

**MINUTES
SELECTMEN'S MEETING
OCTOBER 20, 2008**

Chairman Belanger called the meeting to order at 6:00pm. Members present were Douglas Belanger, Dianna Provencher, Richard Antanavica and Stanley Zagorski. Also present was Town Administrator Robert Reed. Selectmen Brennan was absent due to work commitment.

Executive Session

MOTION: Ms. Provencher moved to go into Executive Session to consider purchase, exchange, lease or value of real property. Mr. Zagorski seconded. The Board was polled: ALL AYES

The Board went into Executive Session at 6:02pm.

The Board came out of Executive Session at 6:30pm.

Office Hours – Town Hall

Mr. Reed reported that employees have mixed feelings about continuing the 4-day work schedule. The public survey has resulted in mixed opinions, but no outcry against it. He noted more and more towns are making this move to save on energy usage and costs. He feels we may see more savings in winter than we could realize for a couple months in summer weather.

Mr. Belanger noted that the Town Clerk will be open for business the last Friday of the month, October 31st, to allow for absentee ballots and voter registration. Concern as to how to maintain evening basketball programs continues, which is being worked on. A separate thermostat has been installed in Town Hall, which will be locked. Mr. Antanavica noted that the athletes don't want the heat on anyway.

Mr. Antanavica did feel that the managers need to maintain work flow and stay later or work five days to accomplish tasks. Ms. Provencher agreed. Mr. Belanger was still reluctant but will support continuing the 4-day work week; although he doesn't think we'll realize a huge savings, as long as we serve the public needs he will go along with it.

MOTION: Ms. Provencher moved to continue 4-day work schedule until further notice.

Mr. Antanavica seconded. UNANIMOUS

Trick or Treat Hours – Halloween 2008

MOTION: Mr. Antanavica moved to support Police Chief's recommendation to continue same as last year, on October 31st from 5-7pm. Ms. Provencher seconded. UNANIMOUS

Policy – Disability Insurance

Mr. Reed has had meetings with regard to the Town offering employee-paid disability insurance coverage to all staff. Mr. Zagorski asked whether any collective bargaining might be involved. Mr. Reed did not believe so, but did know that we have to correct the irregularities that are currently in place. He will make a formal presentation at our next meeting of November 3rd.

Obsolete Equipment – Sale of Town owned property

MOTION: Ms. Provencher moved to declare 2006 Ford Crown Vic police cruiser as obsolete equipment, and further moved that the Town put the vehicle up for sale through standard bidding procedures. Mr. Zagorski seconded. 3-0, Mr. Antanavica abstained.

Special Town Meeting – Close and Post Warrant

Mr. Belanger noted that current economic status could provoke another town meeting down the road, so he feels we should delay the scheduled November 10, 2008 Special Town Meeting. Mr. Reed reported that DOR is silent on how the communities will need to balance their budgets should local aid be cut. He noted that this occurred in 2003, when corrections were allowed to be made at the spring town meeting sessions. It was agreed that we may know more after the November 4th State and Presidential Elections results.

MOTION: Mr. Antanavica moved to postpone to a yet undetermined date the scheduled 11/10/08 STM, with the Board to take further action at our November 3rd meeting. Mr. Zagorski seconded. UNANIMOUS

Mr. Belanger noted that we will now begin to get back on track for regular meetings, that being the 1st and 3rd Mondays of each month.

Correspondence

1. Memo from Selectmen & Treasurer's Offices requesting release of obsolete equipment.

MOTION: Mr. Zagorski moved to determine laser jet printers as obsolete, to be disposed of as the departments see fit. Ms. Provencher seconded. UNANIMOUS

2. Letter of resignation from Michael Moriarty, Police Dispatcher, effective September 2, 2008.

MOTION: Mr. Antanavica moved to accept with regret and letter of thanks.

Ms. Provencher seconded. UNANIMOUS

3. Letter of resignation from Janet Pierce, Treasurer/Collector, effective November 21, 2008. The Board commended Ms. Pierce for the value she brought, she ran a professional department and moved us forward during her tenure. She brought many positives aspects to the office, and although they received some negative feedback, she will be sorely missed. She created an affective department with land sales benefiting our revenue stream.

