

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MINUTES OF JANUARY 20, 2015
SHEPARD MUNICIPAL BUILDING**

PRESENT: Mr. David A. Delanski, Chairman, Mr. Robert E. Lavash, Sr. Vice-Chairman and Mr. Dario F. Nardi, Clerk

ATTENDEES: See list (attached)

Chairman Delanski called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance in the Selectmen's Meeting Room in the Shepard Municipal Building.

Chairman Delanski announced that tonight's meeting was being both video and audio taped and requested anyone in the audience to disclose if they are recording tonight's meeting.

Mr. Delanski took a moment to recognize North Brookfield Selectboard member Mary Walter and Chief Spiewakowski two minor children who were present in the audience.

MINUTES

Mr. Nardi announced the Board has changed the format of the meeting, to approve minutes at the beginning of the meeting to allow for review and coverage of any old and pending matters. Mr. Nardi gave a brief outline of the Board's recent meeting of January 17th, noting this would not be the norm; but wished residents to be apprised as the meeting was not on camera. In his synopsis, Mr. Nardi stated that he and Mr. Delanski met with resident James Fountain at his property on 135 Brimfield Road, to explore the possibilities of land acquisition by the Town for the purposes of a safety complex in the future or as an extension of land for the Town Cemetery. Around 10:38 am the meeting reconvened at the Shepard Building; there was a brief discussion on the Mass minimum wage increase; the upcoming Special Town Meeting relating to the Landfill solar project and final amendments to the Town's hiring policy. Lastly, he announced the scheduled 1/27 dept. meeting was canceled.

Motion to accept the open meeting minutes of December 16, 2014; January 13, 2015 made by Mr. Nardi; second: Mr. Lavash – unanimous

Motion to accept the open meeting minutes of January 17, 2015 as written made by Mr. Nardi; second Mr. Delanski – 1 abstention.

CHIEF SPIEWAKOWSKI – PRESENTATION OF CANDIDATES FOR APPOINTMENT TO DEPARTMENT

Mr. Delanski moved the agenda items out of order and called on the Chief to introduce his candidates for appointment:

Chief Spiewakowski introduced Tom Gajewski and Sean Morin as successful candidates for consideration for appointment as Part Time officers. He stated both candidates have military experience and have police academy experience as well. He noted that Mr. Gajewski had been a resident who recently relocated to Southbridge; Mr. Morin is a resident. Mr. Delanski asked both candidates if they are registered voters. They both affirmed in the positive. Lastly, Mr. Delanski asked each candidate to give a brief statement as to why they have applied for consideration to the department. Mr. Morin stated he has grown up in the community and wishes to contribute back. Mr. Gajewski stated he wished to follow in the family tradition of service; as his father is a current officer with the department. With no further discussion, a motion to appoint the two candidates to the department with the customary conditions for the position and probationary period was made by Mr. Lavash; second: Mr. Nardi – unanimous. Chief Spierkowski added that the hire/appointment was conditional on passing the physical fitness and psychological exams.

OLD BUSINESS:

Formalize STM date:

There was a motion to set the Special Town Meeting date to Thursday, February 19, 2015 to be at the Quaboag High School auditorium and to accept article intentions before the end of the month; made Mr. Lavash; second: Mr. Nardi- unanimous. Mr. Delanski requested that a memo be sent to departments for article intentions of measurable need be submitted to the Board no later than Thursday, January 29, 2015 for consideration and inclusion on the Warrant.

Holiday Pay Discussion:

Mr. Delanski stated that in the past there has been a misconception surrounding the policy on Holiday pay contained in the Personnel By-law; that perhaps the language was too open ended. Following discussions with Town Council the Board of Selectmen/Personnel Board can set specifications policy. As a point of clarification the Personnel Board is requesting a memo to all Department Heads with the directive that any staff member requesting an absence the day before and day after a recognized Holiday must have signed department approval in writing. The written approval is to be submitted to the Personnel Board 48 hours before the anticipated Holiday. Furthermore, employees are expected to work their full hours/shift on the day prior and day after the Holiday unless exempted. A motion to prepare the memo as outlined was made by Mr. Lavash; second: Mr. Nardi – unanimous. In closing, Mr. Lavash added that all and any absences whether paid or not should be recorded/noted on the employee's timesheet. Mr. Delanski restated excused absence must be in writing and submitted before the time is taken.

Mr. Delanski moved to the scheduled 7:15 hearing.

7:15 CHRISTOPHER DUNPHY – FINAL PUBLIC HEARING FY 2015 CDBG

Mr. Christopher Dunphy stepped before the Board asking a moment of their time to address a time sensitive matter involving the billing for Community Opportunities Group (COG); consultants hired on the FY 13 CDBG PARP program. In an effort to meet deadlines, Mr. Dunphy presented the Board with the latest invoice #3 for about \$18,000. of which half (\$9K) is Warren's portion. Again, this grant program is jointly for Warren and Hardwick. Mr. Dunphy also made reference to invoice #2 which he had hoped had been executed; Ms. Prokop was not aware of invoice #2 – efforts would be made to locate and put before the Board. A motion to sign the COG invoice #3 and sign invoice #2 when available was made by Mr. Lavash; second: Mr. Nardi – unanimous.

