

Approved 3-0

**SELECT BOARD MINUTES - May 11, 2011**

**Present:** Select Board - Doug Field, Paulette Leukhardt, Norm Russell  
Executive Assistant - Mary Fitz-Gibbon

Meeting called to order at 7:00 PM. Russell said that when he ran for office he said he wanted Town Hall to become a friendlier place. He thinks it has. Welcome!!

**Minutes:** Minutes of 5/4/11 will be reviewed next meeting.

**Re-organize:** The first order of business was to reorganize the Board. Mr. Field made a motion, seconded by Ms. Leukhardt, and voted, that Mr. Russell serve as Chair of the Board.

Liasion positions were established:

- Russell - Town Office, and Town Hall Building Committee;
- Leukhardt - Personnel Board, Police and Fire departments;
- Field - Highway, Emergency Manager, and other Committees

**Other items:** Ms. Leukhardt said she'd like to sit in on the next payroll sessions to understand how it's done. Ms. Fitz-Gibbon, serving as Executive Assistant, plans to join her. At some point the Executive Administrator position will be advertized. Ms. Fitz-Gibbon will work on a job description for the position. The Select Board will need to appoint someone to represent them at the FRCOG.

**Appointments:**

**Assessors:** Present: Mark Graves, Sandra Lilly,  
Wayne Gardner was present but did not participate.

Ms. Lilly commented about poor communications between the Assessors, Finance Committee and the Board, which was later refuted by Dave DeHerdt. He wished state for the record that the Select Board did invite the Assessors to meetings that were declined by the Assessors.

The purpose of this visit was to announce that Faye Whitney, the Assessors' Clerk, has unexpectedly resigned to take advantage of an opportunity that has come her way. She is willing to continue working two hours per week, on a contract basis (@ \$ 2,000), leaving a second ten hour per week position to be filled. The position will be advertized immediately in a local paper and on the Town's website with the goal of filling the position as soon as possible. Questions were asked about the need for splitting the position. Mr. Graves said that previously, this has been a difficult position to fill, possibly it would be different this time.

A discussion about the position was held. Ms. Leukhardt suggested that the application include a listing of skills currently performed by Whitney that would be considered a plus for the applicant. Russell reminded that once the Assessors have decided upon the person to be hired, the Select Board is required by law to officially make the appointment. A question that arose was whether the 2 hr/week contracted position which Whitney was willing to take had to be posted. It was thought that it probably did not, as the fee was small enough by procurement regulations not to require quotes.

Later in the meeting during public comment time Suzanne Corbett said she didn't understand how one could resign from only part of his/her position. She called what seemed to be happening a shell game.



Russell said she hasn't officially resigned, as the Select Board has not received a resignation to accept. DeHerdt said a similar situation occurred when Tom Cranston, an elected Assessor, resigned then tried to come back as a consultant. The state said you can't do that. In this case Whitney is an employee. This proposal should be passed by town Council. Another question that was raised involved the logic of the idea that somehow when finding a person to fill the position was difficult at one rate, it would somehow be easier to find a person willing to take the same position at a lower rate.

**Sewer Commission:** Present: Plant operator- Betty Nichols, Commissioners – Todd Olanyk, Nancy Hoff  
On eleven days during the month of March the flow into the treatment plant exceeded its permitted limit. As a result, DEP has issued a Notice of Non Compliance and requested an Action Plan to prevent this from reoccurring. This is a problem that occurs annually during spring rains and snow melt. This year the problem was greater than usual (on 3/7 the flow was 63,000 gal) due heavier than usual rain and snow melt both coming at the same time. At this point there is no obvious solution. Sewer lines have been tested for possible places where water can get into the sewer lines. DEP has required an inflow/infiltration plan. Nichols has been going around doing inspections of basements. She has not found anything. She said the problem is mostly a springtime problem. Suzanne Corbett, former owner of the Ashfield House, talked about problems with runoff from the hillside roughly from Tom Carter's house to Norton Hill Road which is more than the two drainage holes installed by MASSHwy can handle. She had pointed this out to the engineers during the reconstruction of Main Street (a state road), to no avail.

Field asked what would happen if the Town didn't come up with a plan. Nichols answered by saying she'd heard the in good times DEP provides help; in bad times it fines. She is aware of fines of as much as \$25,000. She doesn't think the Town wants to go there.

A meeting will be held with Tom Poissant (Highway), Duncan Colter( BOH), Nancy Hoff (Sewer Comm.), and Doug Field (SB) at 1:PM on Tuesday at the plant to draw up a plan. The plan is due at DEP by the end of the month.

