

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

**CALL TO ORDER**

J. Fairbanks called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. in room 205 of the Town Hall. He announced that the meeting was being recorded by Ashburnham/Westminster Community Access TV.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

John Fairbanks stated that there will be a Special Town Meeting held on Tuesday September 29<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 p.m. at the Westminster Elementary School. The warrants contain two items relating to the sewer improvement and expansion project as well as authorization to enter the town into a 20-year net metering solar agreement.

**APPROVALS**

MINUTES

W. Walker made a motion to approve the minutes of August 31, 2015. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

WARRANTS

W. Walker made a motion to approve the following warrants.

September 7, 2015	Accounts Payable 16-10A	\$40,499.03
September 8, 2015	Payroll 16-10B	\$183,501.01
	Deduction 16-10C	\$162,508.30
September 14, 2015	Accounts Payable 16-11A	\$63,926.45
September 21, 2015	Accounts Payable 16-12A	\$249,689.69
	Payroll 16-12B	\$184,773.86
	Deduction 16-12C	\$164,468.51

The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

FIRE CHIEF – LIEUTENANT APPOINTMENT

W. Walker made a motion to approve the appointment of David Monty as Lieutenant to the Westminster Fire Department. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Chief Nivala then presented David Monty with his Lieutenants badge and certificate.

FIRE CHIEF – RADIO GRANT APPLICATION

Chief Kevin Nivala indicated that he would be attending a conference in regards to a grant to fund the purchase of updated, portable radio equipment for the Fire Department.

W. Walker made a motion to support Chief Nivala in his application for portable radio funding. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

PAYROLL AUTHORIZATION – EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

W. Walker made a motion to approve the payroll authorization for a step increase for Stephanie Lahtinen, Executive Assistant. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

EXTEND ACCOUNTING CONTRACT

W. Walker made a motion to approve the extension of the Town’s contract with Julie Costello, for the same terms and conditions, through June 30, 2016. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

MIIA FLEX GRANT

W. Walker made a motion to approve the use of \$2,449 MIIA Flex Grant funds for the purchase of a snow blower and lawn tractor for the Community Senior Center. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

**HEARINGS/OTHER SCHEDULED MATTERS**

APPOINTMENT OF TREASURER/COLLECTOR AND TOWN CLERK POSITIONS

Denise MacAloney, Town Clerk and Melody Smith, Treasurer/Collector were present at this evening's meeting in order to discuss their opinions on whether or not their respective positions should go from being elected to appointed.

D. MacAloney indicated that she had researched the topic of appointing Town Clerks, and feels the position of the Clerk should remain elected. She indicated that the Clerk position provides a good check and balance system for town government and as the Chief Elections Officer, needs to remain independent of oversight from other Boards. D. MacAloney indicated that the topic deserves more study prior to making any changes to the position.

M. Smith indicated that she supports the idea of appointing the Town Treasurer/Collector. She said that as it stands there are no minimum qualifications for the position and having it remain elected presents a large risk to the town as the Treasurer/Collector position has access to the town's finances.

The Board discussed the topic and indicated that the appointment of these positions would be placed on the draft warrant separately for the November Special Town Meeting. They also indicated that this issue is something that the Town Charter Committee will study as well.

DISCUSSION RE: KENT ROAD

Residents of Kent Road were present at this evening's meeting to discuss the repairs they have requested from the town along their private way.

DPW Commission member Vance Butterfield and DPW Director Joshua Hall were in attendance. They stated that the town has not performed repairs on private ways for ten or more years due to liability concerns.

Burt Gendron indicated that in June of this year, the residents approached the DPW and requested that they repair the potholes along Kent Road. At that time, they were informed that the town does not perform any repairs to private roads. Mr. Gendron stated that the residents would like the potholes filled as compensation for the sewer easement the town has on the property.

The Board informed Mr. Gendron, upon review with counsel, it does not appear that the town did anything improper in the taking of the easements in 2003. The Board expressed support for the policy of the DPW not to expend public funds for repairs to private ways. Counsel advised that it was possible there was no award of damage because adding a sewer line for residents on the private road was considered an improvement and out valued any potential award of damage for the necessary easements.

The Board and Kent Road residents continued to discuss the sewer easement on Kent Road.

B. Gendron advised the Board that based on this discussion, it is the intention of the residents of Kent Road to seek legal counsel regarding this situation.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### DESIGNATE MUNICIPAL REPRESENTATIVE FOR SCHOOL DISTRICT COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

W. Walker made a motion to designate John Fairbanks as the Representative for the School District in collective bargaining with the teachers union. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

### REQUEST TO BRING PART TIME ASSISTANT ACCOUNTANT TO FULL-TIME STATUS

K. Murphy proposed that the town re-institute the fulltime staffing in the Accountant office by bringing the Assistant Accountant position to a 35 hour/week benefitted position. This measure would be a cost effective way to have full time support in the office, in addition, the assistant could help volunteer Boards/Committees submit their bills in a timely manner, among other tasks.

W. Walker made a motion to pass this on the Personnel Board and Advisory Board for a recommendation. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

### REQUEST TO CREATE PART-TIME COMPUTER/INFORMATION SYSTEM SPECIALIST POSITION

K. Murphy proposed the creation of a new part-time Computer/IT specialist position for approximately 10 hours a week to provide IT Support to town employees. She indicated that after going out to bid for another consultant, we received no responses.

J. Fairbanks indicated that there is an immediate need to fill this position, and that this position will be added to the draft list of warrant articles for the November Special Town Meeting.

W. Walker made a motion to pass this on to the Advisory Board and Personnel Board for their recommendation. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

## **ONGOING BUSINESS**

D. Hurley was present at this evening's meeting to discuss the Net Metering Solar Presentation for Town Meeting on September 29<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Hurley presented the information from the three offers that have been brought to the town. He indicated that the committee is working on determining the optimal amount of electrical usage to offset with net metering credits. Following the approval at Town meeting the Energy Advisory Committee will work with the Board of Selectmen to enter into an agreement with the company that has presented the best offer.

## **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

*There was no Executive Session this evening.*

## **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

Heather M. Billings

Clerk

*(Prepared by S. Lahtinen)*