

BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Minutes of October 27, 2008

Chairman Jackson called the meeting to order at 7:30PM. Board members present in addition to Chairman Jackson were Richard Gandt, Martha Morrison and Nancy Luther. Of the Selectmen's staff, Town Administrator Virginia Wilder, and Board Secretary Donna Rich, were in attendance. Other persons present were Evelyn Hammond of the Topsfield Cable, Brendan Lewis of the Tri-Town Transcript, Karen Dow, members of the Board of Assessors: Eldon Goodhue, John McArdle and John Minnehan, and Principal Assessor, Pauline Evans, members of the Housing Authority: I. Bruce Bears, John Minnehan, Gerald Buckley, and Executive Director, Alice Sheridan.

APPOINTMENTS:

7:30 PM-Public Hearing-Tax Levy-Board of Assessors: Eldon Goodhue, John McArdle and John Minnehan, and Principal Assessor, Pauline Evans presented the annual percentage of the tax levy for the different classifications (residential, commercial and industrial). Clerk Gandt read the Legal Notice that was published in the Tri-Town Transcript on October 10, 2008. Chairman of the Assessors, Eldon Goodhue explained that the options available to the Board. Following a discussion on the options, Selectman Morrison made a motion to adopt a factor of 1 for FY09 taxation of all classes of property, seconded by Selectman Luther; so voted: 4-0.

Electronic Signature Submittal: The Commonwealth is moving toward submission of documents over the internet, therefore, Ms. Wilder requested a motion be made to allow the Town Administer to submit electronic signatures for the Selectmen as is now required by the State on such documents ; Selectman Luther moved the motion, seconded by Selectman Morrison; so voted: 4-0.

7:45PM- Roll Call Vote on Housing Authority Member: Members of the Housing Authority: I. Bruce Bears, John Minnehan, Gerald Buckley, and Executive Director, Alice Sheridan presented John McArdle's name for nomination as a member to the Housing Authority to replace Grace Lynch who submitted a letter of resignation to the Town Clerk for the position she held that was to expire in May 2010. Clerk Gandt called the Roll Call vote with Mr. John McArdle's name as the sole nominee to fill the vacant position until the Town's next annual election on May 7, 2009: Chairman Jackson voted yes for John McArdle, Selectman Morrison voted yes for John McArdle, Selectman Luther voted yes for John McArdle, John Minnehan voted yes for John McArdle, Gerald Buckley voted yes for John McArdle, I. Bruce Bears voted yes for John McArdle, and Selectman Gandt voted yes for John McArdle. John McArdle was elected unanimously, 7-0. If Mr. McArdle wishes to continue as a member in this position after May 2009, he will be required to run for reelection then to complete this term that expires in May 2010. Also, since Mr. McArdle's name had previously been submitted to the State for appointment by the Governor to the Authority, Ms. Wilder was asked contact the Governor's office to withdraw Mr. McArdle's name. When asked to give a brief overview of what the Housing Authority does Ms. Sheridan explained that the Housing Authority is responsible for Little Brook Village which has a total of 60 apartments: 52 for citizens age 60 and over with low to moderate income and 8 for citizens less than 60 years of age with a disability. The apartments are one bedroom units. The Council on Aging uses space at Little Brook for activities and there are a couple of Boy Scout Eagle projects in progress to make enhancements to the property. The operating budget of Little Brook is solely subsidized by rents received from the tenants and for at least 7 years there has been no state aid received for improvements or repairs. Topsfield residents have first refusal to placement and presently there is a very short waiting list.

8:00PM-Bev Guarino, Town Clerk addressed the Board to provide information regarding the anticipated large turn out on Election Day. The Board was asked to sign the Ballot Warrant to authorize the information which Constable Glatz would be posting at meeting places in Topsfield the next day.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Halloween Trick-or-Treat Hours: Police Chief has announced the hours of Trick-or-Treating will be 5:30PM-8PM on Friday October 31, 2008.

Veteran Day Parade: Reminder that the Veterans Day Parade will be Saturday, November 1, 2008 beginning at 11AM and will proceed down Main Street to the Town Common.

Coliform Bacteria Found in Water: Water Department has informed all Town water customers of coliform bacteria that was found in the Town's water supply in August in the Asbury Street/Bradley Palmer area. It's felt the contamination was related to the Asbury Street bridge project that involved replacement of a section of the water main.

Selectmen Minutes: Selectman Morrison made a motion to accept the amended minutes of October 14, 2008; seconded by Selectman Gandt; so voted: 4-0.

GENERAL BUSINESS

Old Business

Litter Prevention Bylaw The Board reviewed an email sent from Wendy Cooke to inquire about the status of any proposed litter bylaw. Selectman Morrison suggested the Board have a working session to discuss the issue.

MBTA Letter of Response regarding the Alternative Transportation Corridor was received. The Board surmises that the MBTA has no apparent objection to the Town's process that is being followed.

