

Selectboard Meeting
April 9, 2012

Meeting opened at 7:00pm

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

There were no warrants to review.

Addendum is needed on the Board of Health hearing.

Minutes of last week's meeting were approved with changes.

It was noted an email was needed from Planning Board Chair, Jay Swift, noting the board is not acting on the Harry Pease Road petition for the Annual Town Meeting (ATM).

Also, **Alan** requested the Board bring any additional items to him for the Selectboard's report in the ATM.

Steve Kulik, who will be the Town's State Representative under the new redistricting plan, visited the Board. Steve had previously been the Town's Representative. He asked if there were any open issues the Town had so he could follow up with the current Rep, Paul Mark. Steve stated he mostly represents small towns as the largest in his new district is Montague.

Noreen mentioned the Town would like to explore the possibility of joining Northampton Control for its 9-1-1 dispatching service as the current provider's, Berkshire County, costs have risen and are nearly \$7,000.

Alan felt with such a limited budget, the Town could use this money for other purposes.

Steve said he was a Selectman in Worthington when the Northampton Control was being created but did not recall the specifics but would look into it for the Town.

Police Chief, Tom Austin, was present and advised initially the Berkshire service was free but now the Sheriff is trying to cover his costs.

Mitch asked if there was any advantage to calling Steve's office prior to calling various State agencies such as the Attorney General, Secretary of State or Ethics.

Steve said to call those agencies first and if the response is slow, then call his office. He has a District Office in South Deerfield. Also, the Chapter 90 letters have been sent to the Towns and it will be the same amount of money as last year.

Noreen asked if he could be of assistance in obtaining STRAP Grants to aid the Town in repairing the road.

Steve said he does a lot of grant work and works with Kathy Stevens in the District 1 office in Lenox. The maximum amount of a STRAP Grant is now \$350,000, up from \$150,000 ten years ago.

Alan questioned the Brownfield site at the closed General Store and that he has not been able to get a straight answer from DEP as to what the real status of the earth is. Steve took the DEP file number and said he would look into it.

Steve told the Board not to be shy, and feel free to give him a call when questions or problems arise.

Ray Gero, Veterans Agent, told the Board all Veteran's Services will be done electronically after June 1st. There is a 4 day training session but the cost is \$3,5000 and the Town can't afford it.

Noreen has received a Memo of Understanding from MEMA and motioned to accept it. Alan 2nd; vote was 3-0 in favor.

Also **Alan** is to review the FEMA contract that was submitted for the October snow storm.

It has been suggested Eleanor Doyle be designated to post the minutes of various Town Boards/Commissions on the Town website. Alan said most secretaries don't know how, or care to learn how, to post the minutes. There was a general discussion concerning what needs to be done to facilitate the minutes being posted online.

Eleanor was in attendance and asked if she could have her stipend as Assistant Town Clerk be applied directly to her taxes rather than taking a pay. She said other towns have a work program that does this. Her concern is because she is retired from the Postal Service; she is not eligible for Social Security and does not feel it should be taken out of her pay.

Alan told her to check with the Treasure, Jane Thielen, and if she did not receive any satisfaction, to come back to the Board.

Highway Superintendent, **Skip Savery**, advised the Board he and Ron Radwich would be taking the OSHA 10 course that is required on Thursday and Friday. He also placed a legal notice in the Country Journal looking for someone to do some shoulder work and remove gravel on Becket Road in exchange for the gravel. He is finishing up the paperwork on his former employee and will be checking with the Treasurer to go over what vacation days may still be owed.

The next item reviewed was the warrant for the ATM. Historically, there is a Pre-Town Meeting held before the ATM. Alan motioned to sold the meeting on Tuesday, may 1st at 7:00pm. Noreen 2nd; vote was 3-0 in favor. Administrative assistant will send an invitation to the School Superintendant.

There was a lengthy discussion among the Board and **Joe Kearns, Finance Chair**, on various articles proposed for the ATM. Questions were raised regarding the increase in the Librarian salary and decrease in expenses, **Alan** felt more of the money should be spent on the expense side. The Board was not in favor of all the proposed articles and will let the sponsors of those articles argue their case before the residents at the ATM.

Noreen noted the Dog Officer position still has not been filled and will be on the warrant this year. She also had concerns about the applicant for the position. Bob Jackman, as he did not have facilities to hold the animals. On a motion by Noreen and 2nd by Alan, it was voted 3-0 not to offer the position to Mr. Jackman.

Alan questioned **Joe Kearns**, who is also the **Town Moderator**, on the procedures necessary for having secret ballots available for some of the articles on the warrant. Joe said he would like to know how many secret votes are expected so he can organize the votes in advance. In the past, he has used different colored paper for each question.

Prior to adjourning, **Alan** questioned Joe on why only one of the companies that were sent proposal packages for the solar installation came to the mandatory pre-bid conference and submitted a bid. **Joe** said he had spoke with some of the companies and some did not see the proposal and others did not bid on municipal projects.

Noreen motioned to adjourn, Mitch 2nd; vote was 3-0 and meeting was adjourned at 10:33pm.

Minutes respectively submitted by:

Duane Pease
Administrative Assistant

Minutes accepted with/without changes:

Noreen Suriner, Chair

Alan Vint, Clerk

Mitch Feldmesser