

~ ~

Health public comment period extends through Monday, December 1. Your comments may be submitted to the Board of Health, 11 South St., Westminster MA 01473, or by email to Health Agent Wibby Swedberg at eswedberg@westminster-ma.gov

APPROVE NOVEMBER 18 SPECIAL TOWN MEETING WARRANT

Mr. Walker moved that the Board approve the warrant for the Special Town Meeting being held at the Westminster Elementary School on Tuesday, November 18, 2014, at 7:30 p.m. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

DISCUSS SUPERINTENDENT SEARCH CRITERIA

Mr. Fairbanks mentioned that the first meeting of the Superintendent Search Committee is scheduled for Wednesday, November 12th. Unfortunately, he will not be able to attend the Board of Health hearing that same night and he did not want people to interpret this as him being uninterested in the hearing.

Mr. Fairbanks mentioned to the Board that the School Committee has already written the job description for the Superintendent’s position prior to the Search Committee meeting. He spoke with Dave Christianson and requested that the School Committee change the prior teaching requirements from 3-5 year preferred (as presently written) to 5 to 10 years of teaching required.

The Board asked if the survey being conducted will modify the criteria already established by the School Committee. Mr. Fairbanks stated he would find out the answer when the Search Committee meets on the 12th.

HOME HEATING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FUNDING

Ms. Billings explained that the language in the Giles Trust specifies that the funds from the trust be appropriated at an annual town meeting. Mrs. Murphy recommended that the Board vote to authorize the expenditure of \$5,000 from the Fred Smith Poor Fund for this heating season and place an article for the use of Giles Fund on the May town meeting warrant for next year.

Mr. Walker moved that the Board authorize the expenditure of \$5,000 from the Fred Smith Poor Fund, subject to the Committee’s decision on how to distribute the money. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

He noted that this vote replaces the prior vote on October 6, 2014 authorizing \$1,000 for potential emergencies which cannot be covered by any other sources from the Fred Smith Poor Fund to be handled through the Emergency Home Heating Program.

FIRE CHIEF – PERMISSION TO APPLY FOR GRANT FOR RADIOS

Ms. Billings explained that Chief Nivala is requesting permission to apply for a \$150,000 federal grant to replace the department’s portable and mobile radios. The grant requires a 5% match from the town (\$7,500). The application period opens in November.

~ ~

Chief Nivala explained that he is asking the Board for permission to apply for the federal grant. Due to the life expectancy of the present equipment, we are in a high category of eligibility to receive funds according to the grant application. There is no guarantee that the Town will receive a grant but if approved, Chief Nivala will come back to the Board to discuss funding for the \$7,500 match.

Mr. Walker moved that the Board authorize Chief Nivala to apply for the federal grant (\$150,000). The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

FIRE CHIEF – INTRODUCTION OF NATIONAL GRID’S “COMMUNITY ZONE APPROACH”

Ms. Billings invited Chief Nivala to explain a pilot program he has agreed to participate in with National Grid to help the utility company improve responsiveness during storm emergencies.

Chief Nivala explained that he is a ‘Zone Leader’ and main contact for other communities for power restoration. He wanted people to understand that when they have a power outage, they should contact National Grid at 1-800-322-3223. Calling the Police or Fire Department does not help you get your power back up. This information will also be on the Town’s website.

REVIEW CAPITAL PLANNING POLICIES

The Board reviewed the Capital Improvement Budget Policies, Debt Management Policy, and Reserve Policy.

Mr. Walker moved that the Board approve the policies as presented. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

REMINDER -- NOVEMBER 10TH AGENDA ITEM

The Board mentioned that the proposed tobacco ban will be an agenda item on their upcoming meeting for Monday, November 10th. Interested parties are encouraged to submit their comments in writing to the Board of Selectmen prior to this meeting.

Mr. Walker reminded everyone that the Board of Selectmen will express its comments, but that the Board of Health has sole authority to make the decision.

CODE RED

Chief Nivala encouraged everyone to sign up for ‘Code Red’ to receive notification of urgent town news. Go to the Town’s website www.wwestminster-ma.gov and click on the revolving banner entitled ‘Code Red’.

~ ~

8:30 P.M. ADJOURNMENT

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

Respectfully submitted,

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