Mr. Delanski asked Mr. Dunphy as to Town Planner William Scanlan's involvement with the PARP program. Mr. Dunphy replied that he had reached out to Mr. Scanlan as a sub consultant hired by PVPC to assist in the delivery of this portion of the FY 13 grant between Warren and Hardwick.

7:20 PM Christopher Dunphy of PVPC attended this evening's hearing in order to discuss the Community Development Block Grant application being prepared for fiscal year 2015 for Warren in conjunction with the towns of Brookfield and North Brookfield. It is proposed that Warren act as the "lead community" which is why the hearing is here tonight. Mr. Dunphy noted the CDBG program is a federal program designed to help low to moderate income persons. For smaller communities in Massachusetts, the state DHCD administers the program through competitive grants. Mr. Dunphy said that each of the three towns has previously approved Community Development Strategies which are required for the application. Towns larger than 5,000 persons must designate a "target area" to focus grant activities in. In Warren, the Community Development Advisory Committee has targeted activities to Warren Center, West Warren, and vicinity. For fiscal year 2015 the towns, with Warren as the lead community, are applying for approximately \$986,290.00. . Mr. Dunphy noted this is the most they can apply for. If funded, a regional housing rehabilitation program (\$278,000) will enable low to moderate income homeowners to make repairs to their homes to correct code violations and provide safe and healthy living environments. Investor-owners may also participate but are required to provide matching funds. Individual projects may receive up to \$35,000 each in some cases. Mr. Dunphy said that there are over 100 homeowners from the three towns that are currently on the waiting list for housing rehabilitation services. He indicated that the grant will only be able to help a small percentage of these. However, it is hopeful that emergencies can be identified and addressed. Also, PVPC staff can often direct people to other resources that may be able to provide assistance while a client waits for more comprehensive housing rehabilitation services. In Warren, the Highland Street Improvement Project at approximately (\$477,643) will construct roadway, sidewalk, drainage, and water system improvements in a residential area of West Warren. This area was prioritized for improvement through past planning and engineering studies due to the deteriorated condition of the roadway and to storm water flooding. Mr. Dunphy indicated the project is now "shovel ready", with plans and specifications prepared by Lenard Engineering through the past FY 2011 CDBG. In North Brookfield, professional design engineering services (\$44,000) will be sought to prepare plans and specification for the improvement of North Common Street. It is intended that public water, drainage and sewer conditions will be evaluated as well as pedestrian access, streetscape conditions and related improvements. In Brookfield, Professional consulting services (\$44,000) will be sought to assist the Brookfield Council on Aging and Board of Selectmen evaluate current services and prepare plans that will aid the community in evaluating new or adapted facilities to meet the needs of the senior population. Mr. Dunphy said additional funds (\$14,000) may also be sought to support area public social services including assistance for Domestic Violence Prevention services. An additional (\$128,646) in the grant application would be for administration.

Mr. Dunphy noted that there were persons from Warren, Brookfield and North Brookfield in attendance tonight in support of the proposed strategies in the application. For instance, Ms. Bethany Roberts of the Brookfield Council of Ageing offered her insights and need for the professional consulting proposed for her town. Mr. Dunphy also noted that Ms. Mary Walter of the North Brookfield Board of Selectmen is strongly in support of this regional effort and will be providing a support letter shortly for the application.

Mr. Dunphy requested the Board take a formal vote of approval and support for the proposed FY 2015 Warren joint community CDBG application with the towns of Brookfield and North Brookfield.

A motion, to have the town approve the submission of the proposed FY 2015 grant application and their respective activities to the DHCD, and furthermore to authorize the CEO and CFO to sign required forms when prepared. The town also acknowledges and accepts the recommendation of the Community Development Advisory Committee and includes a request for funding for the Domestic Violence Services Program, was read by Mr. Nardi; second: Mr. Lavash – unanimous.

Mr. Delanski thanked Mr. Dunphy for his efforts with this year's application. He asked for any additional comments or questions from those in attendance. Being none, the hearing was closed.

LIBRARIES – DISCUSSION AND UPDATES

As mentioned in prior meetings, the Board is looking to move forward on the proposal to combine both the Warren and West Warren Libraries. There is concern that budgets are strained on both; with news of the State budget deficits there could be cuts to funding that would impact the libraries. Therefore, the Board remaining neutral on the matter has requested representatives from both libraries attend tonight's meeting. Mr. John Premier from WL (Warren Library) spoke briefly on long range plan to have an addition added to the current building that would also accommodate handicap accessibility. The Library is owned by a public corporation; funding for the plan would not come from the budget/town. Ms. Elizabeth Kelley from WWL (West Warren Library) asked the Board if there had ever been consideration to have the library (ies) owned and operated by the Town where Town could select board members and eliminate the fighting over budgets. There was continued discussion among board members from both libraries and the Selectboard. With respect to the topic of the Town owning the Warren library building; Mr. Delanski stated that no transfer/acquisition could be done without Town wide meeting vote. The Selectboard is willing to hear all proposals and suggestions to move forward. A joint meeting was tentatively scheduled for Thursday, March 12th at 6:00 PM – this would be a posted and open meeting. Mr. Delanski stated this could be a brief meeting to set the parameters to start discussions and move forward. At the conclusion of all discussions Mr. Delanski thanked everyone for coming; Library supporters and board members left the meeting at 7:48 PM.

