

**TOWN OF WINCHENDON
BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES
JOINT MEETING WITH SCHOOL COMMITTEE/ FINANCE COMMITTEE
MONDAY, OCTOBER 28, 2013 7:00 P.M.
Town Hall, 109 Front Street, Winchendon
2nd Floor Auditorium**

Present: Robert M. O’Keefe, Chairman
Elizabeth R. Hunt, Vice-Chairwoman
Fedor Berndt
C. Jackson Blair

James M. Kreidler, Jr., Town Manager
Linda A. Daigle, Executive Assistant

Absent: Keith Barrows

List of Documents Presented at Meeting:

- Draft Payroll/Vendor Warrant Process (attached)
 - Murdock Academy for Success Brochure, Team Listing, documents (filed)
 - Winchendon Schools’ MCAS Graphs (filed)
 - Appointments:
 - Brian Dickens letter of interest to serve on Parks and Recreation Commission (filed)
 - Sebastian Valera letter of interest to serve on Conservation Commission (filed)
 - Permits/Licenses:
 - Entertainment Permit Application – United Parish Church Bazaar Nov. 9, 2013(filed)
 - Entertainment Permit/Special One day Liquor License Application – Immaculate Heart of Mary Church Fall Festival Nov. 16, 17, 2013 (filed)
 - All Alcohol Pouring License Application Amendments for Lucky Dragon (filed)
 - Board of Selectmen Permit/License Fees (attached)
 - Proclamation: Purple Heart Town (attached)
 - CDBG Housing Rehab Program - Discharge of Mortgage, 50 Otter River Rd. (filed)
 - Town Manager’s Report (attached)
 - Employment Application and Resume - Albert Gallant (filed)
 - Kopelman and Paige “Summary of Designer Selection Procedures” Memo dated 10/7/13 (filed)
 - Draft “Designer Selection Procedures” (filed)
 - Town Manager’s Goals and Objectives quarterly update (attached)
 - Town of Winchendon’s Draft Permitting Guidebook (filed)
 - Minutes for approval:
 - Monday, October 7, 2013 Regular Meeting (filed)
-

Chairman O’Keefe called the joint meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America. The meeting aired live on local cable access channel 8.

Disclosure of Audio/Video Recording: No one announced they would be audio recording the meeting this evening when asked by the Chairman.

BOARDS/COMMITTEES/COMMISSIONS:

JOINT MEETING: BOARD OF SELECTMEN/SCHOOL COMMITTEE/FINANCE COMMITTEE

School Committee members present for the joint meeting were Chairman Mike Niles, Mike Barbaro, Susan Burdsall, Andrea Suchocki, Supt. Salah Khelfaoui, Business Administrator Melissa Dunnet and Secretary Barrie Martins. Present for the Finance Committee were Chairman Ulysse Maillet, Robert Guenther, Darlene Rossi, Tomas Kane, Jr., Christian Orbello, Ottmar Rau and Recording Secretary Deb Dennis. Chairman Niles called the School Committee meeting to order. Chairman Maillet called the Finance Committee to order.

Warrant Process – A sub-committee comprised of the Finance Committee, Town Government and School Committee meet recently to discuss an issue with a recent vendor warrant. The vendor/payroll timing process was discussed and the following was agreed upon.

Biweekly Payroll Warrant Process:

- **Monday at 10:00 a.m.- Town Government Departmental** approved payroll submissions are due to the Town Accountant’s Office. Payroll checks are direct deposited on Thursday of the same week.
- **Monday at 12:00 noon.- School Departmental** approved payroll submissions are due to the Town Accountant’s Office. Payroll checks are direct deposited on Thursday of the same week.
- If Monday falls on a Holiday, if at all possible, please submit payroll to the Town Accountant at 12:00 noon the Thursday before; otherwise payroll is due in Tuesday morning at 10:00 a.m. for the Town and 12:00 noon for the School.

Biweekly Accounts Payable Warrant Process:

Accounts Payables are processed biweekly with a Thursday warrant/check date.

- **Tuesday 10:00 a.m. – Town Government Departmental** approved invoices are due to the Town Accountant’s office. (Nine days prior to issue date.)
- **Wednesday 12:00 noon – School Department** approved invoices are due to the Town Accountant’s office. (Eight days prior to issue date.)

Communications – Finance Committee member Darlene Rossi stated communications with departments seem to be functionally fairly well and wanted to know what could be done to further that along individually or as a collective. Niles felt that the budget sub-committee was an aid in this process and any issues could be reported back out to each committee. He also mentioned minutes of the sessions were available for review.

