

Selectboard Meeting  
December 19, 2011

Meeting opened by Chair at 7:03pm

Present: **Noreen Suriner**, Chair; **Alan Vint**, Clerk; **Mitch Feldmesser**  
Duane Pease, Administrative Assistant

**Richard Haupt**, Building Commissioner (BC) for Dalton was present to interview for the position of Building Commissioner and Zoning Enforcement Office (ZEO) for the Town.

**Noreen** explained the situation in Town and the challenges that will be faced.

**Haupt** is currently the BC and ZEO in Lanesboro, Hinsdale and Chester as well as his full-time position in Dalton where he works 30 hours per week. He had been a part-time from '95 until '01 when he became full-time in Dalton. He is experienced in zoning issues.

**Alan** advised the Planning Board is currently re-writing the By-Laws as the current ones are somewhat vague. Also, some of the zoning concerns are in combination with health issues. Many of the issues have been around for years and they have to be brought into conformity with the By-Laws. It is necessary to aggressively pursue the zoning issues and apply the By-Laws equally to all.

**Haupt** felt that would not be a problem, he has been involved with the Land Court and various local courts over the years in decisions he has made. He keeps up-to-date with his Continuing Education as he is required to have at least 45 hours of education every 3 years. His continuing Ed costs are paid for by Dalton.

**Mitch** questioned him on the Stretch Code, which is part of the Green Communities Grant and that it most likely will be the Code in a couple of years. He is familiar with it and would not have a problem with it.

**Alan** questioned how many hours a week/month he would work and what the costs would be.

**Haupt** said he would see how much work there was, but the cost would be less than the Town is currently paying. He would request a salary and not charge on an hourly basis.

**Noreen** asked about issuing permits if taxes were owed. Haupt stated in Dalton the permit does not get to him until it is signed off by the Tax Collector. If it is an emergency he felt the tax situation didn't matter and he would issue the permit.

**Sherri Venditti**, observer, asked from his perspective if he could provide input to the Planning Board regarding the rewrite of the By-Laws. Haupt said he felt this was best left to the professionals and many towns have tried but the By-laws have been voted down at Town Meeting.

The Board thanked him for his attendance and that they would advise of their decision as there were others to be interviewed.

**Sherri Venditti** then addressed the Board regarding the condition of the old Town Records. At a previous meeting, Attorney Lynch and Mr. Smith both commented on the deterioration of the paper. Sherri had done some research and found digital photography may be feasible. There is a town resident that is willing to do it at no cost to the Town and he has all the equipment necessary. She said John Richardson is willing and would do it at night. She also spoke with Mr. Smith and he was very supportive of this and gave her some pointers. He said to photograph everything, including blank pages. If the Town Clerk attests to the authenticity, then these photographs can become the public record.

**Joe Kearns**, observer, said Sherri should contact Richard Cox at the UMASS library for additional guidance as he is very familiar with preservation of old records.

An anonymous donor left a plate of goodies to be enjoyed.

**Mitch** spoke regarding the Warrants and Minutes and he felt these should be at the top of the agenda as the Board should do its own work first and these were important to review.

The minutes were approved on a 3-0 vote. The Expense Warrant of \$17,332.32 was signed

There was general discussion on Skip Savery's, Highway Superintendent, use of the ice storm account. Also, the Board felt the Executive Session requested on 12/12/10 by Skip did not meet the standards of Executive Session and the vote was 3-0 to move the minutes to the regular minutes of the meeting.

Next discussion concerned the payment of the Health Agent, **Joe Kearns, Finance Committee Chair**, suggested the Board request the Finance Committee to transfer a sum of money from their reserve account to make a payment. After additional discussion, it was agreed to request \$1,500 until a Special Town Meeting could be held to properly request funding for the position. Prior to the appointment of this Health Agent, payment was made from a revolving account that was funded by the fees collected by the Health Agent. Noreen motioned to request the \$1,500, Alan 2<sup>nd</sup>; vote was 3-0 in favor.

**Diana Schindler**, Hampshire Council of Governments (HCOG) was present with **Charlene Baiardi**. Since the HCOG shut down its inspection program at this time, Charlene is available on an hourly basis through HCOG. The charge is \$60/hour and includes overhead and costs. Charlene is a full-time building commissioner in

Springfield, does structural inspections and also handles zoning issues that occur as part of her overseeing the building process. Springfield has 2 full-time zoning officials.

**Alan** noted that zoning issues were a very important aspect in Middlefield.

**Charlene** said with her full-time position, she could not go to court but could prepare all the documents necessary. She would be available every other weekend to work in town. It is very difficult to do inspections at night and again reiterated she would not be available to go to Housing Court.

**Diana** also mentioned the Board may want to speak with George Peterson who is doing the inspections in Huntington.

The Board thanked Diana and Charlene for their attendance.

**Noreen** wrote a letter of support for **Jackie Duda**, Health Agent, who is going to attend a conference in Alabama. After reading the letter, it was approved 3-0 in favor of sending.

**Noreen** also voiced concerns over the PHER grant which would provide \$850 to the Town. There is conflict with the larger towns pulling out leaving the smaller towns to fend for themselves.

**Tom Austin, Police Chief**, informed the Board of a recent break-in in town, Mary White's house was entered and jewelry and other small items were stolen.

**Noreen** wants the minutes to reflect Cyndi Oligny's 28 years of dedicated service to the Library and the Boards appreciation of her hard work.

**Alan** wanted to know who will be issuing the burn permits; previously they were handled by Cathy Radwich.

**Noreen** suggested the Board request the Fire Chief, Larry Pease, attend a meeting to clarify this. The Chief will be requested at the 1/9/12 meeting.

The **Pole Hearing** request by Western Mass Electric was discussed next and Alan felt the 1/9 meeting will be just to question WMECO about the poles installed on Chester Road that did not conform to the request and approval.

**Alan** also said he spoke with the town Accountant and was informed the Treasurer was way behind on turning over receipts to the Accountant. Currently, the last month submitted is August and we are now in December. There also seems to be resistance to the Tax Takings turned over to the Tax Attorney.

The License Letter was the next item discussed. There was a question regarding taxes owed and how to have the Tax Collector certify that the taxes are paid to date. Alan motioned to have the applicant go to the Collector for certification prior to submitting the

application. Noreen 2<sup>nd</sup>, vote was 2-1 with Mitch voting no. Mitch felt the process should be kept easy and simple for the businesses.

**Sherri Venditti** commented the Board was making the applicant make 3 trips to obtain their license. One to bring it to the Collector on either Friday afternoon or Saturday morning, then present it to the Board and then come back to pick up the license. She said the process needs to be streamlined.

At 9:44pm, **Noreen** motioned to go into Executive Session to discuss the Harry Pease Road situation and the Board will not reconvene in Open Session. Motion 2<sup>nd</sup> by Alan. Vote: Noreen, Aye; Alan, Aye; Mitch, Aye. Vote was 3-0. Board went into Executive Session at 9:45pm.

Minutes respectively submitted by:

Duane Pease  
Administrative Assistant

Minutes accepted with/without changes

Noreen Suriner, Chair

Alan Vint, clerk

Mitch Feldmesser