MOTION: Ms. Provencher moved to accept with regret and letter of thanks for time served.

Mr. Antanavica seconded. UNANIMOUS

Mr. Reed reported that advertisements will be placed online and published in the Mass Municipal Association website, in the local Worcester Telegram, and any available association websites.

Discussion on whether the position might be elevated to Finance Director and just who will form the search committee. It was agreed that a Treasurer/Collector position will be offered at this time, and that a smaller group should be used for hiring team.

Budget Message

Mr. Belanger felt we need to beat the drum now; although Local Aid was spared the first round of State budget cuts, with the economies of the Federal and State governments and the certain reduction in local receipts, it is time to prepare for the worst. The Governor has recently cut over one billion dollars in State spending as outlined in MMA's Special Budget Alert message dated October 16th.

Mr. Belanger read aloud a FY'09 Budget message drafted by Mr. Reed which directs all departments to implement an immediate hiring freeze as well as a freeze on all non-essential spending. The School Department will consider at their next meeting co-signing this Budget message, as will the Advisory Board, who are meeting this evening also.

MOTION: Mr. Antanavica moved to support and co-sign with the School Committee the FY'09 Budget message as drafted by the Town Administrator. Ms. Provencher seconded. UNANIMOUS

Mr. Reed noted that, once again, the Highway Department is hit hard. This will be the 3rd position in that Department that has not been filled since he has worked here. He felt the Selectmen need to seriously think about what they intend to do, and when. Do we want to prepare for an override proposal? Last year we transferred more than \$144,000 into Snow & Ice Deficit Account. Service levels are sure to be hit; what do we intend to do? We need to put a spending plan in place. Mr. Belanger agreed that we must plan ahead. Ms. Provencher felt that, once the hiring freeze is over, the Highway Department will be first to fill positions.

Zoning Board of Appeals – Applicant

David Kirwan was present seeking appointment to Alternate seat on ZBA. He moved to Leicester three years ago, has lived in Worcester County more than twenty years, but did not have an opportunity until now to seek volunteer service to the community. Discussions with Chairman Vaughn Hathaway has peaked his interest; he hopes to gain experience and share some of his knowledge.

Mr. Antanavica noted his application states that he is not a citizen or registered voter. Mr. Kirwan stated that it is his understanding that he would not be restricted from serving unless it was for an elected position. The Board asked that Mr. Reed seek advisory on this matter. In the meantime, they welcomed Mr. Kirwan and thanked him for seeking membership.

MOTION: Ms. Provencher moved to appoint David Kirwan as an Alternate member of the Zoning Board of Appeals, term to expire 6/30/11. Mr. Antanavica seconded. UNANIMOUS

Correspondence (continued)

4. Memo from EMS Director requesting appointment of two on-call EMT/Basic personnel.

MOTION: Ms. Provencher moved to appoint Felix Riviera and Jennifer McNamara as on-call EMT Basic, subject to all Town personnel procedures. Mr. Antanavica seconded. UNANIMOUS

5. Memo from EMS Director requesting appointment of Scott Navaroli as EMS Coordinator.

MOTION: Ms. Provencher moved to appoint Scott Navaroli as EMS Coordinator.

Mr. Zagorski seconded. UNANIMOUS

6. Notice from Board of Health regarding Flu Clinics to be held October 22nd and November 6th at the Senior Center. FILE

7. Letter from School Superintendent requesting a municipal representative to serve on the negotiation team with the School Committee relative to the Educational Association of Leicester contract. Chairman Belanger designated Selectmen Zagorski to represent the Board, which we will notify the Supt of.

8. Request for 12-month Leave of Absence from Part-time Police Officer Michelle Bostock for both educational and personal reasons, which is supported by Chief of Police.

