

~ ~

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

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.

AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION - ESTABLISH GIFT ACCOUNTS

Ms. Billings explained that the Agricultural Commission submitted proposals for the establishment of two gift accounts; one for the support of local farming, the other for the maintenance of street trees. The Town Accountant, Treasurer, Town Planner and Town Administrator have discussed these accounts with Ag Com members M.L. Altobelli and Dean Johnson. The Town Administrator has also obtained clarification from town counsel with regard to the use of the funds. Everyone is in agreement with the proposals as presented, with the understanding that any checks for donations will be made out to the Town of Westminster with “Agricultural Gift Account” or “Street Trees Gift Account” in the memo, and no other restrictions. This will ensure that the funds may be spent for any of the purposes indicated in the description. In addition, the Board of Selectmen will need to approve any expenditure from the accounts before they are made.

Mr. Walker moved that the Board approve the establishment of two gift accounts for the Agricultural Commission with the stipulations as read. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

APPROVED WARRANTS/MINUTES

Mr. Walker moved that the Board approve the minutes of November 10, and December 8, 2014 with minor amendments. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Board members reviewed and approved the following warrants:

December 15 2014	Accounts Payable #26A	\$ 86,489.64
	Payroll #26B	\$ 189,285.58
	Deduction #26C	\$ 168,897.24
December 22, 2014	Accounts Payable #27A	\$ 205,146.11

BOARD OF HEALTH SUBSTANCE ABUSE GRANT

Board of Health Agent Wibby Swedberg and LUK Community Action Team Coordinator Lauren Saunders were on hand. Ms. Swedberg stated that the Board of Health was requesting the Board of Selectmen’s support and approval of the grant application for Westminster’s inclusion in a regional program to prevent underage drinking and drug use. The city of Gardner will be the lead community on this application and will be subcontracting with LUK, Inc. to

~ ~

provide services for the program. Community Action Team Coordinator for LUK Lauren Saunders was also present at the meeting.

Mr. Walker moved that the Board authorize the chairman to sign the Massachusetts Substance Abuse Prevention Collaborative (SAPC) grant application for funds to support underage drinking. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

APPOINTMENTS:

Assistant Animal Control Officer

Mr. Walker moved that the Board appoint Robyn Southern Inniss of Ashburnham as an Assistant ACO. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Public Safety Building Needs Committee

Mr. Fairbanks moved that the Board appoint David Turcotte to the Public Safety Building Needs Committee. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Building Commissioner

Mr. Walker moved that the Board re-appoint Mike Gallant as Building Commissioner through June 30, 2015. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

EXECUTE HIGHWAY UNION COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT

The Board agreed to pass over this agenda item.

EXTEND ACCOUNTING CONSULTANT CONTRACT

Mr. Walker moved that the Board approve an extension of the Town’s contract with Accounting Consultant Julie Costello, effective January 1, 2015 through March 31, 2015. The motion was seconded.

Mr. Fairbanks suggested that the agreement be extended further, through June 30.

After further discussion, Mr. Walker moved to amend his motion and extend the Accounting Consultant’s contract effective January 1, 2015 through June 30, 2015. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

CABLE LICENSE PRELIMINARY DENIAL

Ms. Billings explained that contract negotiations are proceeding with Comcast, but no agreement has been reached as yet. The license agreement expires on December 31; in order to protect the interests of both parties in reaching an agreement, counsel has recommended that the Board issue a “Preliminary Assessment that the Cable Television Renewal License of Comcast of

~ ~

Massachusetts III, Inc. should not be renewed.” The Cable Advisory Committee is focused on reaching an agreement that will provide additional capital equipment and revenue for the operation of the cable studio, as well as building out un-served areas of town.

Mr. Walker moved that the Board issue a “Preliminary Assessment that the Cable Television Renewal License of Comcast of Massachusetts III, Inc., should not be renewed” as submitted by town counsel. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

ROAD RACE

Mr. Walker moved that the Board approve the race application submitted by Jessica Popik subject to the approval of all pertinent departments. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

6:26 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)