COMMENTS AND CONCERNS:

Mr. Stanley Soltys inquired as to a meeting date/time to tour the Town Hall clock tower as discussed at the prior meeting. The Selectboard scheduled for Saturday the 24th and would have Ms. Prokop contact with a confirmed time.

Mr. Tom Boudreau, Highway Surveyor updated the Board on some items brought to his attention:

- 1- the abandoned couch on Douglas Road has been collected
- 2- sanding on A Street had been properly addressed and was followed up with an additional application when his department was notified of concerns
- 3-wished the Board and residents to be aware he is exploring the opportunities for a TIP grant; and has had discussions with key people to start the process rolling.

CORRESPONDENCE

The Board reviewed the following:

- Email from Don Nickerson expressing concern over recent article in the T & G in which North Brookfield was issued a Cease & Desist from the Architectural Access Board on the Town Hall renovations. He is fearful that the same scenario could possibly play out in Warren. Mr. Delanski offered a brief synopsis of the T&G article; citing restrictions on spending Fed/State funds for building repairs in N Brookfield. Mr. Dunphy added that the Architectural Board is pretty strict.
- Email from Tom Boudreau seeking budgetary guidance for seasonal summer help. (See attached wage classification sheet). Board will take a look at it.
- Email from Chief Spiewakowski advising the Board that the repair to the boiler is complete and it is now fully operational. In addition, the rodent control company hired by the Town Hall Remediation Committee has installed several traps and bait stations on Thursday, January 15th. Noted
- Notification that James McKeon has completed FEMA training (IS-00800.b National Response Framework, An Introduction) course. Request was made to send Mr. McKeon a note of congratulations.
- Request from PVPC on a City/Town-Owner Agreement for housing rehab projects in Wheelwright. (Chairman to sign). Motion to have chair sign; made by Mr. Lavash; second: Mr. Nardi – unanimous.
- Voice message left in BOS office from a resident of Old Douglas Road requesting the Highway Department to pick up a sofa on Old Douglas Road. Information was forwarded to Highway Department on 1-15-15 and was removed and is now at the barn. Noted
- Email from Tom Boudreau regarding a proposed reconstruction of Brimfield Road, Maple Street and Southbridge Road. Mr. Boudreau is looking for the Board's support to move forward pending cost and eligibility through the TIP Program. Board will send a letter of support to CMRPO to further the cause.
- Email from Chief Spiewakowski asking the Board to have the Town Hall Remediation Committee consider adding a pest control program to include birds and bats as part of its recent pest intervention; following the discovery of both at the Town Hall. Request was made to follow up with Town accountant.

SENIOR ABATEMENT PROGRAM 2015

Motion to accept 12 applicants to the 2015 program; made by Mr. Lavash; second: Mr. Nardi – unanimous.

TREASURY WARRANT(S) AND INVOICES

Motion to accept warrants # 60 (payroll) and # 61 (vendor) dated January 19, 2015 in the amounts of \$33,677.02 and \$ 50,325.93 respectively was made by Mr. Nardi; Second: Mr. Lavash – unanimous.

Motion to sign and approve PVPC invoice #1 for FY 2014 Warren Community Assistance Program in the amount of \$4,616.29 was made by Mr. Nardi; second: Mr. Lavash – unanimous.

OTHER BUSINESS

CMRPC – Freight Rail Study – Support Letter

A motion to authorize the Chairman to sign was made by Mr. Nardi; second: Mr. Lavash – unanimous

Mr. Delanski remarked he had received a complaint that a town owned vehicle may not be in compliance with applicable RMV regulations. There was a consensus of the Board to send a request to have a memo sent to all department heads that oversee town owned vehicles to check they are in full compliance.

Mr. Nardi announced that on Thursday, February 5th at 6:00 PM the Board would host an informational meeting for residents to answer questions on the articles for the upcoming Special Town Meeting. The meeting will be in the Selectmen’s meeting room; but can be moved to the Gym if necessary.

Mr. Delanski asked that a Congratulations note be sent to Ms. Britney Herring for achieving 1000 points in Basketball while playing at Quaboag High School. All were in agreement.

NEXT MEETING DATE:

Next scheduled meeting: Tuesday, January 27, 2015 at 7:00 PM

Motion to Adjourn made by Mr. Lavash; Second: Mr. Nardi – unanimous at 8:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Lorena Prokop
Administrative Secretary

Dario F. Nardi, Clerk