

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MINUTES
NOVEMBER 19, 2012
Slade Building**

Members present: Michael Stauder, Chairman
Matthew Castriotta, Vice Chairman
Christopher Norcross, Clerk

Staff present: Brian Bullock, Town Administrator; Elaine Peterson, Town Secretary; Police Chief Dennis Perron; Highway Superintendent Lyn Gauthier

Others present: Representative Anne Gobi, Tom Howlett, Alan Rawle, Wendy Howes, Ed Blanchard, Gary Kellaher

Meeting was called to order at 6:38 p.m.

Police Department

Chief Perron presented to request the Board accept the resignation of Patrolman Fagundes, effective on December 30, 2012 and Part-time Officer Thomas Perry effective immediately.

Motion: M. Castriotta **2nd: C. Norcross**
To accept the resignations of Robert Fagundes effective December 30, 2012 and Thomas Perry effective November 19, 2012 **Vote: All in Favor**

Motion: M. Castriotta **2nd: C. Norcross**
To authorize hiring Kori Stuart at \$14.25 per hour at 19 hours per week effective November 20, 2012 **Vote: All in Favor**

Motion: M. Castriotta **2nd: C. Norcross**
To authorize Chief Perron to begin the hiring process for both part-time and full-time officers **Vote: All in Favor**

He reported the wage account to pay her would be short at the end of the year due to paying out vacation time taken by the outgoing police department clerk and overlapped training. Chief Perron presented an updated job description for the Police Department Administrative Assistant for the Board to review and approve. Mr. Stauder stated he had a problem authorizing an increase to 20 hours in the next fiscal year that would possibly incur an additional expense of \$15,000 for health insurance benefits. Chief Perron stated attracting and retaining part-time help at that rate of pay and no benefits would be difficult. Mr. Castriotta stated the original hours for that position was not 20 hours. Chief Perron agreed but stated the hours are now needed. Chief Perron thanked the Board and exited the meeting.

Representative Anne Gobi came in to make a courtesy call and say "Hello" to the Board as the transition of district coverage occurs in January 2013. She stated it will be a pretty busy year especially on the federal level and the Governor possibly instituting some 9C cuts as in the past.

She believed we were in for a tough budget year. Mr. Stauder asked if there was any news on the Quabbin budget situation. Ms. Gobi said she attended the meeting with Dept. of Education Jeff Wulfson's office. She did not believe Hubbardston would see much change from the last version. Representative Gobi thanked the Board and exited the meeting.

Open Agenda:

Wendy Howes presented herself as a wildlife advocate and nature lover. Ms. Howes was concerned about the timing of the first hay cutting at Mt. Jefferson Conservation Area and the nesting habits of the bobolinks. Ms. Howes was here to request adding an amendment to the Hay Management Plan for the Mt. Jefferson Conservation Area town hay fields. She stated she has approached the Open Space Committee and the Conservation Commission and was now coming to the Board. Her proposed amendment was to add a final phrase to existing paragraph four on the hay management plan to read "The objective of the plan is to have each field restored....to enhance the beauty of the fields and ensure adequate ground cover protection for wildlife, **including nesting grassland birds.**" On page 2, under USE OF THE FIELDS, add the following paragraph: **First cutting in all fields except Field 4 and the Malone Road field shall be between July 20 (to allow for successful nesting of grassland birds) and August 20 (to prevent excessive encroachment of brush in to the field). In the unexpected event the bobolinks are determined to be colonizing Field 4 or the Malone Road fields, these fields will also be designated as delayed-cut fields.** Another bird that is in trouble in the state is the meadowlark.

She added she contacted DCR and asked if they had any objections to the amendment and they did not. Ms. Howes stated she also contacted the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs and they thought it was a fine tradeoff. Mr. Bullock requested a copy of the contract. Mr. Stauder stated he wanted to consult with a naturalist at Wachusett Meadow.

Ms. Howes presented comments from the Open Space Chair to illustrate the Chair's arguments as to why she did not want to delay the hay cutting. The Board said they would take her suggestions under advisement and ask her to come back in a month.

She also questioned the composition of the Conservation Commission and their involvement with the conservation area as well pointing out one Community Preservation Committee as one member at large is another Open Space Committee member and the definition of member of large is generally defined as "representing interests of the entire community." Ms. Howes also pointed out possible conflict of issues as in January 2012 the member at large of the CPC is also an active Open Space member and presented an application for funding of an Open Space Committee project at Malone Road.

Ms. Howes added that there is supposed to be a conservation restriction on the Malone Road property due to it being purchased with CPA funding and there is not one presently. This was confirmed by the MA Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs in an email presented by Ms. Howes. The Board thanked her for her information and asked Ms. Peterson to coordinate an agenda slot for December 17th.

Appointment Request: Ms. Peterson reported Ms. Howes has requested to be appointed to the Low Impact Development Bylaw Committee as a member at large.

Motion: C. Norcross

To appoint Wendy Howes to the LID Bylaw Committee with a term to expire June 30, 2013

2nd: M. Castriotta

Vote: All in Favor

Highway Superintendent Lyn Gauthier came forward with Rutland DPW Director Gary Kellaheer to discuss regionalizing on a joint bucket truck purchase through a Community Innovation Challenge Grant (CICG). This is a regional forestry maintenance grant with the Rutland as the lead community. Other participating entities are Oakham, Barre, Paxton, and (possibly) Hubbardston. Grant funds would be used for purchase of the bucket truck and any and all available training for the operators. Each community involved would place an amount of money, to be determined on an annual basis, for any upkeep and repair issues into a line item account or escrow. Mr. Kellaheer estimated \$1,000.00 per year for three years from the five towns could establish a threshold of \$15,000 for the maintenance and repair. The Town of Rutland would be responsible for service delivery and member communities would meet to decide scheduling, planning and emergency assignments. The projected amount to purchase the necessary equipment, bucket truck is \$183,395.00. The deadline for application is November 30, 2012.

