

BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Minutes of December 14, 2015

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Al Letizio, Jr. called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. Selectmen Bruce Breton, Joel Desilets, Ross McLeod and Roger Hohenberger were present, as was Town Administrator David Sullivan. Mr. Letizio opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

NON-PUBLIC: Mr. Desilets moved and Mr. McLeod seconded to enter into nonpublic session in accordance with RSA 91-A:3 II a. Passed unanimously. Roll call vote all “yes”.

The Board, Mr. Sullivan, and Community Development Director Laura Scott were in attendance to discuss the vacant secretary position. Mr. Breton moved and Mr. Hohenberger seconded to hire the recommended candidate subject to completion of a successful background check. Passed unanimously.

PUBLIC SESSION: Mr. Letizio called the public session back to order by announcing that the Board had discussed hiring and that the recommendation of staff had been affirmed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/LIAISON REPORTS: Mr. Letizio advised that the Route 111 Beautification Committee is moving forward and hopes to bring Phase I of a plan to the Board shortly; which will include 4 “Welcome to Windham” signs and related plantings. Also, he advised that Mrs. Kathleen DiFruscia has submitted her resignation from the Committee due to a scheduling conflict, however, she will retain her membership on the Town Center Beautification Committee.

Mr. Desilets moved and Mr. McLeod seconded to accept Mrs. DiFruscia’s resignation with thanks and regrets. Passed unanimously.

Mr. Sullivan recommended that the Board appoint Recreation Coordinator Cheryl Haas to the Town Center Beautification Committee; noting she has been sitting in on each meeting.

Mr. Breton moved to appoint Ms. Haas as recommended. Mr. Hohenberger seconded. After brief discussion, motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Letizio advised that the EDC had met the previous Friday and reviewed a proposal from Mr. Tom Pritcher for parcels owned by him in the Village Center District. He indicated that the EDC had recommended that Mr. Pritcher also speak to the Town Center Committee.

EAGLE SCOUT PROJECT: The Board considered a proposal by Dan Rochford, Life Scout from Troop 263, to construct a 24’-25’ span bridge at the Rail Trail. Mr. Rochford advised that the Conservation Commission had okayed the project, and that the Building Inspector had advised he bring same to the Board.

Discussion ensued regarding the logistics of the project, which included the following:

- Bridge will be located approximately 100 yards in from the Roulston Road side, in the area of an existing bridge, and will cross a stream
- Will add access to other area trails
- Will be constructed of pressure treated 2x4 or similar, and foundations will be set below the frost line
- Design has been checked by a structural engineer for approximately 4 people at once

Mr. Hohenberger moved and Mr. Breton seconded to approve the project as presented. Passed 4-0-1, with Mr. McLeod abstaining due to concerns with the weight limit and the depth of the foundations as proposed. Further discussion ensued, it was clarified that Mr. Rochford still needs final approval from the Building Inspector.

LIBRARY TRUSTEES: Mr. Sullivan advised that the Trustees had requested to be removed from the agenda.

PERSONNEL POLICY: Mr. McLeod presented a proposed amendment to the Board relative to work hours; noting it was prompted by a recent change in the Community Development Department over which the Board had no say. He noted that policy affords no oversight of hours by the Board and, after speaking to Mr. Sullivan, he had drafted proposed language for a new section, as follows:

“Any proposed change or alteration of work hours and schedules that could result in reduced access by the general public shall be brought to the Board of Selectmen for their review, and shall require their approval; noting that in the interest of the general public’s access to Town services, they may approve a change or alteration of work hours and schedules different from that proposed.”

Mr. Hohenberger felt that any increase in hours should be approved by the Board, as it may entail a budgetary impact. Discussion ensued, and Mr. Sullivan noted language could be added that specifies if the increase impacts the budget.

Mr. Desilets extended thanks to Mr. McLeod for his work; adding it was a prudent action. He added it does not indicate a lack of trust in staff; rather he shares concerns regarding budget impacts as well as employee satisfaction. Mr. Desilets then noted that reduced hours can impact the public as well.

Discussion ensued regarding the most effective wording before Mr. Hohenberger moved and Mr. McLeod seconded to post for public hearing as proposed by Mr. McLeod, with additional language in reference to increased hours/budgetary impacts.

Mr. Breton suggested an amendment to “any proposed change shall be brought to the Board for review.” Discussion ensued, and Mr. Letizio indicated he would not support same as it delves too far into the weeds.

Motion passed as stated unanimously.

EARNED TIME DONATION POLICY: Captain Caron approached noting there is a staff member whose husband is very ill with cancer for whom she is the sole caretaker and that she has, to date, used most of her earned time. Captain Caron noted several employees approached him wanting to donate time to her; however, the current policy does not allow this. He requested the Board amend the policy to allow donation of earned time to employees in need under such circumstances, and to make same effective that evening.

After brief discussion, Mr. McLeod moved and Mr. Hohenberger seconded to approve posting of said amendment for posting, and to allow donations to be made immediately subject to approval.

Discussion ensued as to how the policy came about, and Mr. Sullivan noted that he and Captain Caron will craft language as an exception for serious, catastrophic illness involving immediately family.

Passed unanimously.

COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS: Mr. Sullivan noted that the Board had previously voted to add another citizen member to the Record Retention Committee, for which Mrs. DiFruscia had applied.

Mr. Hohenberger moved and several seconded to appoint Mrs. DiFruscia accordingly. Passed unanimously.

OLD/NEW BUSINESS: Mr. Sullivan advised that he had received inquiries as to whether the Board intended to file for Intervenor Status relative to the Kinder Morgan project. He clarified that doing so does not constitute taking a position; rather it just ensures the Town will receive all filings, etc.

Mr. McLeod inquired what costs would be involved in filing as such, and Mr. Sullivan replied it would be part of the flat rate charged by Counsel, if there were any costs involved.

After brief discussion, Mr. Desilets moved and Mr. McLeod seconded to file for Intervenor Status relative to the Kinder Morgan project. Passed unanimously.

CORRESPONDENCE: Request received to waive the deadline requirements relative to application for an elderly exemption; and to abate taxes paid. Mr. Hohenberger moved and Mr. McLeod seconded to grant the waiver as requested. Passed unanimously.

BUDGET WORKSHOPS: The Board reviewed the following proposed budgets for 2016:

Recreation – No questions/comments from the Board on the budget. Brief discussion relative to the proposed passive recreation area article, with no changes being made.

Library – No questions/comments from the Board. Director Carl Heidenblad acknowledged the passing of Jena Day in May; who had served as the Library's Finance Administrator for 17 years. Also, he advised that Terri Marietta had retired in August after 15 years; Lois Freeston after 28 years, and; Carolyn Shea would be leaving in the spring.

Town Clerk/Elections – Brief discussion regarding the increase to the number of election staff hours being due to the number of elections. No other questions/comments from the Board on the election budget.

Lengthy discussion ensued regarding the possibility of transitioning the Town Clerk from fee-based to salary. Mr. Sullivan made presentation to the Board of a proposal for same, developed after research of the various options and conversation with Town Clerk, Nicole Bottai.

Mr. Sullivan's recommendation was to place a warrant article to put the Town Clerk on salary with all fees then going to the Town. Proposal included:

- \$80,000/year salary
- Retirement, disability, COLA etc., benefits; for health, offer of either a single plan only or a stipend at the family plan level
- Fifteen days of earned time per year

Mr. Sullivan explained that, overall, cost for this would be \$120,000 annual, whereas if she stayed on fees, Mrs. Bottai would earn \$122,000.

Mr. McLeod raised concerns regarding RSA 31:19 and changing the structure mid-year, and Mr. Sullivan indicated he had spoken to Town Counsel who believes it is okay.

Mr. Breton expressed concerns regarding negotiation of same with a sitting Town Clerk. Mr. Sullivan clarified he did not negotiate with Mrs. Bottai; rather he was doing as tasked, which was to draft a proposal.

Mrs. Bottai indicated that she supported the concept of going to salary, which is discussed every year, and she is comfortable with Mr. Sullivan's proposal provided it is drawn up in writing. Discussion ensued regarding the option to bill for expenses instead as well as whether a family plan should be offered to Mrs. Bottai. As to the latter, Mr. Sullivan advised if the Town were to do that it might as well stay with the current structure.

After further discussion, Mr. Hohenberger moved and Mr. Desilets seconded to draft an article to place the Town Clerk on salary as presented. Passed 3-2, with Mr. McLeod and Mr. Breton opposed.

The Board then briefly discussed Mrs. Bottai's CIP request regarding records preservation, and concurred with same.

Tax Collector - No questions/comments from the Board.

Assessing - No questions/comments from the Board.

Historic - No questions/comments from the Board.

Cable Television – Brief discussion regarding implementation of live streaming, for which funds are available in the Special Cable Fund.

Searles - No questions/comments from the Board.

Conservation Commission - No questions/comments from the Board.

Information Technology – Brief discussion relative to telephones/system options and security system upgrades. No other questions/comments from the Board.

Mr. Sullivan then advised that the final budget hearing will be on the 21st , unless an additional evening is needed, and that he will amend and repost the documents on the One Drive for the members.

He then advised the Highway Agent has been contacted relative to the possible construction of a wash station to be funded by grant monies from four towns, including Windham. He indicated that doing so would mean giving up the new highway truck, and that Mr. McCartney will be in at the next meeting to discuss the logistics of same with the Board.

NON-PUBLIC: Mr. Desilets moved and Mr. McLeod seconded to enter into nonpublic session in accordance with RSA 91-A:3 II a and c. Passed unanimously. Roll call vote all “yes”.

The Board, Mr. Sullivan and Ms. Devlin were in attendance. Mr. Sullivan updated the Board on a reputations matter relative to disciplinary action. No decisions were made.

Mr. McLeod discussed a reputations matter relative to permitting with the Board. No decisions were made.

Mr. Sullivan reviewed a reputations matter with the Board relative to consulting. After some discussion regarding same, Mr. Sullivan withdrew the request.

Mr. Hohenberger moved and Mr. McLeod seconded to adjourn. Passed unanimously.

Meeting was adjourned at 10:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Wendi Devlin, Administrative Assistant

Note: These minutes are in draft form and have not been submitted to the Board for approval.