

SELECT BOARD MEETING

June 20, 2012

Present: Selectmen - Doug Field, Paullette Leukhardt, Ron Coler
Interim Executive Administrator - Mary Fitz-Gibbon

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 pm.

Mr. Field announced that to keep meetings from dragging on so late, exercising his role as Chair, he has decided that public comment and items not on the agenda will be kept for the end of the meeting.

Minutes: A motion was made by Mr. Coler to accept the minutes of May 16, 2012. The motion was seconded by Ms. Leukhardt for purposes of discussion. Ms. Leukhardt wished to include an addendum to the minutes to include a statement that she received a lot of documents from Jim Hawkins (FCCIP) and that she has them in her possession. Mr. Coler said he accepted the addendum to the motion, provided that information could be extracted from the tapes. Ms. Leukhardt seemed to consider this a challenge to her integrity. She loudly proclaimed her distress. It was a heated discussion; Ms. Leukhardt continued. Mr. Coler said he was sorry, but he really didn't remember. Although Mr. Coler said he was "ok" with the motion, Ms. Leukhardt wasn't. There was no recordable vote. This set of minutes will be revisited.

Minutes of the May 30, 2012 meeting were discussed. Mr. Coler commented on a misspelling of his name. Ms. Leukhardt questioned the various ways that her name appeared (P Leukhardt, PL, sometimes Paullette Leukhardt); she thought it should be consistent. **A motion was made by Ms. Leukhardt, seconded by Mr. Coler, and voted, to accept the minutes of Wednesday, May 30, 2012.**

Appointments: Present: Ben Tobin

Mr. Tobin requested permission to use Town Hall on July 17th for a few hours in the afternoon to take pictures and talk with people in regard to the Ashfield Film Festival. The steward has been consulted and said as it is not an event for the public no application would be necessary. **A motion was made by Mr. Coler, seconded by Ms. Leukhardt, and unanimously voted to approve this use.**

Old Business

FRCOG – Inspector Program FY13 Contract

Mr. Field said the proposed contract has been reviewed by Town Counsel with a requested second review by Kopelman and Paige. The few suggested changes have been included in the contract currently before the Board. Ms. Leukhardt said she would like to double check the document before the Board voted. The Board will vote and sign at its meeting on June 25th. Mr. Coler would like the Town to take advantage of the pro-bono training program to use the on-line application process. He also said he would be interested in serving on the Inspector Program Advisory Board. Currently, there is no Ashfield representative. Mr. Field asked Mr. Coler to draft a letter to accompany the signed contract.

Senior Center - Mr. Field, the Select Board representative for Ashfield, explained the latest round of changes in the draft agreement for a West County Senior consortium. The selectmen from Ashfield, Buckland (Kevin Fox), and Shelburne (Joe Judd) will eventually sign an agreement regarding the financial arrangement for the center. As it stands now, Shelburne will continue to serve as the fiscal agent. There

will be a Board of Directors composed of three Council of Aging persons from each member town. All that is being requested of the Town at this time is approval of the draft agreement. **A motion was made by Ms. Leukhardt, seconded by Mr. Coler, and voted, to participate in an agreement among the towns of Ashfield, Buckland, and Shelburne with respect to the proposed agreement before us.**

FY12 Expense Report Review – The following were noted:

- 1.) Ms. Leukhardt questioned the Administrator's salary. It was her impression that the wage was hourly, not salary, i.e. number of hours @ an hourly rate. She said the money appears to be insufficient to cover the last pay period.
- 2.) The Conservation Commission needs to turn in a voucher to pay a \$41.22 obligation.
- 3.) There is an adjustment for street lights.
- 4.) Some town employees were not paid. (see new business)

