

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN**  
**Proctor School Library**  
**Minutes of January 12, 2015**

Chairman Dick Gandt called the meeting to order at 7:30PM. Board members present, in addition to Chairman Gandt, were Martha Morrison, Steve Lais (arrived at 8:05PM) and Laura Powers. Eldon Goodhue was absent. Of the Selectmen's staff, Town Administrator Kellie Hebert and Board Secretary Donna Rich were in attendance. Other persons present during all or part of the meeting were Topsfield Cable operators Baxter & Ben Demers, Tri-Town Transcript reporter Edith Leavengood, Fire Chief Ron Giovannacci and resident Boyd Jackson.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:** Chairman Gandt announced that the Board would go into Executive Session at the end of regular session to discuss strategy for negotiations with respect to collective bargaining with the Full Time Firefighters, Call Firefighters, AFSCME Highway/Water and Park & Cemetery unions and would not return to Open Session.

Selectman Morrison announced that the Topsfield Garden Club and the New Meadows Garden Club would hold a gardening EXPO on February 6<sup>th</sup>, 5-9PM at the Emerson Center.

Selectman Morrison announced that the Tree Planning Committee would hold a workshop on Saturday, March 7<sup>th</sup>, 9-11:30AM at the Town Library. Topics would include soils & soil preparation before you plant, Trees in Your Landscape, and Avoiding Tree Pests & other Tree Problems. Registration would be required.

Chairman Gandt announced that the Board had a Working Session on December 29<sup>th</sup> and the Board voted to approve two Chapter 90 reimbursement requests for a total of \$232,154.93 and approve the purchase of Road Salt for Fiscal 2015 in an amount of \$50,000, and reviewed FY16 Town budgets and completed the Performance Review of the Town Administrator.

Chairman Gandt reminded residents that the Census and Dog Licenses were now due to the Town Clerk's office. Also included in that mailing was a senior survey for those over the age of 60 to respond to.

Chairman Gandt announced that the Board would be holding Public Hearings on January 26<sup>th</sup> for two of the eight available Pouring Licenses: Willowdale Estate and The Commons.

Chairman Gandt announced that on January 7<sup>th</sup> in the late afternoon there was a pipe that burst at Town Hall on the second floor that affected the Treasurer/Collector office and hallway on the first floor. Selectman Morrison reported that it was most likely due to an 1873 window pane that fell out and amazingly did not shatter. Kudos were given to the employees for their swiftness at covering over the affected areas and contacting key companies to assist in the clean-up.

**CITIZENS QUESTIONS & COMMENTS** *none heard*

**GENERAL BUSINESS**

**Old Business**

**FY16 Budgets under the Selectmen:** Chairman Gandt briefly went through the following budgets: Animal Inspector, Board of Health, Conservation Commission, Council on Aging, Debt, Fire and Insurances.

**New Business**

**Communications Directed to the Selectmen:** Chairman Gandt led a discussion relative to the internal procedure for handling communications, such as volunteer applications and anonymous correspondence. The Board requested that all volunteer applications be emailed to the Board members, as well as the receiving Board, Commission or Committee. Three members of the

Board wished anonymous letters to be distributed to them once they have been received in the Selectmen's office, Selectmen Gandt, Lais and Morrison. Selectman Powers felt they should not be distributed and did not wish to receive them. Chairman Gandt agreed to document in an email the procedure for handling communications directed to selectmen.

Masconomet Regional High School Topsfield Scholarship: Selectman Morrison made a motion to approve two (2) \$400 Scholarships for Masconomet Regional High School seniors, seconded by Selectman Powers; so voted: 4-0. The number of scholarships has been reduced from the three last year due to lack of funds in the account.

Annual 2015 Warrant: Selectman Morrison made a motion to open the 2015 Annual Town Meeting Warrant and for it to close on February 23<sup>rd</sup>, seconded by Selectman Powers; so voted: 4-0.

Board of Health: Selectman Morrison made a motion to appoint Joe Collins to the Board of Health for a term to expire June 30, 2017, seconded by Selectman Powers; so voted: 4-0.

Tax Work Off Program Request: Selectman Powers made a motion to change the tax work off rate to \$9.00 per hour beginning in FY16 for both the veterans and the senior programs, seconded by Selectman Lais; so voted: 4-0.

Highway Contract Request: Selectman Powers made a motion to award a contract to MB Tractor & Equipment of Plaistow NH for a brush chipper in the amount of \$39,098, seconded by Selectman Lais; so voted: 4-0.