Fiscal Policy – Finance Committee Chairman Maillet feels this has been on the back burner for some time. He wanted to start talking about things that impact the town and create a Fiscal Policy as a guide to monitor the town’s finances. He thought the language should include five categories. He recommended a sub-committee be formed comprised of members from the Finance Committee, School Committee and Board of Selectmen to hammer out language to bring before the whole group. O’Keefe suggested he and Mr. Maillet speak in the next few weeks with the Town Manager. Kreidler reported that he and Chairman Maillet, years ago, visited Lexington who has a wonderful policy in place. It was

agreed they would meet next Monday in the Town Manager's office. Mr. Maillet is very enthused with the cooperation that has been received by the group.

After School Program - Supt. Khelifaoui reported he had set aside some funding for the program. Jennifer Haddad passed out brochures about the program and gave a brief update. Two afterschool programs at Memorial School and Toy Town Elementary are grant funded and Murdock Middle and Murdock High are district funded. She discussed the programs briefly. There are 222 kids combined in this program that run from right after school until 5:00 p.m. Busing home is provided. Ms. Haddad was thanked for attending this evening and for providing this information.

Murdock Academy for Success – Supt. Khelifaoui spoke about changes implemented including this alternative school. We initially put a program pilot forward for six students. It is quite successful and there are more kids now involved. Steve Haddad came forward to speak further on this program. He said it's an academy that is an extension of MHS. It's designed as an alternative learning environment. One of the main goals is to reduce the drop out students and another is internships. He said it's a great program. He spoke about program incentives and life-teaching skills. They are hoping to raise money for driver's education. They are developing a system called "Academy Awards." Mr. Haddad and the program were applauded.

MCAS – Supt. Khelifaoui passed around statistical charts on MCAS scores stating there were things, not disastrous but disappointing, that needed to be worked with. The performances that you see are from six or seven months ago. He explained the test taking and the timeline. The curriculum decisions are over a year and a half ago. He wished the process was different so decisions could be made earlier. He spoke about a MCAS program called PARK which is online that would give you immediate results. This year they have been asked to pilot the PARK's and hopes this will help them. He said last year's results affect what they are doing now. They will be restoring this year training the kids on taking MCAS. They are also working very closely with Middle School math. This year they are doing a new approach and is the motivator to separating the Middle School from the High School. They will be taught in different ways. O'Keefe pointed out the graphs show that we are on the right trajectory. Kreidler asked why we aren't doing the real-time MCAS testing. Dr. Khelifaoui said we have to apply to state rules and are introducing new tools. Kreidler asked if there was a sense with the new tools implemented and where they were today. He said hopefully much better; but he couldn't predict. Logic tells him that doing things different will create a different, and hopefully, positive response. Niles said the new measurement tool called PARK will have real-time results.

Report on Finance Sub-Committee – Chairman Niles stated this was a report of the sub-committee and a discussion about Fall Town Meeting. He stated the group has warrants for the Fall Town Meeting. One had to do with Medicaid reimbursement for the fiscal year. It is a customary article in the spring but was deferred this year to the Fall Town Meeting. The amount is roughly \$36,000. They also will be asking for support reallocating funds in the amount of \$15,000 for the Toy Town boiler project which came under budget to repairs for the Murdock High boiler. Next potential item was brought to the attention by the Department of Education comprising of a compliance issue on whether or not the Town is meeting the minimum Town contribution to the net school spending. We've spoke to the DOE and Town Counsel and have agreed to disagree but we all agree we don't know what the number is. The Town Accountant and the Business Administrator along with the Dept. of Education will sit down in a room and report out the real number. Kreidler stated those following along at home, under Education Reform, communities are required to spend a certain amount under public education. You can spend more than that if you choose to do so as a community, but not less. The Dept. of Secondary Education

(DSE) looks at a very definite snapshot of time, July 1 to June 30th, looking at what was spent in that time. In reality, some numbers can slide into the next fiscal year and others that can be brought to the table and recorded differently than what DSE looks at. Some numbers were brought to the table mid-year that may look like it was an under payment or that we didn't meet the minimum requirement. Indirect cost can also compound the confusion as he had explained to the sub-committee meeting last week. Indirect cost, explained the Town Manager, is that the general government budget has certain line items within it, like health insurance for all employees, worker's compensation, unemployment. While these are managed on the general government side, certain portions of that are being carried forward that are education related. The school is incurring a bill on the general government side that we will charge them for indirectly per the agreement between the school and the Town. We need to get the number, identify it and clear it up. Discussion was had on changing the way we have been doing indirect costs and possibly to amend the agreement and finding another method that meets the state requirements and the needs for both the school and the Town.