Question # 1 on Ballot – Discussion on the Question #1 on the State Ballot to eliminate the State income tax concluded with information to be posted on the Town Web Site and be available in print at the Board of Selectmen's Office at Town Hall and the Public Library for interested parties to review.

New Business

911 Dispatchers Union Contract: Selectman Luther made a motion to approve the 911 Dispatchers Union Contract, seconded by Selectman Gandt; so voted: 4-0. Selectman Gandt noted that the contract took 16 months of negotiations with 1 ½ years remaining on this contract.

Rail Trail Design Committee Alternate Member appointment: Selectman Morrison made a motion to appoint Katherine Carlson to the 7 Grove Street Rail Trail Design Team as an Alternate Member, seconded by Selectman Luther; so voted: 4-0.

John Deere Backhoe for Highway and Water Department: This purchase was approved at the May 2008 Annual Town Meeting. Selectman Gandt made a motion to award a contract for the acquisition of a 2009 John Deere 310 SJ Backhoe through Schmidt Equipment, Inc., of North Oxford MA for an amount not to exceed \$65,000, seconded by Selectman Morrison; so voted: 4-0.

Washed Sand for Winter Use-Highway Department Request: Selectman Gandt made a motion to approve a contract for the purchase of Washed Concrete Sand with Torromeao Industries Inc., of Methuen, MA at a rate of \$11.75 per ton delivered and not to exceed an amount of \$20,000, seconded by Selectman Morrison; so voted: 4-0.

Road Salt for Winter Use-Highway Department Request: Selectman Gandt made a motion to approve a contract for the purchase of “Solar” Road Salt with Eastern Salt Company of North Chelmsford, MA at a rate of \$67.00 per ton and not to exceed an amount of \$20,000, seconded by Selectman Morrison; so voted: 4-0. Selectman Gandt made a motion to approve a contract for the purchase of “Foreign” Road Salt with International Salt Company, LLC of Clarks Summit, PA at a rate of \$63.83 per ton and not to exceed an amount of \$30,000, seconded by Selectman Morrison; so voted: 4-0.

NEW ITEMS

Signage for Rail Trail: Selectman Gandt relayed a request from the Rail Trail Committee in reference to the color of posts for the signage approved at a previous Board meeting. There was discussion regarding using white vs. brown colored posts. The Board’s consensus was that either color is acceptable. Selectman Gandt will forward the information to the Rail Trail Committee.

Board of Health Alternates: Selectman Morrison made a motion to appoint Leo Cormier, Alex Parker and Murray Salvatore as Alternate Health Agents for a term to expire June 30, 2009, seconded by Selectman Gandt; so voted: 4-0.

Town Administrator’s Report:

- MMPA Benchmark survey inputting data deadline is November 14, 2008.
- National Grid energy audit is scheduled for November 5, 2008
- Attended a Labor Relation Seminar
- Facilities Tour took place on Saturday with the Finance Committee and Finance Team visiting all the facilities to review the requests for capital expenses. Last year the guideline was set at \$100,000; this year’s guideline has not been set.
- Explanation of Bill 5092 regarding dangerous dogs.
- Public Safety Team will meet to review how the Topsfield Fair went this year.
- The Town has been notified that they have been reinstated to process CORI Forms.
- Renewal applications are being processed for the Alcohol Licenses and Used Car Dealers I and II.
- The septic sytem for the Village Shopping Center is expected to be installed sometime between October 29 and November 3.

Correspondence & Reports

Correspondence

National Grid: Tree Maintenance for Electrical Wires Notification was received. Selectman Gandt mentioned that the stumps would not be removed, and that red ribbon denotes the cutting of a tree vs. blue ribbon denotes pruning of the tree.

Conservation Commissioner Letter of Interest Received from Jennie Merrill of Rowley Bridge Road. Selectman Morrison requested that she be invited to the next meeting for an interview.

Resignation of Historical Commission Chair Received, Alison Hardy was informed that a meeting of the Commission should be called and a new chair voted on.

Executive Office of Transportation has sent Bridge Reports on Rowley Bridge Street/Ipswich River dated 7/10/08 and Salem Road/Ipswich River dated 7/16/08.

Reports

Board of Assessors submitted minutes for September 26, 2008.

Library Trustees submitted minutes for September 9, 2008.

School Committee submitted minutes for Sept 18 & Oct 2, 2008.

Surface & Ground Water Study submitted minutes for Sept. 11, 2008.

Web Site Committee submitted minutes for July 23, 2008.

Invitations:

YMCA has invited the Board to a Legislative Breakfast on Nov. 12, 2008.

Warrants: The Selectmen signed and approved warrants in the amount of \$ **302,583.08** . The breakdown is as follows:

Warrant #FY09:	
035T	\$ 70,641.71
036	\$231,941.37

At 9:10 PM, Chairman Jackson entertained a motion to adjourn, Selectman Luther moved the motion and Selectman Morrison seconded the motion; so voted: 4-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Rich, Secretary
Selectmen's Office

Approved as amended at the November 10 , 2008 Board of Selectmen's meeting.