Town Hall & Library Telephone Systems: Selectman Morrison made a motion to award a contract for the Town Hall & Library Telecommunications Project to Voice Systems Inc, of Canton, MA in the amount of \$17,016.48 under the OSD Statewide Contract #ITT50, seconded by Selectman Lais; so voted: 4-0.

**Town Administrator's Report Included:**

- FY16 Budget update with Finance Committee, Finance Team, including the Capital Program.
- Town Hall Building Committee update provided, meeting every Wednesday, vendor presented their findings, Boyd Jackson was voted as chairman of the committee and Bill Fitch, vendor, would be providing a presentation to the Board in February.
- Voluntary Coalition for Health Insurance update provided, including the teachers and school committee signing of the document and that it would be before the Board at the next meeting.

**Minutes**

Selectman Morrison made a motion to accept the Minutes of September 22, 2014, as amended, seconded by Selectman Lais; so voted 4-0.

Selectman Powers made a motion to accept the Executive Session Minutes of September 22, 2014 as amended and to hold until all issues have been resolved, seconded by Selectman Morrison; so voted 4-0.

Selectman Morrison made a motion to accept the Minutes of October 20, 2013, as amended, seconded by Selectman Powers; so voted 4-0.

Selectman Morrison made a motion to accept the Minutes of November 3, 2014, as amended, seconded by Selectman Powers; so voted 4-0.

Selectman Morrison made a motion to accept the Executive Session Minutes of November 3, 2014 as written and to hold until all issues have been resolved, seconded by Selectman Powers; so voted 4-0.

Selectman Powers made a motion to accept the Minutes of November 17, 2014, as amended, seconded by Selectman Lais; so voted 4-0.

Selectman Morrison made a motion to accept the Executive Session Minutes of November 17, 2014 as written and to hold until all issues have been resolved, seconded by Selectman Powers; so voted 4-0.

## **Correspondence & Reports**

### Correspondence

Veteran Agent Dick Cullinan submitted a letter of thanks to the Board & the Fire Department for their support with the Wreaths Across America Program that was held on December 8<sup>th</sup>.

MIIA sent information regarding nominations for the Director position at MIIA.

Kopelman & Paige's full response to the Open Meeting Law complaint regarding the Personnel Advisory Committee was presented.

Governor Baker announced an increase in the Chapter 90 apportionment for FY15 which for Topsfield was amended from \$271,240 to \$406,860.

### Reports

Conservation Commission submitted a Monthly Report for December.

MassDOT submitted a Bridge Inspection report for the Salem Road bridge over the Ipswich River.

At 8:49 PM, Selectmen Powers made a motion to go into Executive Session to discuss negotiating strategies with respect to collective bargaining with the Full Time Firefighters, Call Firefighters, AFSCME Highway/Water & Park and Cemetery unions; seconded by Selectman Morrison. In a roll call vote, a yes vote was recorded for Chairman Gandt, Selectman Morrison, Selectman Lais, and Selectman Powers. The Board would not return to open session.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Rich, Executive Assistant  
Board of Selectmen

*Approved as amended at the February 23, 2015 Board of Selectmen's meeting.*

Per the Open Meeting Law, the documents that were either distributed to the BOS before the meeting in a packet, or at the meeting were:

1. Agenda
2. Preliminary BOS minutes of September 22<sup>nd</sup>, with executive session, October 20<sup>th</sup>, November 3<sup>rd</sup>, with executive session, November 17<sup>th</sup> with executive session.
3. FY 16 Town Budgets.
4. Procedures for Anonymous Letters and Volunteer Applications.
5. Masconomet Topsfield Scholarships request.
6. Appointment to the Board of Health request.
7. Change request of the rate in FY16 for the veterans and the senior tax work off programs.
8. Contract for a brush chipper for the highway department request.
9. Contract for a telecommunication project for Town Hall and the Library request.
10. Veteran Agent submitted a thank you for support of the Wreaths Across America program, along with the Fire Department.

11. MIIA's sent nominations for Director position at MIIA request.
12. Kopelman & Paige's submitted a response to the Open Meeting Law complaint regarding the Personnel Advisory Committee.
13. Conservation Monthly Report submitted.
14. MassDOT submitted a report on the bridge at Salem Road/Ipswich River.
15. Chapter 90 Local Transportation apportionment for FY15 was amended.

Pursuant to the 'Open Meeting Law,' G.L. 39, § 23B, the approval of these minutes by the Board constitutes a certification of the date, time and place of the meeting, the members present and absent, and the actions taken at the meeting. Any other description of statements made by any person, or the summary of the discussion of any matter, is included for the purpose of context only, and no certification, express or implied, is made by the Board as to the completeness or accuracy of such statements.