



BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Regular Business Meeting
Proctor School
60 Main Street, Topsfield
Minutes of Monday, January 8, 2018
7:30 PM

Board Members present were Chairman Boyd Jackson, Clerk Mark Lyons and Selectman Richard Gandt. Selectmen John Spencer and Laura Powers were not in attendance. Of the Selectmen's Staff, Town Administrator Kellie Hebert and Recording Secretary Susan Winslow were in attendance.

Fire Chief Jenifer Collins-Brown, Town Accountant Catherine Gabriel and Police Chief Evan Haglund were in attendance. Finance Committee Member Eric Menzer was in attendance as were residents Gerry Buckley, Katherine Carlson, Carole Carter, Sarah Guido, David Larson, Kim Sherwood, Diane Torrey and Libby Wilson. Ben and Maddie Demers from Boxford Cable Television and Doreen Burliss from the Tri-Town Transcript were also in attendance.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Boyd Jackson called the meeting to order at 7:32 PM.

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chairman Jackson made the following announcements:

"Please be informed that the meeting is being recorded live by Boxford Cable Television and that the Board's Recording Clerk also has a recording device for her record keeping; is there anyone else present who wishes to record the meeting?"

There was no response to this announcement.

"Please sign the attendance sheet."

Selectman Gandt made the following announcement:

"Items such as diapers, wooden crates, gas jugs, paint cans, garden hoses, and Christmas lights are not acceptable in Recycling. Also, plastic bags are no longer acceptable in recycling because they become tangled in the sorting machinery. Recyclables must be placed in a bin, or if paper or paperboard, in a paper bag. Effective 1-1-18, JRM service crews will be leaving plastic bags and other unacceptable materials behind, tagged with orange stickers to remind residents that these items are not acceptable in with the curbside recycling."

Chairman Jackson made the following announcements:

“Town Hall will be closed on Monday, January 15, 2018 in recognition of Martin Luther King Day.”

“The Board will meet in Executive Session under Exemption #3 to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining, specifically for the Full Time Police, Full Time Firefighter IAFF, Call Firefighters Association and AFSCME units since an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the chair so declares. The Board will NOT return to public session.”

Selectman Gandt informed the viewing audience that new equipment installed by Boxford Cable Television before December 11, 2017 should improve the audio quality of televised meetings. Mr. Gandt encouraged viewers to contact the Selectmen’s Office if they are still experiencing audio difficulties with the televised meetings.

Selectman Gandt gave the Board a report on his first Listening Session at the Town Library on January 5, 2018, from 3:30 to 4:30 PM. One resident appeared for the Listening session and two points were made. The first was to give credit to the Topsfield Treasurer/Collector for her Department’s efforts to inform the public about ways to pay their taxes early, including publicizing the opportunity to pay online. The second item was related to the resident’s concern and questions about the Fiscal Year 2019 Budget and Debt Service. Selectman Gandt will be holding Listening Sessions on the first Thursday of each month from 5:30 – 6:30 at the Town Library.

CITIZEN COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS

Resident Kim Sherwood expressed her concerns about the Town’s purchase of Donibristle Farm.

Ms. Sherwood also asked for an update on the Collins Center Document. Town Administrator Hebert informed her that it is still being reviewed to incorporate Topsfield data.

Ms. Sherwood referred to the Agenda listing the proposed union discussions scheduled for Executive Session and expressed her opinion that negotiations should take salaries into consideration before contracts are signed because in her opinion they affect \$2,000,000 of employee salaries.

Fire Chief and EMS Director Jenifer Collins-Brown gave the Board an update on activities during the recent snow storm and extreme cold weather. Chief Collins-Brown praised the actions of the Highway, Park and Cemetery and Police Departments as well as the members of the Fire Department for working together extremely well during this extended weather event. Chief Collins-Brown

reminded residents about the importance of working Carbon Monoxide Detectors in their homes and offered the assistance of the Fire Department to any residents who have questions about placement. Chief Collins-Brown also shared information on how residents may sign up for RECC Emergency Alerts.