New Business

Payroll issues –

1. Non-payment of police payroll - Ms. Leukhardt reported that in talking with the Chief she learned that the officers were not being paid for the most recent pay period. There was not enough money in the police payroll budget to cover the expense. The officers and the Chief had gone to the Treasurer and said they would wait for the next pay period to be paid for work already performed, which is why the Treasurer made the decision she did. Ms. Leukhardt, upon learning this, contacted Town Council to discuss the situation. Council said pay the employees, then find a way to cover the shortfall. A suggestion was made that the Board should take a more proactive stance, by providing guidance to the Treasurer when they see what is happening.
2. The second concern had to do with when the warrants, in particular payroll warrants, are signed. The practice has been that Board members come by the office on Monday to sign warrants in order that payroll can get to the payroll service in time for checks to be available on payday. The suggestion had been made that the Board change its meeting night to Monday. Mr. Field has spoken to several former Selectmen who said they followed the procedure currently practiced. He suggested that the practice of viewing the warrant on Monday continue; however, the actual signing would be delayed until Wednesday so that it can be done publicly at a board meeting. If there is a problem with payroll, it can always be corrected next time.

Open Meeting violation deadline – Mr. Field said he would like to move the next meeting to June 25th to respond to the two alleged violations filed by Ms. Corbett. At that meeting the Board can discuss its response in an open meeting. The response can be prepared that evening, meeting the June 26th deadline.

Liaison Reports: Police Department – The new cruiser is coming. A picture of it shows the lettering, some of which is only visible after dark. Mr. Coler has lined up a couple of desks that the Chief might be interested in.

Fire Department – The department is working on a grant. Ms. Leukhardt suggested getting a letter of support. The application has to be electronically submitted by 5:30 pm on July 12th. Mr. Field thought letters to our legislators requesting support would be appropriate.

Town Hall Committee – Mr. Coler met with the committee but had nothing to report.

Highway Department – Chapter 90 money hasn't been approved by the legislature yet.

Memo regarding liaisons – Mr. Field read a draft memo prepared by Mr. Coler to the various committees, explaining that Board members would serve as liaisons to some departments. Other boards and committees without Board liaisons should plan to meet with the Board twice a year, once in the fall and again during budget season. Members will discuss this further at the next meeting.

Executive Session – Mr. Field reported that the Board will hold an executive session on Thursday, June 28, 2012 to meet with MIIA representatives and MIIA contracted lawyers regarding on-going litigation. He plans to ask what can be made public.

E-mail from Suzanne Corbett – Mr. Field reported that an email was received from Ms. Corbett at 5:00 pm today. It contains a list of questions and requests for documents. It is the Board's intent to respond, however Mr. Field hopes Ms. Corbett understands that it is going to take some time to compile. He did not mention what was being requested.

The Board has been asked to look at the retaining wall at the Field Field where Sanderson Academy formerly stood. Mr. Coler said he would walk the wall and take pictures.

BOH: Present – Joanne Ostrowski

Ms. Ostrowski invited the Select Board to join the Board of Health at its meeting on June 26th to hear information from the Town of Deerfield regarding a piggery in that town. There is someone in Ashfield who wishes to have a piggery. Betty Stewart said the Agricultural Commission will also be involved. People familiar with the situation in Deerfield told of reported experiences there.

Public Comment:

Beverly Chow rose to request that the Chair have people who wish to speak stand and state their names. And also that they speak loud enough to be heard. It was suggested that there be a microphone in the audience area.

Deb Nicholson, resident of the Ashfield House, Main Street said the smoke alarm went off twice today. Carmen DeLuca took care of it. Mr. Field said heat in the little storage room where it was located would be enough to set it off. Ms. Nicholson said there were leaks in that area; maybe it was water damage causing the alarm to go off.

A motion was made, seconded, and voted to adjourn at 8:39 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Priscilla Phelps

Document List:

Senior Center Agreement Among the Towns of Ashfield, Buckland and Shelburne

Email Letter to Select Board from Suzanne Corbett, dated June 20, 2012; requesting review of nine potential conflict of interest issues

