

BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Proctor School Library
Minutes of February 22, 2016

Chairman Powers called the meeting to order at 7:31PM. Board members present, in addition to Chairman Laura Powers, were Selectmen Martha Morrison, Boyd Jackson, Eldon Goodhue; Steve Lais joined the meeting remotely due to a geographic location. Of the Selectmen's staff, Town Administrator Kellie Hebert, Procurement Officer Donna Rich and Board Executive Assistant Susan Sordello were in attendance. Other persons present during all or part of the meeting were Topsfield Cable operators Baxter & Ben Demers, Tri-Town Transcript reporter Doreen Burliss, Kim Daly, Rosemary Young, Brenda Gaghagan, Matthew Shedeem, Sam Penta, Charlotte O'Toole, Elaine Crippen, Harry Faust, Kathy Faust, Ruth Lucy, Mary Jolene Guerra, Penny Rogers, Martha Davis, Annette Cohen, Al DiDonato, Kathleen DiDonato, Therese Lodewick, David Soffron, others.

The Board stood for the Pledge of Allegiance and then observed a moment of silence.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Chairman Powers announced that we have a quorum and that Selectman Lais would be joining the meeting remotely due to a geographic location.

Martha Morrison updated the audience on the March 1st deadline for requesting an exclusion to mosquito spraying.

Eldon Goodhue invited residents to participate in the Library Strategic 5 year plan by filling out a community survey found on their website.

APPOINTMENTS:

7:34 - Police Chief Evan Haglund recommendations for appointments:

- Selectman Morrison made a motion to approve the appointment of Ann Ambeliotis as a matron and prisoner watch person and to expire June 30, 2016, seconded by Selectman Goodhue. In a roll call vote, a yes vote was recorded for Chairwoman Powers, Selectman Morrison, Selectman Jackson, and Selectman Goodhue and remotely from Selectman Lais.
- Selectman Morrison made a motion to approve the appointment of Samuel Penta as an auxiliary police officer and prisoner watch person and to expire June 30, 2016, seconded by Selectman Goodhue. In a roll call vote, a yes vote was recorded for Chairwoman Powers, Selectman Morrison, Selectman Jackson, Selectman Goodhue and remotely from Selectman Lais.
- Selectman Morrison made a motion to approve the promotion of Auxiliary police officer Matthew Shedeem to the position of Reserve Police officer with a one year probationary period ending on February 23, 2017, seconded by Selectman Goodhue. In a roll call vote, a yes vote was recorded for Chairwoman Powers, Selectman Morrison, Selectman Jackson, Selectman Goodhue and remotely from Selectman Lais.
- Selectman Morrison made a motion to approve the promotion of Reserve Police Officer Brendan Gaghagan to full time police officer effective February 23, 2016, seconded by Selectman Goodhue. In a roll call vote, a yes vote was recorded for Chairwoman Powers, Selectman Morrison, Selectman Jackson, Selectman Goodhue and remotely from Selectman Lais.

CITIZENS QUESTIONS & COMMENTS

None Heard

GENERAL BUSINESS

Old Business

7:41

- Selectman Morrison made a motion to approve the submission of the plans dated January 19, 2016 from Stantec Consulting Services Inc. of Boston MA to National Grid for consideration to construct 1.8 miles of rail trail along the section of the former railroad corridor between Washington Street and the Topsfield/Boxford Town Line. Seconded by Selectman Goodhue; Selectman Jackson talks about moving to a new plan for the town and it taking a long time to get to this point in the Rail Trail project. In a roll call vote, a yes vote was recorded for Chairwoman Powers, Selectman Morrison, Selectman Jackson, Selectman Goodhue and remotely from Selectman Lais.

APPOINTMENTS:

7:45 Council on Aging

Jan Mutchker, PhD presented an overview of a study done by UMass Boston regarding the Needs Assessment for the Topsfield Council on Aging, dated December 2015.

