

MINUTES
BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING
JANUARY 9, 2017 at 6:30pm
TOWN HALL, SELECTMEN'S CONFERENCE ROOM

CALL TO ORDER/OPENING

Chairman Belanger called the meeting to order at 6:32pm. Chairman Douglas Belanger, Vice Chair Harry Brooks, 2nd Vice Chair Thomas E. Buckley, III, Selectwoman Dianna Provencher, Selectman Michael Shivick, Town Administrator Kevin Mizikar, Assistant to the Town Administrator Kristen Forsberg and Student Liaisons Jaymi-Lyn Souza and Robert Kemp were in attendance.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

No members of the public provided comment

1. SCHEDULED

No scheduled items

2. CORRESPONDENCE

a. Student Liaison Reports

The Student Liaisons presented excerpts from their written report and also brought forth a proposal to bring short student showcases to the Board meetings once a month.

A motion was made by Mr. Buckley and seconded by Ms. Provencher to approve monthly student showcases at Board meetings. The motion carried unanimously.

b. Library Director Letter

Mr. Belanger read a letter from Suzanne Hall, Library Director, thanking Christie and Bruce Higginbottom and Teena Cherry for helping to pack up the library in preparation for the move to the temporary location.

3. NEW BUSINESS

a. Leave of Absence – Nancy Lamb

Mr. Mizikar presented a leave of absence request from Nancy Lamb. Ms. Lamb is a library employee who has requested a leave of absence from January 10th to February 21st in order to be considered for the Temporary Outreach Coordinator position at the Leicester Senior Center. In accordance with the personnel bylaw, a leave of absence requires Board approval.

A motion was made by Ms. Provencher and seconded by Mr. Brooks to approve the leave of absence request from Nancy Lamb. The motion carried unanimously.

b. Appointments

i. Promotion to the Position of Sergeant

This item was passed over.

ii. Temporary Outreach Coordinator – Nancy Lamb

A motion was made by Mr. Shivick and seconded by Ms. Provencher to appoint Nancy Lamb to the position of Temporary Outreach Coordinator for the Senior Center. The motion carried unanimously.

iii. Civilian Detention Officers

Mr. Mizikar presented a request from Chief Hurley to appoint 10 Civilian Detention Officers which would enable the Town to hold prisoners at the police station on an as needed basis due to the move to regional dispatch.

A motion was made by Mr. Belanger and seconded by Mr. Brooks to appoint the 10 applicants as presented to the position of Civil Detention Officer.

Under discussion, Ms. Provencher asked if the dispatchers used to perform these duties. Mr. Mizikar responded that they did so now the Town must hire outside people on an on-call basis at \$15/hr with a 3-hour minimum. Mr. Mizikar noted that while on duty they are going to be typing police reports, filing documents and complete other tasks as assigned by the supervising officer. Mr. Buckley asked why there are so many. Mr. Mizikar responded that as this is an on-call position, five men and five women were recommended to ensure someone will be available when needed.

The motion carried unanimously.

c. 2017 License Renewals

Mr. Mizikar noted that everyone who is still in business and desires to be licensed has submitted their paperwork.

A motion was made by Ms. Provencher and seconded by Mr. Brooks to approve the 2017 license renewal requests as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

4. DISCUSSION/OLD BUSINESS

a. Power Purchase Agreement Performance

Mr. Mizikar noted that in early 2015, the Board signed a Power Purchase Agreement with Syncarpha, Inc. to purchase solar electricity from their solar array in Palmer at the former airport. The system was not finished at the time the agreement was signed but was finished rapidly thereafter and came online in late December 2015. Since then, the Board has realized \$50,000 in savings for the 1.3mw of power purchased which is an overall 18% reduction in costs for those accounts included. Those electric accounts that are part of the agreement cost the Town \$256,000 in calendar year 2015 and \$214,000 in calendar year 2016. The Town receives a credit on the Ngrid accounts each month, rendering most of bills as zero for these accounts. Syncarpha is paying 18% less for electric than Ngrid and is able to pass those savings on to us.

Mr. Buckley asked if any of the savings are related to the energy project. Mr. Mizikar noted some savings could be coming from changes made but we tried to do a balanced analysis and hold for these costs. One of the largest accounts that is part of the power purchase agreement is our street lights which were not affected by the energy project. The Town can expect to see a \$20,000 savings in the FY'18 budget for street lights as a result. Mr. Belanger asked about our stock of available lights. Mr. Mizikar responded that they are restocked about biannually and are stored at the Highway Department. Whenever an outage occurs Ngrid collects stock from our warehouse and goes out and does the work for us.

Mr. Belanger expressed concern about road darkness by the Giguere's crosswalk and stated one of the street lights is pointed towards the Goretti's parking lot leaving that section of Route 9 dark. Mr. Mizikar noted that Ms. Forsberg did some outreach to the various appropriate parties regarding this issue but we can take a look at adding or redirecting the light in this area.

5. TOWN ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

The Town Administrator presented highlights from his written report including:

- The Fire Station is scheduled to open in May
- The Library has begun relocating items to 1 Paxton Street and will be closed until February 1st
- One proposal for the drinking water study was received and Mr. Mizikar had good follow-ups with other firms and hopes to have something in time for the next Board meeting
- The office is working on developing in the FY'18 budget and moving forward with the capital planning process
- The contract for EMS billing services will be presented at the next meeting
- A new bill was passed regarding recreational marijuana that delays many of the major milestones at least 6 months to July 1, 2018, which gives the Town more time to make local decisions
- Snow and Ice is almost \$11K in deficit at this point but we are using our resources wisely. The storm over the weekend initial cost is estimated at \$14,587.

6. BOARD OF SELECTMEN REPORTS

Mr. Shivick noted that there will be a Hearts for Heat fundraiser on Feb 2nd at 7pm at Hezekiah Stone and thanked Jim Souza for quickly addressing issues via social media. Mr. Shivick also noted that there is a fundraising effort to bring back the Christmas Lights display this year.

Ms. Provencher noted the Worcester County Selectmen's Association meeting will be held on Friday from 5-6pm and the MMA annual meeting will be held later this month.

Mr. Buckley wished everyone a happy new year and wished his brother Jim a happy birthday. Mr. Buckley noted that Mr. Souza did a great job redirecting traffic while the work was being done on the high school entryway and there is a nice plan in place for safety.

Mr. Brooks wished everyone a happy new year and thanked EMS and Fire for coming out to help someone who fell. Mr. Brooks also told the highway department that they are doing a great job this winter.

Mr. Belanger stated he has high hopes for our Town and Country this year and hopes we come through better than the pessimists anticipate. There are many people struggling to survive and he hopes that 2017 is a good year for everyone.

7. MINUTES

a. January 19, 2016

A motion was made by Ms. Provencher and seconded by Mr. Shivick to approve the minutes of December 19th, noting the date is listed incorrectly on the agenda. The motion carried unanimously.

8. EXECUTIVE SESSION, MGL CHAPTER 30A, SECTION 21A

A motion was made by Mr. Shivick and seconded by Mr. Buckley to enter into executive session at 7:09pm.

Vote by Roll Call:

Belanger – Aye

Brooks - Aye

Buckley – Aye

Provencher – Aye

Shivick - Aye

The motion carried unanimously.

A motion to adjourn was made by Ms. Provencher and seconded by Mr. Shivick at 7:34pm. The motion carried unanimously.