

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
MINUTES  
August 2, 2010  
Slade Building**

**Members present:** Matt Castriotta, Chair  
Ernest Newcomb, Clerk

**Member absent:** Michael Stauder, Vice Chair

**Staff present:** Debra Roussel, Town Administrator; Jim Dunbar, Treasurer, Assessors John Prentiss and Kurt Leslie

**Others present:** Tom Howlett, Kellianne Becker, Michael Foley, Jean Paul Salamanca, Gardner News Reporter

Meeting commenced at 6:02 PM

Mr. Newcomb invoked the Rule of Necessity to allow the Board to obtain a quorum, noting his conflict as an employee of the Highway Department as the payroll would be included in the warrant.

<b>Warrant# 4</b>
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**Motion:** E. Newcomb

**2<sup>nd</sup>:** M. Castriotta

**To approve Warrant #4 in the amount of \$161,408.23**

**Vote:** All in Favor

Mr. Dunbar presented a report of Hubbardston properties currently in tax title and copies of Chapter 5 of *Treasurers' Manual, Tax Title & Foreclosures* published by The Massachusetts Collector and Treasurer's Association. He noted several properties (43) listed under Plan 12W on the report are located in the Pinecrest Subdivision. He stated Walter Ducharme, a former member of the Board of Directors for the Pinecrest Property Owners' Association, has a copy of the tax title report and has been contacting property owners that about the affected Pinecrest properties to see if they are interested in purchasing them. Mr. Ducharme has not encountered much success. Mr. Castriotta asked if the Pinecrest Property Homeowners Association was interested in buying all of them. Ms. Roussel stated she had asked Mr. Ducharme and he indicated they were not. Mr. Dunbar described the tax title process; the Tax Collector places the property into tax title and a lien is placed on the property and is recorded at the Registry of Deeds to secure back taxes are paid. Liens are then transferred to the Treasurer as an asset eliminating the outstanding liability to the Town. The interest rate increases from fourteen (14) percent to sixteen (16) percent until the taxes are paid or the property is foreclosed. The Town must wait a minimum of six (6) months before beginning foreclosure on the property. The foreclosure process can take up to two (2) years to go through Land Court. Another option is called land of low value, if the property is valued under \$25,000 and it is a more accelerated process requiring Department of Revenue approval. Mr. Dunbar stated he would provide the list to the Assessors to supply the value of the properties, before proceeding to foreclosure and auction in the future.

Kellianne Becker presented on behalf of the Lion's Club. The Lions Club would like to run Bingo this year at Field Day. She presented the state lottery commission application for a one day license for the required approval of the Board of Selectmen. Bingo will be under the same tent as the eating area, they will charge for the bingo cards and Massachusetts gets five (5) percent of the profits. She stated the Lions' were also researching residents' interest on Field Day to pursue a one year license for Bingo.

**Motion: E. Newcomb**

**To approve the one day Bingo game license for Field Day, September 11, rain date September 12, 2010**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: M. Castriotta**

**Vote: All in Favor**

Ms. Becker thanked the Board and exited the meeting.

Michael Foley presented to request to be appointed to the Computer Advisory Committee.

**Motion: E. Newcomb**

**To appoint Michael Foley to the Computer Advisory Committee with a term to expire June 30, 2011**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: M. Castriotta**

**Vote: All in Favor**

**Minutes Approval**

**Motion: E. Newcomb**

**To approve minutes of June 21 and July 6, 2010 as written**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: M. Castriotta**

**Vote: All in Favor**

**Signatory Authority**

Ms. Roussel reported at a department head meeting with Acting Fire Chief Hayes, Police Chief Perron and Highway Superintendent Gauthier the topic of signatory authority was discussed. There are situations when the department head has immediate need to sign for a service, such as trash pickup at the Highway Garage. Ms. Roussel indicated the Board has the ability to grant authority to department heads, however recommended the Board review requests for signatory authority on a case by case basis for services under \$500.00.

**Motion: E. Newcomb**

**To send a memorandum to Department Heads that any contracts be submitted to the Board of Selectmen for approval**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: M. Castriotta**

**Vote: All in Favor**

Ms. Roussel reported the Finance Committee met recently and had received a bill for membership dues to the Massachusetts Finance Association. As they have no expense account, they requested the Board of Selectmen fund from their expense account as they had in previous years.