GENERAL BUSINESS

Old Business

8:10

Discussion: letter dated 12.23.15 related to Rail Trail safety at Main Street crossing. Selectman Jackson suggested the parking space be designated as a handicap spot and would discuss with the issue with the Public Safety Committee and report back. Selectman Lais asked for all intersections to be reviewed to be consistent. Issue was tabled until the next meeting; March 7, 2016.

APPOINTMENTS:

8:20 24/7 Fire Safety Committee

Selectman Morrison reported that Committee Chairperson, George Hall was unable to attend. Chairman Powers recognized Committee Member, Phil McManus. Mr. McManus explained how the committee came about and that they were a qualified group. Mr. McManus went on to report that the Committee disputes hiring Municipal Resources, Inc. to conduct an independent study. Committee member Sue Archer went through a time line of events from 2001 to present regarding the Fire Department. She also went on to say that on June 12, 2015 the committee agreed, unanimously, to submit the report as written. (Editor's note: Ms. Archer later clarified that this vote was taken on January 14, 2016) Both committee members McManus and Archer called for the delay of hiring 4 FTE firefighters. Selectman Morrison explained that there is no proposal by the Board of Selectman to go to a 24/7 department, Selectman Jackson concurred. 24/7 Committee member, Scott Moore refuted the claim that the committee unanimously agreed that there should not be an independent study and recommended a formal study. Committee member Melissa Ogden spoke and stated that the only unanimous decision that the committee made was that they were not in favor of hiring 4 firefighters. Mr. McManus went on to clarify that when the discussion of an outside study was conducted, a majority of the committee members were not in favor of an outside study. Selectmen Lais and Goodhue thanked the committee for their effort. Selectman Morrison stated that she did not want to delay the publication of the report any further and suggested an addendum. Committee member Archer

responded that there was no additional information and that the report could be published as it as long as only spelling corrections are made and no omission of findings. Finance Committee member and Fire Department liaison, Eric Menzer stated that it is a complex issue and hard for any one committee to make decisions. He went on to state that the Finance Committee would likely support an outside study and the funds to do so. Selectman Lais noted that if a grammatically corrected version of the report was not presented the next day, the original copy should be put on the website. Firefighter Jen Collins-Brown thanked the committee and noted that she has attended every meeting and said that there was a failure to communicate with the Board of Selectman regarding the complexity of the task. Further discussion may take place at the Selectman's working session scheduled for February 29, 2016 at 5:00.

GENERAL BUSINESS

Old Business

- Selectman Morrison made a motion to approve the application for a One Day Liquor License to North Shore Elder Services for an event to take place on July 23, 2016 at Coolidge Hall in the Topsfield Fair Grounds, seconded by Selectman Goodhue. In a roll call vote, a yes vote was recorded for Chairwoman Powers, Selectman Morrison, Selectman Jackson, Selectman Goodhue and remotely from Selectman Lais.

New Business

- **One Day Liquor License Request:** Selectman Morrison recused herself. Selectman Goodhue made a motion to approve the application for a One Day Liquor License to the Topsfield Garden Club got an event to take place on March 19, 2016 at the Gould Barn, seconded by Selectman Jackson. In a roll call vote, a yes vote was recorded for Chairwoman Powers, Selectman Jackson, Selectman Goodhue and remotely from Selectman Lais.; Selectman Morrison abstained.
- **Conservation Commission Request:** Discussion of erosion problems at the Hood Pond parking area. Members of the Conservation Commission were to be present to seek direction from the Board of Selectman to solve the problem. There was discussion that included suggestions of Conservation Commission Administrator, Lana Spillman, seeking assistance from other Town departments for engineering help and solutions. Rosemary Young spoke on behalf of the Topsfield Beach Association and stated that the Association does not have funds to support the engineering costs discussed.
- **Conservation Commission Request:** Selectman Morrison made a motion to support the Conservation Committee request to have Topsfield Conservation Land be exempted from spraying and larvaciding mosquito control activities this year, seconded by Selectman Jackson; lengthy discussion; issue tabled.
- **GREEN Topsfield Committee Request:** Selectman Morrison made a motion to approve a banner to be placed between Proctor School and Town Hall from April 19th – 29th to notify residents of the Earth Day Celebrations, seconded by Selectman Goodhue. In a roll call vote, a yes vote was recorded for Chairwoman Powers, Selectman Morrison, Selectman Jackson, Selectman Goodhue and remotely from Selectman Lais.
- **Annual Report:** Selectman Morrison made a motion to approve an agreement with ET Johnson & Associates of Cotuit MA for the design of the 2015 Town Annual Report in an amount of \$3,200 and for the Chairman to sign, seconded by Selectman Jackson. In a

