

BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Minutes of March 14, 2011

Chairman Dick Gandt called the meeting to order at 7:30PM. Board members present, in addition to Chairman Gandt, were Martha Morrison, Eldon Goodhue and Laura Powers. Nancy Luther was absent. Of the Selectmen's staff, Town Administrator Virginia Wilder and Board Secretary Donna Rich were in attendance. Other persons present during all or part of the meeting were Topsfield Cable Evelyn Hammond and Walter Harmer, Tri-Town Transcript Suzanne Snell, Town Moderator John Kinhan, Fire Chief Ron Giovannacci, Tri-Town Council Director of Programs and Operations Lisa Teichner, Tri-Town Council Board of Directors President Chris Rothman, Steward School Principal Michelle Costa, Proctor School Principal Sarah O'Leary, Tri-Town School Union Representative Sharon Lyons, Elementary School Committee members Jeff Evaul, Jeanine Cunniff, Rosemarie Lucey, Gordon Sparter and Susan Archer, residents: Melissa Peirce, Kelly Haas, Jennifer Randall, Anthony Alley, Joe Quigley, Jen & Sal LaRossa, Natalie Gregory, Manjula Canagaratna, Tom Evans, George Simas, Herb Harvey, Jennifer Hunt, Kathleen Bligh Yoh, Bill Barrett, Todd Green, Doreen Lalikos, Amy Butterworth, Elaine White, Terri Lee Aftandilian, Ray Zamagni, Craig Lindsey, Melissa McSweeney, Lisa Lucey, Tracey Hudson, Liz Atkins, David Read, Stefani Dalton, Meredith Massaro, Ken Vogel, Heidi Fox, Mark Gudatits, Sarah Guido, Susan & Tim Dowd, Jennifer Webber and Sherry Roach.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Chairman Gandt announced that the Board would go into Executive Session at the end of regular session to discuss a Police Union Contract issue and would not return to Open Session.

Chairman Gandt announced that the Planning Board will hold a Public Hearing on March 15th at the Library on Zoning Bylaw changes proposed for the Annual Town Warrant.

Chairman Gandt reminded citizens that nomination papers for Topsfield town offices are due back to the Town Clerk's Office by March 17th.

Selectman Morrison announced that there would be a FY2012 Budget Forum on March 23rd in the Proctor School Cafeteria beginning at 7:30PM. There will be representation from the Town's elected Boards present to answer questions on the status of budgets and the budget process.

Chairman Gandt announced that the compost site will be opening up on April 2nd and along with the "trip tickets" (i.e. a \$5.00 one ticket each drop-off), the Road Commissioners will offer an annual vehicle sticker for \$45.00. Both are available in the Selectmen's office at Town Hall. Chairman Gandt reported that the Board met on Thursday, March 10th for two hours to discuss the Beach Association agreement and the Annual Town Warrant.

APPOINTMENTS:

7:30 – Tri-Town Council - Director of Programs and Operations Lisa Teichner and Board of Director President Chris Rothman were present to provide an overview of the services offered by the Tri-Town Council. Some keystone programs highlighted were: Tri-Town Youth Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition, Project Safety 24/7 Hotline, Horizon After-School Program, All-Night Graduation Party and the Youth Risk Behavior Survey. Chairman Gandt noted that, as requested, the Tri-Town Council is on the Warrant for the town's annual contribution for funding in the amount of \$18,319.

7:45 - Fire Chief Contract Signing – Fire Chief Ron Giovannacci was present. Selectman Morrison made a motion to approve the Fire Chief contract as written effective July 1, 2010 and to expire June 30, 2013, seconded by Selectman Powers; so voted: 4-0. Selectman Goodhue asked Chief Giovannacci if he was happy with the contents of the contract and the Chief responded “This is a dream job, serving my neighbors and friends”. Chairman Gandt reported that the contract is for 0% salary increase, with a \$4000 stipend included for the Emergency Management Director responsibility.