O'Keefe's belief is that the Town has met the net minimum school spending amount and asked if every member of the School Committee agreed. He didn't want the wrong message out to the public. Ms. Burdsall said the brief explanation tonight makes sense and didn't believe that anyone in Town government actually would intend a shortage. Supt. Khelfaoui, speaking for himself, stated they have not sent any message that the Town has not met the minimum net school spending. He asked how we build some sort of safety margin for the variances that are bound to happen in the future.

Kreidler stated he would normally have no cause to look at the Chapter 70 compliance sheet on the DSE's website. Because of this issue, he has had it put in front of him. Nine out of ten informed voters in Town, he believes, would answer that we spend minimum net school spending. Six out of the last ten years we have exceeded minimum contribution and several years by hundreds of thousand dollars. He hasn't researched the data that is driving that but there is one year where it was in excess of \$564,000 above minimum contribution. He thought we would all become more educated about this and it would drive where we go. Barbaro, said that was the year the Town voted in excess to help get the Town through the underperforming status. The full amount wasn't used and returned to the Town the following year. That is a good example of the ebb and flow. Barbaro continued, what we are seeing are uncontrolled cost. He gave the example of the mass layoffs in 2010. The number budgeted for indirect costs for unemployment was \$80,000 but it came in at \$140,000 due to the amount of layoffs. How do you reconcile that deficit? You have to come back the following year to address it. He feels these types of situations can be done mid-year at a Special Town Meeting.

Kreidler commented that there should be a way that when the unemployment bill comes in and we look at personnel we should be able to pay that bill from account numbers from either the school or the town.

Ms. Suchocki wanted it to be clear that she has been on the committee for a year and that there are no requirements to know all these things. It's a learning experience and she doesn't understand how the way these things go. She said this was not presented to them as a committee that the town did something wrong and they owe us money. Everyone knows the town is spending what it should and needs to be spending on the school. She is sure this will be worked out. Niles concluded the discussion with the sub-committee tasked with figuring it out and looking at some of the ideas presented tonight. He also said knowing unemployment will be higher for the FY14 budget, we can put in a higher number for Town Meeting. He said the indirect agreement was originally made in 2005. That will be refreshed with a higher level of detail.

Niles next talked about other discussions the sub-committee had regarding overages in the FY13 budget. Transportation cost is being estimated to be \$17,000 in special education transportation and regular transportation around \$33,000. They are waiting for yearend to be closed by the Town Accountant to get actual numbers to resolve how to pay the bill.

Cable Funds – Niles spoke of the recent contract signed by Comcast and the sub-committee is curious how the education component of the agreement was put into play. The sub-committee had talked about expanding to a second channel and the two funds that are allocated in the contract. They wanted to put a proposal to the school to get some mobile cameras, a second channel to go on air and get the kids involved in programming and learn some broadcasting skills. Kreidler clarified that one of the sums referenced, the \$24,000, is for operational, is not available and budgeted already for cable operators. The other sum, \$45,000, is for Capital, a second channel but we have to meet a certain threshold for programming of the current channel before we get the second channel. Dr. Khelifaoui stated the concern isn't necessary to have a second channel but to make sure we can broadcast out of the hall for meetings, for shows and to create a learning experience for our own High School students. Mr. Nardini is already working on a proposal to submit to the Board of Selectmen.

Reserve Fund – Niles stated a discussion was had with the sub-committee regarding the Finance Committee creating a "Reserve Fund" that might be used for the School.

Niles is also concerned about health insurance costs and asked if we are still self-insured and in a good place. Kreidler replied, yes, we are self-insured and in a very good place. He said we do not have a great split compared to other Towns, 60/40, but we also have not had a raise or increase on premiums for four years. He briefly explained re-insurance where we have a cap of \$60,000 paying from that fund and then reinsurance comes in. If several people hit that, we could have an impact. We are in our ninth year and in good standing.