DEPARTMENT UPDATE

Topsfield Police Department – Chief Evan Haglund

Chief Haglund informed the Board:

- The Budget will be affected by the unanticipated retirement of Officer Stephen Weir.
- The age of the Police Station continues to be an issue, with plumbing problems, leaks and sewer/gas issues.
- The Department is involved in an accreditation and certification process, with completion expected in March.
- Interest in the Firearms Safety Course and a new Firearms Refresher Course has been very high, with 35 people responding to an announcement for the Refresher Course which will be offered to current Firearms License holders.

NEW BUSINESS

Appointment of Reserve Police Officers

Selectman Gandt made a motion to appoint Special Police Officers Justin Slattery and Timothy Glynn as Reserve Police Officers as recommended by Police Chief Evan Haglund. Seconded by Chairman Jackson. Selectman Gandt asked Chief Haglund if the dissolution of the Auxiliary Officer system would have a negative effect on the Department. Chief Haglund informed the Board that it will not.

Chairman Jackson called for a vote, so voted 3-0.

Abatement Process

Clerk Mark Lyons presented Part II of the Town's Abatement Process he presented at the December 11, 2017 Board Meeting. Clerk Lyons distributed a summary from the Town of Barnstable, MA website titled, "Barnstable Elderly and Disabled Taxation Aid Committee". The document outlined the process adopted by the Town of Barnstable to establish a fund to defray the real estate taxes of low income elderly and disabled persons. Clerk Lyons suggested that Topsfield might establish an Elderly and Disabled Taxation Aid Fund similar to that used in the Town of Barnstable.

Appointment of Martha Sanders to Open Space Committee

Selectman Gandt made a motion to appoint Martha Sanders to the Open Space Committee as recommended by the Open Space Committee at their December 18, 2018 meeting. Seconded by Clerk Lyons. Ms. Sanders informed the Board that she has volunteered for the Open Space Committee for years

and is passionate about it. The Board thanked Ms. Sanders for her volunteer service. Chairman Jackson called for a vote, so voted 3-0.

Amend Willowdale Estate All Alcohol Beverages – General On-Premises Pouring License

Clerk Lyons made a motion to amend the Willowdale Estate All Alcohol Beverages – General On-Premises Pouring License to reflect the corporate name change to Bramble Hospitality LLC accepted by the Board in a Public Hearing on December 11, 2017 and accepted by the Alcoholic Beverages Control Commission (ABCC). Seconded by Selectman Gandt, so voted 3-0.

Open Town Warrant

Selectman Gandt made a motion to open the Town Warrant on January 9, 2018 and to close the Town Warrant on January 31, 2018 at 4:00 PM. Seconded by Clerk Lyons. Selectman Gandt suggested that the Town keep the Town Warrant Open for a longer period of time. Town Administrator Hebert informed the Board that the proposed three week period meets the timeline required for the mailing deadline. Chairman Jackson called for a vote, so voted 3-0.

Fiscal Year 2019 Departmental Budgets

Town Administrator Kellie Hebert informed the Board that Town Accountant Catherine Gabriel has worked diligently to compile all Departmental Budgets which she then forwarded to the Finance Committee and the Selectmen. The Town Administrator informed the Board that the Public Forum/Joint Meeting with the Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee to present a Fiscal Year 2019 Budget has been scheduled for Wednesday, January 24, 2018 at 7:30 PM in the Proctor School Cafeteria.

Selectman Gandt praised Town Accountant Catherine Gabriel for timely distribution of the Budget documents to Selectmen.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Town Administrator Hebert informed the Board that her report on the Fiscal Year 2019 Budgets constituted the majority of her TA Report for this meeting.

Ms. Hebert informed the Board that the Town of Topsfield is being recognized at the 2018 MMA Annual Meeting on January 20, 2018 as one of the top three municipalities in Category 2 of the MMA's Annual Town Meeting Report contest.

