be overseen and dispersed by the Westminster Agricultural Commission and to be used for:

- 1. Helping to defray the Town’s portion of agricultural land preservation projects,
- 2. Supporting increased access to agricultural, horticultural, and associated value –added education and training for town residents,
- 3. Developing an agricultural development and support infrastructure for Westminster agricultural and horticultural production and,
- 4. Initiating pilot programs for direct marketing of value-added agricultural products.

Funds are to be allocated by merit, in the form of scholarships, stipends, grants, contributions, and/or awards.

The Board agreed to send this request to the Treasurer and Accountant for a written opinion, and to take the matter up again at its next meeting.

CECIL GROUP – PRESENTATION OF DOWNTOWN INITIATIVE PROJECT

Steve Cecil of the Cecil Group presented a comprehensive long-term strategy for refurbishing the downtown area, including several measures for improving pedestrian and vehicular access, creating a bicycling infrastructure, a number of street and landscape enhancements, and recommendations for improving zoning and planning design guidelines. It was noted that the entire project could encompass a 15-year period from start to finish Town Planner Steve Wallace advised that the power point presentation can be viewed by going to the Town’s website at www.westminster-ma.gov and clicking on the Master Plan on the Planning Board’s webpage.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR RECOMMENDATIONS RE BOARD/COMMITTEE UPDATES

Ms. Billings explained that Town Administrator Karen Murphy recommended that all Town departments be directed to submit quarterly reports to the Board of Selectmen, reports to include an update on the prior three months’ activities and any future short and/or long-term plans for

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their department. Boards and Committees should be reminded to submit meeting minutes to the Town Clerk on a timely basis. This Town Administrator’s office will provide copies of minutes to the Board of Selectmen for review with the Board’s general correspondence. Department heads and board of committee chairmen may be invited to meet with the Board of Selectmen, at their own or the Board’s request.

The Board agreed that the goal for Board/Committee minutes should be to submit them at the next scheduled meeting.

Mrs. Murphy stated that she would inform Department Heads of this requirement at the next scheduled Department meeting on October 29.

2015 SENIOR TAX WORK-OFF PROGRAM

Ms. Billings explained that the Board was being requested to vote to approve the revised Senior Tax Relief Work Program application form. The income guidelines have been slightly lowered from last year, in accordance with HUD figures. The program will continue to be limited to 30 participants for a maximum credit of \$1,000 on their tax bills.

Mr. Walker moved that the Board approve the revised Senior Tax Relief Work Program. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

REVIEW DRAFT WARRANT ARTICLES

Board members reviewed a list of proposed articles that had been submitted for the upcoming special town meeting on November 18. With regard to item #10 on the list, a request proposing that the Town seek special legislation for funding for the replacement of the Whitman River sewer pumping station, Mr. Walker suggested that the proposal first be vetted through the Advisory Board and DPW Commission. Mr. Walker moved that the Board authorize all articles submitted to be included on the warrant, with the exception of #10. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

7:30 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)