Motion: M. Castriotta

2nd: C. Norcross

To authorize the Chair to sign the Community Innovation Challenge grant application

Vote: All in Favor

Mr. Bullock will forward a letter of support tomorrow. Mr. Gauthier thanked Mr. Kellaheer for spearheading the collaboration. There is also the possibility of joint use of a fully stocked emergency trailer for cleanup. Mr. Kellaheer thanked the Board and exited the meeting.

Agreements for Plowing Mile & Streeter Roads

Ms. Peterson presented the agreements with Grass Hopper Yard Grooming for plowing and sanding of Streeter and Mile Road. Mr. Stauder reported he had spoken with some Streeter Road residents concerning the road not being in condition to be plowed. They had wondered if the Town could be paid by the street residents to get the road in plowable condition. Mr. Gauthier stated the Highway Department is not supposed to do any work on a private road. Mr. Bullock stated he had never been involved where the town was the contractor. Usually the residents need to contract a private contractor. Mr. Stauder suggested taking over the road and leaving it as a dirt road. Mr. Bullock reported normally you want the roads to be brought up to subdivision standard (with drainage etc.) before accepting them. Mr. Castriotta suggested placing betterments on the road to bring it up to subdivision standard. Discussion suggested the residents might not all be in agreement. Mr. Bullock was asked to contact Amy Stevens to ask the residents in for further discussion. The Board members signed the contracts that had previously been approved at the November 5, 2012 meeting.

A wage authorization to hire a truck driver/laborer was presented next.

Motion: M. Castriotta

2nd: C. Norcross

To hire Alan Barrett with a wage authorization of \$16.47 per hour effective November 19, 2012

Vote: All in Favor

Mr. Gauthier thanked the Board and exited the meeting.

Letter to Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School District:

Mr. Bullock reported he inquired at a staff meeting if there was a need for assistance from Montachusett Regional for any projects in the Town. Two items had come to his attention: Replacing the entry door in the Senior Center and IT skills to order and install equipment for cable broadcasting. He had composed a letter in case of approval.

Motion: M. Castriotta

To authorize the Chair to sign the letter

2nd: C. Norcross
Vote: All in Favor

Minutes Approved:

Motion: M. Castriotta

To approve the minutes of October 9, 2012 as submitted

Vote: Mr. Castriotta- yes, Mr. Norcross- yes, Mr. Stauder- abstain

Motion: C. Norcross

To approve the minutes of October 22 and November 5, 2012 as submitted

Vote: Mr. Castriotta- abstain Mr. Norcross- yes, Mr. Stauder- yes

2nd: C. Norcross

2nd: M. Stauder

Ms. Peterson reported minutes had been sent by the Quabbin school district towns from November 8th. The group has named themselves **Quabbin District Coalition** going forward. The group will focus on common ground issues affecting the Quabbin member towns. Clair Hendra will serve as the group's point of contact and provide administrative support. The group had also sent a letter requesting each town send a letter to their state representative and senator to ask them to attend the meetings between the Department of Education Deputy Commissioner and Quabbin Regional School District through the budget settlement process. The Board took no action.

Town Administrator Screening Committee/DPW Director Position

The Board discussed the composition of the new town administrator screening committee. Mr. Bullock recommended having a human resource person on the committee. The Board agreed and recommended contacting Susan Benedict to see if she would participate. She had previously chaired the personnel board. The Board requested Mr. Bullock check with consulting agencies also. It was decided that there will be five government members and four non-government members.

Discussion turned to hiring the DPW Director. Mr. Castriotta questioned whether it was prudent to hire a DPW Director before the Board hires the Town Administrator, stating the TA would be directly supervising the DPW Director. Mr. Stauder stated this Board is the ultimate supervisor. Mr. Castriotta countered the TA would be the direct supervisor and should be able to recruit and hire that staff person. Mr. Stauder stated ultimately it is whoever the Board likes and should still go out for the DPW Director. Mr. Bullock will have the job description for the DPW Director tomorrow.

Mr. Blanchard reported he had met with the Town of Ashburnham and presented their classification plan and market averages for compensation. Job descriptions were available if needed.

Municipal Finance Clerk Position finalized:

Mr. Bullock reported he had interviewed all three applicants for the position and recommended splitting the position into two (4) hour positions with one clerk working for the Accountant and the other clerk working for the Treasurer.

Motion: C. Norcross

2nd: M. Castriotta

To approve hiring Marcia Howlett with a wage authorization of \$13.75 per hour for four hours per week and Elaine Peterson with a wage authorization of \$16.01 per hour for four hours per week as Municipal Finance Clerks effective November 19, 2012

Vote: All in Favor

The Board preferred to schedule an exit interview with Ms. Chick in December.

Mr. Blanchard asked if there was any update on the Phillips dog case. Mr. Bullock will follow up tomorrow.

Warrant #11

Motion: C. Norcross

2nd: M. Castriotta

To approve Warrant #11 in the amount of \$140,395.14

Vote: All in Favor

Motion: C. Norcross

2nd: M. Castriotta

To adjourn the meeting at 8:10 PM

Vote: All in Favor

Respectfully submitted,



Elaine M. Peterson

Town Secretary

Approved: December 17, 2012.