**Motion: E. Newcomb**

**To pay for MA Finance Association dues from Selectmen Expense Account #122-5200**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: M. Castriotta**

**Vote: All in Favor**

**Appointments:**

Wiring Inspector Darrell Sweeney has requested Eric Ring be appointed as Assistant Wiring Inspector to cover for vacations and other necessary times. His resume was presented to the Board for review.

**Motion: E. Newcomb**

**To appoint Eric Ring as Assistant Wiring Inspector with term to expire June 30, 2011**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: M. Castriotta**

**Vote: All in Favor**

**Motion: E. Newcomb**

**To appoint Acting Chief Robert Hayes to ad hoc Health Insurance Committee with term to expire June 30, 2011**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: M. Castriotta**

**Vote: All in Favor**

**Permanent Part-time Vacation Policy**

Ms. Roussel requested further clarification on the policy regarding eligibility for vacation for permanent part-time employees hired after the adoption of the policy. Her recollection was to award credit for prior years' service for those permanent part-time employees with a weekly schedule as of that date. The Board confirmed the policy was not intended to apply to on call or temporary employees.

**Motion: E. Newcomb**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: M. Castriotta**

To clarify the vacation policy regarding permanent part-time employees that any personnel hired after the adoption of the initial policy must accrue the benefit, working for one year before receiving vacation benefits

**Vote: All in Favor**

**Declaration of surplus equipment**

Ms. Roussel presented a list submitted by the Board of Assessors, Town Clerk and Tax Collector of equipment to be declared surplus:

- 2) Dell computer monitors
- (1) Starlogic computer monitor
- (3) Executone phones
- (1) Executone telephone box
- (1) Cannon printer MP830
- (1) Cannon printer MP780
- (1) Blue office chair

**Motion: E. Newcomb**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: M. Castriotta**

To declare the list as presented as surplus property

**Vote: All in Favor**

**Capital Expenditure Exclusion Question**

Ms. Roussel reported on the recommendation of Town Counsel the Board needed to rescind or amend their previous vote regarding the wording on the capital expenditure exclusion vote as approval needs to be for the actual expense not the borrowing to fund the expense.

**Motion: E. Newcomb**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: M. Castriotta**

To rescind the previous vote taken and replace it with the following;

**Question 1: Shall the Town of Hubbardston be allowed to assess an additional \$90,649.37 in real estate and personal property taxes for the purpose of funding clean up of the December 2008 ice storm for the fiscal year beginning July 1<sup>st</sup>, Two Thousand and Ten?**

**Vote: All in Favor**

Ms. Roussel reported there was a walkthrough of the Library Building by prospective bidders for design services on last Friday. The Board will need to appoint a committee to review the proposals once received.

**Municipal Relief Bill:** Ms. Roussel reported on certain aspects of the bill. One provides extension of retirement payback as well as early retirement incentive but only if the position retiring is not going to be restored.

**Second Shift Class II License**

Ms. Roussel reported Mr. LaJoie has not renewed his license to date. The Building Commissioner has sent Mr. LaJoie a letter asking him to come into compliance to the conditions of the license. Ms. Roussel stated it is her belief that Mr. LaJoie cannot request an extension as the license expired June 30, 2010. Mr. LaJoie will need to reapply for a new Class II license. The insurance bond is still in effect. She has asked Town Counsel for guidance but has not heard back to date.

**Board of Assessors**

Assessors John Prentiss and Kurt Leslie appeared tonight in regards to Albert Afonso's request to be appointed as an Assessor. Mr. Afonso served on the Ludlow Zoning Board of Appeals from 1978- 1982 and has sold real estate for Century 21.

**Motion: E. Newcomb**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: M. Castriotta**

To mutually elect in accordance with MGL Ch. 41, sec. 11, Albert Afonso as Assessor with term to expire at the 2011 annual election

**Vote: Mr. Castriotta- yes, Mr. Newcomb- yes, Mr. Prentiss- yes, Mr. Leslie- yes**

Ms. Roussel inquired if anyone had checked with the Department of Revenue as to requirements for taking the Assessor Certification Course. Mr. Prentiss stated he believed new Assessors had one year to take the course. Ms. Roussel explained there had been confusion in the request for increasing the Assessors Clerk hours and requested the Board amend their previous vote from 21 to 24 hours.