MINUTES

November 27, 2017 Regular Business Meeting

Selectman Gandt made a motion to accept the November 27, 2017 Minutes as amended. Seconded by Clerk Lyons, so voted 3-0.

November 29, 2017 Working Session

Selectman Gandt made a motion to approve the November 29, 2017 Minutes as amended. Seconded by Clerk Lyons, so voted 3-0.

December 6, 2017 Working Session

Selectman Gandt made a motion to approve the December 6, 2017 Minutes as written. Seconded by Clerk Lyons, so voted 3-0.

December 11, 2017 Regular Business Meeting

Selectman Gandt made a motion to approve the December 11, 2017 Minutes as amended. Seconded by Clerk Lyons, so voted 3-0.

December 18, 2017 Working Session

Selectman Gandt made a motion to approve the December 18, 2017 Minutes as amended. Seconded by Clerk Lyons, so voted 3-0.

CORRESPONDENCE

- Letter dated 12/18/17, "Introduction to the Topsfield Trust"
- Letter dated 12/1/17 from JRM Hauling & Recycling
- Letter dated 12/12/17 from Hanne Rush, Assistant Attorney General, Division of Open Government to Kim Sherwood.
- Letter dated 7/27/17 from Michele E. Randazzo, KP Law, to Jonathan Sclarsic, Esq., Director, Division of Open Government
- Open Meeting Complaint form filed by Kim Sherwood
- Letter dated 12/15/17 from Geoffrey C. Beckwith, Executive Director and CEO, Massachusetts Municipal Association
- Notice of Filing dated 12/5/17 from The Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Utilities listing public hearings scheduled to receive comment on National Grid's filing for approval of general increases in base distribution rates for gas service.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 9:00 PM, Selectman Gandt made a motion to enter into closed Executive Session, with the meeting to adjourn at the conclusion of Executive Session. Seconded by Clerk Lyons.

Roll Call Vote to enter into Executive Session:

Jackson – Yes

Lyons – Yes

Gandt – Yes

So voted 3-0. The Board entered Executive Session at 9:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Winslow
Recording Secretary

DOCUMENTS

1. Agenda
2. Detailed Agenda
3. BOS Recommendation Request from Chief Evan J. Haglund
4. Document, "Barnstable Elderly and Disabled Taxation Aid Committee"
5. Volunteer Form completed by Martha Sanders
6. Draft Minutes from 12/18/17 Open Space Committee Meeting
7. All Alcohol Beverages – General On-Premises Pouring License for Bramble Hospitality LLC
8. Document, "Town of Topsfield Proposed FY19 Budget"
9. Document, "FY18 Budget – Department Request Other Expense Line Items Over Guidelines & Essential Unfunded Line Items"
10. Document, "Town of Topsfield – Fiscal Year 2019 Budget"
11. Letter dated 12/18/17, "Introduction to the Topsfield Trust"
12. Letter dated 12/1/17 from JRM Hauling & Recycling
13. Letter dated 12/12/17 from Hanne Rush, Assistant Attorney General, Division of Open Government to Kim Sherwood.
14. Letter dated 7/27/17 from Michele E. Randazzo, KP Law, to Jonathan Sclarsic, Esq., Director, Division of Open Government
15. Open Meeting Complaint form filed by Kim Sherwood
16. Letter dated 12/15/17 from Geoffrey C. Beckwith, Executive Director and CEO, Massachusetts Municipal Association
17. Notice of Filing dated 12/5/17 from The Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Utilities listing public hearings scheduled to receive comment on National Grid's filing for approval of general increases in base distribution rates for gas service.
18. BOS Meeting Minutes November 27, 2017
19. BOS Meeting Minutes November 29, 2017
20. BOS Meeting Minutes December 6, 2017
21. BOS Meeting Minutes December 11, 2017
22. BOS Meeting Minutes December 18, 2017
23. BOS Meeting Minutes December 20, 2017

Minutes were accepted as amended at the January 22, 2018 Board of Selectmen Meeting.

Pursuant to the 'Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18-25, 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.