MOTION: Ms. Provencher moved to approve Leave of Absence as requested, with Chairman signing Civil Service Form 56 for submittal. Mr. Antanavica seconded. UNANIMOUS

Signatures

- Commonwealth of Massachusetts' November 4, 2008 Election Warrant

MOTION: Mr. Antanavica moved for Board to execute Election Warrant from Town Clerk.
Mr. Zagorski seconded. UNANIMOUS

- St. Vincent's Hospital Affiliation Agreement for enhanced and/or basic life support

MOTION: Ms. Provencher moved to accept and enter into Affiliation Agreement with St. Vincent's Hospital as submitted. Mr. Zagorski seconded. UNANIMOUS

- Town Administrator's Employment Agreement – Mr. Reed reported that Counsel has reviewed for legal content and integrated with original Agreement, past and present MOUs into new Employment Agreement.

MOTION: Ms. Provencher moved to execute this date the Employment Agreement between the TOL and Robert Reed as Town Administrator 2009-2012 made on September 27, 2008.

Mr. Zagorski seconded. UNANIMOUS

Town Administrator's Report

- annual tax classification hearing is scheduled for November 3rd
- smoking policy hearing is scheduled for November 3rd
- taxi regulations hearing is scheduled for November 3rd
- further discussions on implementation of a Disability Insurance policy and how it might affect collective bargaining will take place on November 3rd
- final lease document for Hillcrest CC will be prepared for November 3rd; only details to be worked out
- sewer hookup to Hillcrest CC is complete; system now under Hillcrest Sewer District
- health insurance quotes along with Group Insurance Commission rates are being prepared, with this task falling under BOS through a report of the Town's Health Insurance Advisory Committee. Mr. Belanger felt that the GIC plan can be non-adversarial if proposed correctly

Board Reports/Other Business

Selectmen Zagorski:

- asked that we have in on November 3rd the Hilltop Management Group, Lessee, to speak to their plans at Hillcrest Country Club and allow residents to hear what the future will bring, as many submitted ideas on the survey we had available. Mr. Belanger will extend an invitation.
- Asked about accessibility issues at Rochdale Park driveway with regard to ownership of Town and Raymond Shea properties
- Economic Development Committee met last week with new objective to marry owners of parcels along Route 56 and Route 9 with companies seeking to relocate businesses. They plan a public forum on how to best market the sale of properties along these commercial corridors.

Selectmen Antanavica:

- Asked for report on what he hears is available State bond funds relative to infrastructure improvements, specifically with replacement of Rawson Street bridge in mind

MOTION: Mr. Antanavica moved that the Town Administrator research this matter.

Ms. Provencher seconded. UNANIMOUS

- Asked for report on DHCD Peer-to-Peer Grants, with \$1000 in technical assistance funding available to towns
- Outdoor wood boiler regulations have been adopted by the Board of Health; he urged residents to have their systems registered
- Hearts-for-Heat raffle tickets are available, with drawing to be held November 10th

Selectmen Provencher:

- Asked for report on \$53.1 million for parks upgrades, wondering if Burncoat Park project would comply
- Revitalization projects from other towns that she asked be copied for Board members
- Local or State police can be assigned as flaggers on roadways with 45MPH or less posted
- Vote "NO" on Question 1, to abolish income tax, which will hurt cities and town tremendously
- Change in Mass Dept of Environmental Protection regulations now requires permit to be pulled from local Conservation Commission for any work to be done within 100' of wetlands; blanket permits for local ponds will no longer cover work by homeowners

Selectmen Belanger:

- Urged voters to vote "NO" on Question 1. He noted that the waste is in the State level of government, the local level runs very efficiently and most effectively. The "smaller government" we hear is needed is actually an oxymoron...local governments run very well
- \$1 million dollars raised during recent cancer walk fundraiser; he thanked all those who supported the cause

- thanked Lessee of Hillcrest Country Club, Gerry Paulauskas and Bruce Smith, for their leap of faith as they endeavor to run the Club year by year of late, now having received agreement on 5-year lease, which will allow them to invest in the property. A new roof is part of the lease agreement. The Board agreed to authorize Town Administrator to work on RFP process and award same.

Minutes

MOTION: Mr. Antanavica moved to approve 8/11/08 Regular & Executive Sessions, and 9/08/08 Regular Session minutes. Ms. Provencher seconded. UNANIMOUS

MOTION: Ms. Provencher moved to adjourn.

Mr. Antanavica seconded. UNANIMOUS

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan LeChasseur,
Administrative Assistant