roll call vote, a yes vote was recorded for Chairwoman Powers, Selectman Morrison, Selectman Jackson and remotely from Selectman Lais; a no vote was recorded for Selectman Goodhue.

Town Administrator’s Report:

- The Town Administrator Kellie Hebert reported that she is starting to build the Town Warrant and has a call into Town Counsel to go through several items. Town Hall project is still TBD, all other items within the budget set by the Fin-Com. Administrator Hebert will be seeking the acceptance of municipal electricity as it is an opportunity to lower resident’s electricity costs. Hebert asked the Board if they would entertain setting up a work session for warrant items only. Update on 2016 Town Meeting and Warrant working session was suggested for Monday, February 29th 2016 from 5:00-6:30.
- Selectman Goodhue made a motion to add assessment costs for the new fire chief as a warrant article; seconded by Selectman Morrison who stated that if we don’t need it, it can be taken out. In a roll call vote, a yes vote was recorded for Chairwoman Powers, Selectman Morrison, Selectman Jackson, Selectman Goodhue and remotely from Selectman Lais.
- Selectman Goodhue made a motion and add a warrant article that would rescind the “Strong Chief” designation under M.G.L. chapter 48, section 42; Selectman Jackson seconds. It is suggested to add as a placeholder. In a roll call vote, a yes vote was recorded for Selectman Morrison, Selectman Jackson, Selectman Goodhue and remotely from Selectman Lais; a no vote was recorded for Chairwoman Powers.
- The Town Administrator Hebert introduced one final article; a Citizen’s Petition regarding a written/secret ballot system that was certified by 12 voters. No action by the Board of Selectman.
- The Town Administrator Hebert introduced three new people at Town Hall. Toula Guarino, Principal Assessor, Catherine Gabriel, Town Accountant and Susan Sordello, Executive Assistant to the Board of Selectman and Town Administrator.

At 10:07 PM, Selectmen Morrison made a motion to adjourn and Selectman Goodhue seconded the motion. In a roll call vote, a yes vote was recorded for Chairwoman Powers, Selectman Morrison, Selectman Jackson, Selectman Goodhue and remotely from Selectman Lais.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Sordello, Executive Assistant
Board of Selectmen

Approved as written at the March 7, 2016 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. Police Department appointments

3. Liquor License application for North Shore Elder Services
4. Liquor License Application for Topsfield Garden Club
5. Notice of Public Hearing regarding Comcast rates to regulated Massachusetts communities
6. Conservation Commission Monthly Report
7. Conservation Commission letter regarding erosion at 131 Haverhill Road
8. Conservation Commission letter regarding mosquito spraying for town conservation land
9. Request by GREEN Topsfield for Earth Day banner to be hung near Town Hall
10. Request to award and agreement to ET Johnson & Associates for the design of the 2015 Annual Report
11. Letter from Salem Mayor Kim Driscoll regarding support of the MOA
12. Letter from the DEP regarding Water Management Act Permit
13. Letter from Ipswich River Watershed Association regarding a collaboration to help with the understanding of water-related regulatory requirements
14. Invitation to MMA Spring Legislative Breakfast
15. Copy of the Citizens Petition
16. Preliminary Draft worksheet for warrant articles

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.