

MEETING MINUTES
Town of Heath
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Community Hall
January 22, 2013

Called to order at 7:01 p.m. by Sheila Litchfield, with Tom Lively and Brian DeVriese present. Also present: Kara Leistyna, Town Coordinator and Kris Nartowicz, Treasurer.

Reviewed Agenda: Added to Other Business Vaughn Tower phone call; Letter of support from Indian Head Snowmobile Club.

Kris Nartowicz/Treasurer: Kris shared that she would like to hire a new tax title attorney, Berenson & Bloom from Easthampton. They are local and all references she called were excellent. They have a successful collection rate and offer comprehensive municipal property tax law services at a reasonable rate of \$150/hour.

On a motion by Brian DeVriese and seconded by Tom Lively, the Select Board voted unanimously to hire Berenson & Bloom for tax services.

Reviewed Minutes: *On a motion by Brian DeVriese and seconded by Tom Lively, the Select Board voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the 12/18/12 and 1/8/13 Select Board meetings as amended.*

7:23 p.m. Bob Gruen, School Committee member, entered meeting.

School Committee Update: Bob began by addressing the recent article in the Recorder, "Mohawk Schools 2/3 Empty," Jan. 15, 2013. Bob felt that the information provided by Chairman, Robert Aeschback, was erroneous and he disagrees with it. He will address the issue with Superintendent Buoniconti and Chairman Aeschback. Sheila shared that many people are concerned with the numbers provided and would like accurate data. The issue is getting attention and causing concern and Bob believes that it may cause school choice numbers to drop. Discussed budget/school assessment FY14, upcoming meetings and voting. Joe Judd called Sheila to get her sense on whether a meeting should be held with one Selectmen from each town in the district to generate fresh approach to the topic. Also discussed school committee commitment/presence and its importance for Heath. Sheila determined that the line item for Pre-School should be \$10,000 for FY14. Lastly, discussed computer equipment and that Heath did not receive grant money for Ipad Cart program. Bob will find out how much is needed to fund the equipment.

8:05 p.m. Finance Committee entered meeting (Don Freeman, Gloria Fisher, Kathy Inman, Ned Wolf and Jeff Simmons) and Bob Gruen left at 8:12 p.m.

Joint Budget Meeting:

- Police Hours: Will discuss with Margo at budget hearing on 1/29.
- Town Clerk Hours: Discussed Hilma's request for more hours and increase in pay. Kara will inquire with Town Counsel specifically asking what authority does the governing body have in setting compensation and hours for an elected official; should salary be a separate warrant article or remain on Art. 3 as a line item and what oversight, if any, does the governing body have over elected official.
- Stipends: FinCom would like to know who receives them, how much and hours? They are exploring issue and will come up with suggestions/recommendations to the Select Board. After Town Meeting is a good time to work on this research for FY15.

- School Budget: Budget meeting on 2/6 to vote on budget; Heath's assessment is unknown at this time. Discussed Heath school staff reductions.
- Warrant: Discussed articles.

Finance Committee left at 8:44 p.m.

Mail/ Email:

- Police monthly report
- Response from attorney regarding wind bylaw. Forwarded to Planning Board.
- Emails from Mike Smith regarding salt on roads
- Email from Sheila to Mike regarding positive comments regarding roads
- Email from Dave Howland/War Memorial Committee. The Select Board added \$150 budget to Art. 3 for FY14.
- Notice of Basic Mediation Training
- HRA Announcement of new Director of Comm. Development
- Email from Becky Allen regarding Septic Loan account
- Email from Betty Nichols response regarding budget request/tax title. Kara will insert information into comments on budget worksheet.
- MA Dept. of Revenue Final 2012 EQV
- Email from Hilma regarding Woodard's Dogs. Tickets remain outstanding.
- Excerpt from CodeRed contract regarding term. Select Board wondering if payment can be made for more than one year of contract in FY13 in order to qualify for reimbursement from EMPG grant.

Financial Mail:

- Emails from Tracey regarding STM warrant/Abatement
- FCCIP Budget reports
- Email from Tracey regarding BOH Clerk salary. There should be no hourly rate, just annual appropriation divided by 52 weeks for a weekly rate of pay of \$57.69 for FY14.
- Memo from D. Purington regarding donation
- General Fund Exp. Report 1/8/13
- Franklin Regional Retirement System info. on Retirement Assessments FY13/FY14. Tom says that FRCOG is trying to transfer retirement program to state and will have an effect on Franklin Reg. Retirement program – should reduce cost.

Other Business:

- **Highway Garage Doors – STM warrant article:**
- **BOH Septic Fund Account:** Discussed issue of administering loans. When BOH declares a septic system unfit, a loan can be issued. Select Board would like HRA to administer loans. Kara will get a history printed out from accountant. HRA charges \$800 fee per loan.
- **Building Manager/Custodian:** Discussed job and duties. Kara will create a job description based on old version and input from other towns with similar position. Also discussed need for Project Overseer for special projects FY13 (floor refinishing and painting of Sawyer Hall and Community Hall).
- **Vaughn Tower Phone Call:** Sheila received a telephone message from Vaughn Tower apologizing for the cancellation of the Ambulance MOU meeting last week at the Charlemont Town Hall. A meeting will be re-scheduled. Board agreed that Feb. 11 will work anytime after 7:15 p.m.
- Kara will send draft of STM warrant to Town Counsel for review.
- Indian Head Snowmobile Club is applying for a grant to purchase trail maintenance equipment.

On a motion by Brian DeVriese and seconded by Tom Lively, the Select Board voted unanimously to sign support letter for Indian Head Snowmobile Club as support for DCR grant application.

On a motion by Brian DeVriese and seconded by Tom Lively, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn at 10:15 p.m.

Next meeting scheduled for 1/29/13 at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kara Leistyna, Town Coordinator