8:00 - Elementary School Budget Review - Tri-Town School Union Representative Sharon Lyons, School Committee members: Jeff Evaul, Jeanine Cunniff, Rosemarie Lucey and Susan Archer were present. Chairman Jeff Evaul began by stating that in previous years the elementary school has produced a budget within the Finance Committee’s guidelines; however, this year it was not possible without seriously affecting educational services. Therefore the FY12 requested budget is 3.4% over guidelines representing an increase \$192,888. Members of the Committee spoke of the impact that previous budget constraints have had on the elementary school system, especially in the area of technology. Based on the information provided, Mr. Evaul did request that the Elementary School budget be held harmless from a proposition 2½ override. Chairman Gandt gave a brief overview of the budgets pointing out some notable financial issues such as Health Insurance with a projected increase of \$185,000, \$45,000 in reduction in state aid and an increase of \$65,000 in pensions. Chairman Gandt explained that the Board of Selectman does not approve the school budget and stated the Board appreciated receiving letters from concerned parents. However, there are some misconceptions of the budget process. It was noted that there would be a budget forum on March 23 at the Proctor School Cafeteria beginning at 7:30PM and within the forum there would be a question and answer format. Members of boards that vote individual budgets would be present. Residents Craig Lindsey, Terri Lee Aftandilian and George Simas made comments on their perceptions as to the erosion of the elementary education in the Town.

GENERAL BUSINESS

Old Business

Annual 2011 Town Meeting Warrant: There was a brief review of the Warrant Articles. For Articles 14, 15, and 16 that relate to the senior tax exemptions it was asked that an age be placed in the explanation so as to avoid any confusion. Article 17 was to be renamed to be: Home Rule Petition-Health Insurance Plan Design. Selectman Powers made a motion to approve the 2011 Annual Town Meeting Warrant as presented and amended; seconded by Selectman Morrison; so voted: 4-0.

Hood Pond License Agreement: Selectman Morrison made a motion to approve the License Agreement for Hood Pond as presented, seconded by Selectman Goodhue; so voted: 3-0-1.

New Business

New Class II Used Car Dealer: The license approval for New Meadows Auto located at 86 Central Street was tabled until the March 28th meeting.

Inspector of Animals: Selectman Morrison made a motion to present Sandra Larson for nomination to the Department of Agricultural Resources as Topsfield’s Animal Inspector for a term beginning May 1, 2011 to April 30, 2012, seconded by Selectman Powers; so voted: 4-0.

Flu Clinic Reimbursement: Selectman Morrison made a motion to approve the contract for services with Public Sector Partners, Inc. of Worcester, MA to process Medicare reimbursements for the flu clinics offered in Topsfield in FY11 in the not to exceed amount of \$400 and to authorize the Chair to sign, seconded by Selectman Powers; so voted: 4-0.

Liaison Reports

Selectman Goodhue reported that the Fire Department has two certified child seat inspectors who are available 6AM – 6PM, Monday – Friday. In addition, Mr. Goodhue noted that burn permits are now available for \$10 at the Fire Station and the Department performs home walk-throughs to check on carbon monoxide detectors upon request from residents.

Selectman Goodhue announced that the Library has a Drop-In Club for grades 4-6 on Monday's from 3:15-5PM with snacks and drinks provided.

Selectman Morrison reminded citizens that the Planning Board would hold a Public Hearing tomorrow, March 15th, at the Public Library on its proposed Warrant Articles.

Selectman Morrison reported that the Storm Water Management Committee completed the EPA/Department of Environmental Protection guidelines for Phase II with positive recommendations. A special thanks was offered to Holger Luther, Greg Krom, Dave Bond, Joe Gibbons and Bill Hunt for their work on this project. Chairman Gandt requested the document to be placed on the website.