**Highway Department:** Present: Tom Poissant

Procurement quotes Poissant presented the quotes received through the FRCOG bidding process and discussed the items he wished to accept. There are additional items that can be purchased. A motion was made by Field, seconded by Leukhardt, and voted, to accept Poissant's recommendations for the procurement of highway supplies, including: magnesium chloride; EJ Prescot - double wall plastic culverts; Highway Safety Systems – center line painting, All States Asphalt – stone seal; and Lane Construction - bituminous concrete in place and other items as needed.

Grader Poissant reported that the 30 year old grader is down. The option to rebuild the rear end is difficult due to the unavailability of parts. By taking some parts to a machine shop and buying some bearings and seals he is hopeful the machine can be fixed enough to use, but for how long ??? The current plan is to try to repair it enough so that the scraping of roads can be completed.

Options such as renting are expensive(\$7,000/ month). Borrowing from other towns is a problem, as they're all using their graders now, too. The grader is used year round. In winter it has a plow and a wing for pushing snow banks back. Poissant thinks the Town is going to have to consider purchasing a new grader, which would be a \$275,000 investment. It was slated for replacement in 2015, but he thinks it will need to be done sooner.

Surplus equipment The Fire chief is the person who can put in requests for equipment. Mr. Poissant watches equipment listings as well. Del Haskins, Fire Chief, chanced to stop by a bit later and was asked for his assistance. He said he is looking.

**Transfer of funds:** A request has been submitted to the Finance Committee, but it hasn't been acted upon yet. This will be on the agenda next week. Mr. Russell will attend the Finance Committee meeting to answer any questions.

**Personnel matters:**

Sick pay buyout An agreement was made that everybody that had accrued sick time up to a certain point would be paid off and the policy terminated. Vacation time is capped at three weeks. Previously employees could accumulate sick and vacation time without limit. The total currently owed for sick and vacation time is \$20,735.85. The amount in hand is \$19,528.

Personnel Board - Ms. Fitz-Gibbon will check into the status of this board. She will figure out who the last members on that board are. The bylaw excludes employees from being on the board, so it would appear that Curt Pichette who is thought to be on the board and is an employee should not be. Dave DeHerdt is interested is serving on the committee.

Dry Hydrant Chief Haskins asked about the distance the Town owned past the center of roads. He plans to install a dry hydrant on Plainfield Road, and he wants to be sure its in the road's right-of-way. He will check with the Highway super.

**Police Department:** The chief sent a request to the Board for signing so that he can move forward with the "Click-it or Ticket" program. A motion was made by Field and seconded by Leukhardt to sign the requested form for the "Click-it or Ticket" program. The vote was unanimous. The authorized signature, which would be the Chief, needs to be notarized.

**Liaison Reports:**

Town Hall Building Project An estimate for moving the security system for the Police Department to the basement is approximately \$2,000.00 with a 2 yr. guarantee on parts and labor. Mary Quigley, who will oversee the project, is checking into all of the elements that are necessary to accomplish the move. Chief Droney has submitted a list of requirements that will be given to Quigley.

A check for \$35,000 has been received from the Housing Authority that will go into the Grant Program Income fund and is expected to be used in the Town Hall Rehab project.

**Mail:**

Franklin Tech. - A letter from the superintendent of Franklin Tech. wrote to advise then Town that three students were approved for entry to the school back in January, but the non-district approval form was inadvertently left out of the mailing. As a consequence the parents of the potential students did not complete and submit the forms in time to meet the April 15<sup>th</sup> deadline. This will need to be addressed.

FRTA - Notice of annual meeting.

Whiting Oil - Notice of insurance coverage at 412 Main Street.

Letter about E-mail moving to different server.

Mass Broadband fiber optic route map. It appears that the route doesn't go past the school on Cape Street. It seems to follow the power lines.

**Meeting dates:** The Board decided to continue meeting on Wednesdays at 7:00 PM.

**Public Comments:**

Dave DeHerdt spoke to correct the record on some Assessor's comments, as noted above.

Suzanne Corbett expressed confusion on the status of Faye Whitney , which is noted above. She also spoke of concern about attempts to limit who might know about available positions, in order that certain people have a better chance to apply for positions. She gave some examples of how this has been handled previously. When there had been a need for tree service all persons who could provide tree service were given an opportunity to provide information about the service they could provide and their pay requirements. The same thing has been done by the police department with regard to towing services. Several persons agreed openness is important.

A motion was made by Mr. Field that the Board go into executive session to discuss negotiations with a non union employee. The roll call vote was Field – y, Leukhardt –y, Russell - Y Russell announced that the Board will not reconvene in open session.

The meeting adjourned at 9:15 PM

Respectfully submitted,  
Priscilla Phelps