**Motion: E. Newcomb**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: M. Castriotta**

**To amend the previous vote for the Assessors Clerk hours from 21 to 24 per week**

**Vote: All in Favor**

Ms. Roussel stated Regional Resource Group, Inc. has submitted a response to the request for proposal for assessing services. She stated RRG has met all the minimum requirements and have exceeded expectations on all the grading requirements. As Chief Procurement Officer, Ms. Roussel recommended the Assessors award the contract to RRG, Inc., contingent on appropriation of funding at town meeting. She clarified the funding for the Assessor Clerk's additional hours will have to be transferred as well. Ms. Roussel reported she has spoken with the Department of Revenue after Town Accountant Chick expressed concerned due to the absence of a budget line in place to fund the contract and DOR confirmed The Town cannot incur liabilities without a funding source. Ms. Roussel stated Harold Scheid of RRG, Inc. is comfortable with accepting the award contingent on town meeting approval. Mr. Prentiss stated they are doing a great job and are very thorough but would like to meet with Mr. Scheid to clarify who is providing the Visions services before awarding. The only additional fees over the base price being are for performing cyclical property inspections every nine years. Mr. Prentiss said that was completed last year so will not be coming up in the near future. The Assessors exited the meeting.

#### **Center School Water Tank**

Ms. Roussel reported there was only one bidder for the repair despite repeatedly contacting other companies. The price was renegotiated by removing some of the services. The agreement reads as described in the contractor's proposal dated January 1, 2010, excluding any work related to exterior surfaces, to be performed by Quabbin District facility maintenance department. Ms. Roussel reported she had spoken with Town Counsel today as to the legality of the amendment and based on the emergency need and public safety issue, the change is permissible. She presented a signed faxed copy stating the original is in the mail.

**Motion: E. Newcomb**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: M. Castriotta**

**To award the contract to Limmerick Steeplejacks, Inc. of Limmerick, ME for cleaning and coating the Center School 800 gallon underground water tank in the amount of \$12,900.00 contingent upon receipt of the original contract and certificates of insurance**

**Vote: All in Favor**

#### **Other Business:**

Ms. Roussel presented the United States Census Bureau 2010 Boundary Validation form. The Assessors have verified the boundary maps are accurate.

**Motion: E. Newcomb**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: M. Castriotta**

**To authorize Chair Castriotta to sign the 2010 Boundary Validation Program form**

**Vote: All in Favor**

Ms. Roussel reported MEMA has approved the final submission for reimbursement of \$567.00 related to the cemetery cleanup from the 2008 Ice Storm. The total amount to be placed on the override question will be \$90,649.37.

The Slade Building contractor, P & P, said the bricks should be in within a week or two. The electrician has installed the exterior lights and an outdoor electrical plug. The only holdup may be that the bricklayers will need water for mortaring the bricks. The water may be shut off, but the Fire Department

has a mobile "water buffalo" tank that they will bring down for using water to flush toilets and other uses. Ms. Roussel is still waiting for confirmation from the Board of Health that offices can remain open to the public. Ms. Roussel will provide bottled water for the affected town buildings.

Ms. Roussel reported she has prepared the Request for Proposals for legal services and requested the Board review before advertising. She stated Joel Bard of Kopelman & Paige, PC has requested to provide a litigation status report in Executive Session and further discuss how K & P can aid the Town to manage the legal bills. The Board requested Mr. Bard be invited to the August 16 meeting.

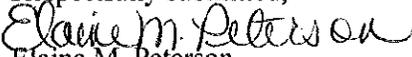
Ms. Roussel stated she had previously suggested the Chairs of the Board of Selectmen, Capital Planning and Finance Committee form the agenda for the triboard meeting. She reported two recommendations from the DOR Financial Management Review were to consider a recurring capital source for funding and to adopt an official budget calendar and process. Ms. Roussel would like to make recommendations regarding those two suggestions prior to the triboard meeting for discussion. A date has not been scheduled yet for that meeting.

Mr. Castriotta reported he would be meeting informally at the end of the week with Barre Cable Committee member Rick Paula regarding purchasing peg access and recording equipment for the Town. He will also be approaching business owner Kraig Kaijala regarding his previous offer to donate a folding backdrop for use while recording Board meetings.

Ms. Roussel reported the Senior Center Committee recently visited some potential sites for the future Senior Center. They were 1 and 11 Main Street. She stated there is an opportunity through the CDBG grant to purchase property for a Senior Center. There may be a need to talk to abutters to the back property at 11 Main Street in regard to a water protection zone for public drinking water.

**Motion: E Newcomb  
To adjourn at 7:10 pm**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: M. Castriotta  
Vote: All in Favor**

Respectfully submitted,  
  
Elaine M. Peterson  
Town Secretary

Approved: November 8, 2010