Town Administrator's Report:

- Town Warrant: deadlines reviewed: Ballot Questions due to Town Clerk March 31st, Document to printer April 6th.
- Special Town Meeting: receiving prior year bills from departments.
- North Shore Coalition-attended and provided update.
- FEMA-reviewed potential funding assistance available from snow storm of January 11th & 12th, meeting is to be held at the Fair Grounds on April 4th.
- Health Insurance Hearing at the State House-reviewed and special mention that Chairman Gandt testified.
- Gifting Accounts-procedural process was discussed as well as specific accounts for Veterans Day Parade and Town Hall Capital Improvements. Citizens can make donations and the Board of Selectmen approves the expenditures from these accounts. It was noted that an Education gift account already exist.
 - Selectman Morrison made a motion to approve the establishment of a gift account entitled Veterans Day Parade, seconded by Selectman Powers; so voted: 4-0.
 - Selectman Morrison made a motion to approve the establishment of a gift account entitled Town Hall Capital Improvement; seconded by Selectman Powers; so voted 4-0.
 - Selectman Powers made a motion to approve the establishment of a gift account entitled Topsfield General Purpose to be expended by the Board of Selectmen; seconded by Selectman Morrison; so voted: 4-0.
- Lowering of the Flag: the President of the United States has requested the lowering of the flag for the death of F.W. Buckles, the last known World I veteran. He died at the age of 101.

Chairman Gandt recognized John Kinhan, who noted that certain articles need further details. He also added that the center of Essex County falls at the Fair Grounds, Central Street and Route 1.

Chairman Gandt recognized Missy McSweeny who expressed her appreciation for the work of the Board of Selectmen and the Finance Committee for their dedication to the operation of the Town. She explained that there are donation opportunities set up for citizen to donate which will benefit the schools and they are through the TESPTO, TAFT and Masco.

Selectmen Minutes:

Selectman Morrison made a motion to accept the Minutes of January 18, 2011 as presented; seconded by Selectman Powers; so voted 3-0. Selectman Goodue abstained.

Selectman Powers made a motion to accept the Executive Session Minutes of January 18, 2011 as written; seconded by Selectman Morrison; so voted 3-0. Selectman Goodhue abstained.

Selectman Powers made a motion to accept the Minutes of January 24, 2011 as presented; seconded by Selectman Morrison; so voted 3-0. Selectman Goodue abstained.

Selectman Morrison made a motion to accept the Executive Session Minutes of January 24, 2011 as written; seconded by Selectman Powers; so voted 3-0. Selectman Goodhue abstained.

Correspondence & Reports

Correspondence

Comcast Pricing Adjustment: Comcast sent a letter detailing the pricing for Topsfield.

Digital Flood Maps: US Department of Homeland Security (FEMA) sent a letter updating the adoption of Digital Flood Insurance Rate Maps and Flood Insurance Study report.

Dog Restraint: Carol Larocque sent a letter to the dog owner of an Australian Shepard to have the dog under a permanent restraining order carrying a \$100 fine for any further incidents.

Bottle Bill Resolution: Documents received regarding the proposed Massachusetts Beverage Container Deposit Law which expands the current Law to include water bottles, sports bottles, and similar beverages.

Reports

Conservation Commission submitted a monthly report for February.

Fire Department submitted an activity Report for February.

North Shore Regional Vocational School District submitted minutes of January 13th and agenda for March 10th.

Board of Assessors submitted minutes of February 11, 2011.

Warrants: The Selectmen signed and approved warrants in the amount of **\$ 159,024.57**. The breakdown is as follows:

Warrant FY11:

075T	\$ 77,143.91
076	\$ 81,880.66

At 10:04PM it was determined that the Board would not go into executive session and Selectmen Powers made a motion to adjourn; Selectman Morrison seconded the motion; so voted: 4-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Rich, Secretary
Selectmen’s Office

Approved as written at the May 18, 2011 Board of Selectmen’s meeting.

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.