Fall Town Meeting – Kreidler informed the Committees that until the books are closed, a date for a Special Town Meeting cannot be set. This is being driven by the transition of our long term accountant and new accountant and the missed plan of a month to two month training overlap due to illness. The purpose of the Fall Town Meeting is due largely in part to course corrections or reconciliations once the books are closed. A hard date cannot be set until the books are closed. Dr. Khelifaoui was concerned about the School's submission to the State that was extended to be due by the end of the month without final figures and would do his best to put in figures. It can be amended two years back.

Everyone was thanked for attending. Niles moved to adjourn the School Committee meeting; Suchocki seconded. By a vote of all aye, the School Committee adjourned at 8:35 p.m. The Finance Committee adjourned their meeting. The Board of Selectmen called for a brief recess at 8:36 p.m.

Chairman O'Keefe called the meeting back to order at 8:42 p.m.

SELECTMEN'S COMMENTS:

Trick or Treat – Thursday, October 31, 2013 – O'Keefe announced Halloween Trick or Treat in Winchendon will be on Thursday from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Reminder: Real Estate Tax Bills due Nov. 1, 2013 – O'Keefe announced the tax bills are due

Reminder: Open Meeting Law/Public Records Law Seminar – Wed., October 30, 2013 7:00 p.m. – O’Keefe announced the seminar to be held at Town Hall and conducted by our Town Counsel. He encouraged those to attend.

PUBLIC COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS: None.

APPOINTMENTS/RESIGNATIONS:

Parks and Recreation Appointment – Mr. Brian Dickens came before the Board with his interest to serve on this committee. He introduced himself and said he wanted to learn more about this committee. He is a musician and has planned local concerts in Winchendon and regionally. He said his overall reason to help the town is his belief there is a great power in the ten to twenty-four age bracket and he hoped to help build a dialogue with this group and the town. He also hopes to step up the arts in Winchendon. Hunt told Mr. Dickens that he sold her because he was asking what he can do for his town. Hunt moved to welcome Brian aboard; Berndt seconded. By vote of all aye, the motion carried unanimously. Brian was thanked and his enthusiasm was welcomed.

Conservation Commission Appointment - Sebastian Valera – Mr. Valera came forward on his letter of interest to serve on the Conservation Committee. O’Keefe commented from reading his letter that he has lots of experience on boards in the past. Valera said it still is a learning curve and his goal was to belong to one committee a year. He mentioned he has served on the Board of Health, the ZBA, and also part of the rezoning task force in ’06. He’s been out for a few years now and eventually wants to run for Board of Selectmen. He said he has some time now and wants to give back to his town. Berndt moved to appoint; Blair seconded. By a vote of all aye, the motion carried unanimously. Sebastian was thanked and welcomed.

PERMIT/LICENSE APPLICATIONS, HEARINGS:

Entertainment Permit - United Parish Church Bazaar - November 9, 2013 – Mr. Walker came before the Board and announced the Holly Bazaar that will be held from 9:00 a.m. -2:00 p.m. He announced all the activities that will take place. Blair moved to grant the permit; Berndt seconded. By a vote of all aye, the permit was approved.

Entertainment Permit/Special One Day Liquor License - Immaculate Heart of Mary Church Fall Festival – Nov. 16-17, 2013 – The applicant was not able to attend the meeting but gave information to Selectwoman Hunt. She announced the activities that would take place. Blair moved to grant the permit/license; Berndt seconded. Blair amended his motion to include four One-Day Special Liquor Licenses in order for them to obtain and return any unused stock to the distributor. By a vote of all aye, the permit was approved unanimously.

Lucky Dragon All Alcohol Pouring License Application Amendments – Daigle explained the Form 43 for the applied changes to their license with the ABCC was returned by them with “No Recommendation.” Additional documents were requested from the ABCC that also needed to be approved by the Local Licensing Authority. Daigle informed the Board she had all the documents requested except one, the Certificate of Good Standing for Judy individually. We expected that to be received shortly. The documents were included in their packet for review. Jack and Judy, from Lucky Dragon, were in attendance for any questions. Blair moved to approve forwarding the amended application to the ABCC; Berndt seconded. By a vote of all aye, the motion carried unanimously.

BOS Permit/License Fees – Review: This topic was moved to the next meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

PROCLAMATION: Purple Heart Town – O’Keefe read the requested Resolution for approval this evening proclaiming the town a “Purple Heart Town” and proclaiming every August 7th as “Purple Heart Day” in admiration and gratitude for all the men and women who have selflessly served their country and the community in the Armed Forces and earned the Purple Heart Medal. Blair moved approval; Berndt seconded. By a vote of all aye, the motion carried unanimously. Blair suggested that the Town Manager explore the possibility of having signs that this is a Purple Heart Town for those to see coming in and out of town. Daigle was asked to mark the

annual calendar in July for the Board to redo the resolution designating August 7th of that year as “Purple Heart Day.”

