

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN**  
**Working Session**  
**Minutes of December 1, 2008**

Chairman Jackson called the meeting to order at 4:11PM. In addition to Chairman Jackson Board members present were Richard Gandt, Martha Morrison, Nancy Luther and Karen Dow. Of the Selectmen's staff, Town Administrator Virginia Wilder, and Board Secretary Donna Rich, were in attendance. Additionally Lydia Bertolino, Director of Council on Aging was present.

**Senior Tax Work-Off Program:** Selectman Luther introduced Lydia Bertolino, Director of the Council on Aging, who presented materials prepared by the Council on Aging on the Senior Tax Work-Off Program. Selectman Gandt noted that the documents presented meant to establish guidelines for the 2009 Program and could be revised each year. Under the guidelines up to ten (10) senior citizens would receive roughly \$750 for 100 hours of work in a Town department to be used to offset his/her property taxes. In a discussion on the mechanics of processing the payment and tax implications it was noted that Federal Tax would be withdrawn; however, state taxes would not. The participants would also be issued a W-2. Ms. Bertolino will make changes to the program as discussed and a vote to adopt the program would be taken at the December 8, 2008 Board of Selectmen's meeting.

**General Liability for the Additional Insured Groups:** MIIA has informed the Town that there are entities such as the Topsfield Beach Association, Topsfield Athletic Association, and Friends of the Library that are being insured but are not directly under the Town's control. Following a brief discussion it was decided that Ms. Wilder should review the Board's options and report back as to the cost and what other exposure the Town may have.

**Litter Bylaw:** Ms. Wilder and Selectman Gandt were charged with drafting a bylaw containing a definition and enforcement proceedings and then to report to the Board.

**Green Communities Act:** Chairman Jackson was charged with speaking to George Hall, Chairman, Conservation Commission to see if the Green Communities Act is a Conservation Commission initiative.

**Essex County Sheriff's Grant Letter of Support:** Ms. Wilder provided an overview of the request for the Board's endorsement of a grant application to support the State 911 Department Development Grant for a Regional Dispatch Center. After discussing the issue, the Board decided to invite the Fire Chief Ron Giovannacci, Police Chief Haglund and Joe McGowan, of the Essex County Correctional Facility and Sheriff's Department to attend a Working Session to further explain the details. However, Ms. Wilder was directed to make some changes to the proposed letter of support and submit it for approval at the December 8<sup>th</sup> Board meeting.

**Additional Items Brought Before the Board:**

**Rail Trail Informational Night:** Selectman Gandt announced that there will be a Rail Trail Informational meeting at the Gould Barn on Monday, December 8<sup>th</sup>, beginning at 8PM. The Board also discussed the encroachment of personal fences on the proposed Rail Trail. The Rail Trail will be seeking the Board of Selectmen's consensus on how to handle those encroachments. Selectmen Morrison suggested that the Fence Viewers Committee be engaged to review the fences along the trail and initiate a report indicating the fences that are involved with the degree of encroachment onto the Rail Trail and town property. Chairman Jackson stated he would contact Mr. Steve Clark, Chairman of the Fence Viewers to discuss the matter further.

**ZBA Meeting:** Selectman Gandt noted that he would be meeting with Mr. Bob Moriarty, Chairman of the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) tomorrow morning to discuss a variety of issues. Selectman Morrison, as liaison to the ZBA, asked to be informed as to the context of the conversation.

**CP Berry Meeting:** Selectman Gandt noted that he had scheduled a meeting with Alan Berry, developer of 12 Boston Street, the Essex County Greenbelt and Joe Geller, Chairman, Open Space Committee, to brainstorm potentials for connecting residents of the English Commons development to the community of Topsfield. Selectman Morrison noted that the permitting process has yet to be completed and cautioned Selectman Gandt that his conversation should not interfere with that process.

**Warrants:** The Selectmen signed and approved warrants in the amount of \$ **413,569.15**. The breakdown is as follows:

Warrant #FY09:	
045T	\$ 67,478.21
045School	\$ 218,516.92
046	\$ 127,574.02

At 6:07 PM, Chairman Jackson entertained a motion to adjourn, Selectman Luther moved the motion, seconded by Selectman Dow; so voted: 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,  
Donna C. Rich, Secretary  
Selectmen's Office

*Approved as amended at the December 22, 2008 Board of Selectmen's meeting.*