Discharge of Mortgage – 50 Otter River Rd. - O’Keefe announced the property is being sold and is part of the Community Development Block Grant, Housing Rehab Program. A vote from the Board to discharge the mortgage was moved by Blair; Berndt seconded. By a vote of all aye, the motion carried unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS: Consideration of Employee Contracts – This item was moved to the next meeting. The Town Manager stated he was working on the grid.

TOWN MANAGER’S REPORT:

1. Personnel Updates-

- a. **Chief Mechanic (DPW)-** Kreidler announced the resignation of Billy Gorecki from his position of Chief Mechanic in the Department of Public Works. After interviews of two internal candidates, Albert Gallant was appointed. Blair moved to affirm the appointment of Albert Gallant as the Chief Mechanic; Berndt seconded. By a vote of all aye, the motion carried unanimously.

2. Financial Updates-

- a. **Year End-** Kreidler informed the Board that the new Town Accountant has the assistance of some outside help for the closing of the FY13 books. Hunt commended the new Town Accountant for handling tough situations and doing a heck of a job.

3. Project Updates-

- a. **Police Station Building Project-** Kreidler informed the Board that all of the final reports on hazardous building materials conducted on the flooring on the first floor of the building have come back negative for asbestos containing materials. Town Counsel is preparing to release the escrowed funds to the former owner and we are set to move the project forward.

Designer Selection- Enclosed is the copy of the draft designer selection procedures that have been provided by counsel. The law requires that we adopt such a document in order to proceed with the project. Blair moved to adopt the Designer Selection Procedures; Berndt seconded. By vote of all aye, the motion carried unanimously.

Request for Qualifications (RFQ): Owner’s Project Manager (OPM)- Kreidler stated with that vote we can now set to motion a Request for Qualifications for an Owner’s Project Manager which would lead to the **Request for Qualifications for a Designer-** which would lead to a **Request for Proposals for Construction Services.** Kreidler said he would keep them apprised of where each of these stand.

- b. **Route 140-** The paving is complete. The roadway traffic lining is underway. The curb cut reconfiguration at the gas station is nearly finished.

4. Miscellaneous Updates-

- a. **Streetlights**- A report from Supt. John Deline was included in the Town Manager's Report. Blair noted that a couple people have seen some lights now on. Kreidler stated since this report was written, John has gotten somebody's ear and things have been happening.
- b. **Winchendon Housing Authority**- Kreidler reported he has been advised by David Connor that Comcast has begun charging the Housing Authority for its cable services in their three public areas. After a bit of research it appears as though the Housing Authority may no longer show up on our approved list of public facilities in town for which basic drops and service are provided free of charge under our contract. Blair moved to write to Comcast and ask them to update the list to include the Housing Authority; Berndt seconded. By vote of all aye, the motion carried unanimously.
- c. **Municipal Electrical Aggregation**- Still no word from the Attorney General's office.
- d. **Goals and Objectives Quarterly Report**- Kreidler gave a brief update on his submitted quarterly report and his goals and objectives. He asked the Board to review and to pay special attention to the permitting guidebook. It was in draft form but is meant to be business friendly, resident friendly and employee friendly. It will take away any guest work. Once finished it will be put on the website with hyperlinks to departments, documents, the Town Charter, etc. and placed on counters where permit applications are picked up. It will also be pointed out to people coming in.

Hunt asked about quarterly meetings with Dept. Heads specifically with their vehicles to show report of usage and mileages. She would like to get updates with the water issue as well. Kreidler said he would have Dept. Heads come quarterly within his written report.

Blair asked about the police detail on Rte. 140. Kreidler explained that we are reimbursed by a fee which includes administrative costs as well as personnel.

MINUTES: Monday, October 7, 2013 Regular Meeting - Blair moved to approve; Berndt seconded. By vote of all, the motion carried unanimously.

COMMUNICATIONS: N/A

AGENDA ITEMS: The next regular meeting of the Board would fall on Veterans Day, November 11th. The Board cancelled this meeting and will add a substitute meeting if needed.

ADJOURNMENT: With no Executive Session being held this evening, Hunt moved to adjourn; Blair seconded. By vote of all aye, the meeting adjourned at 9:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Daigle
Executive Assistant