

**Minutes**  
**Board of Selectmen Meeting**  
**Monday – January 5, 2004**  
**Police Station Community Meeting Room**  
**7:00 p.m.**

Chairman Brian Ashe called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**Present:** Selectmen Brian Ashe, Hal Haberman and John Papale.

**Also Present:** Town Administrator Susan Wright.

**Acceptance of Minutes:**

The minutes of the December 15, 2003 Regular Meeting and the December 15, 2003 Executive Session were accepted as presented.

**Visitor Comment:** There were no visitors wishing to comment to the Board.

**Recycling Commission:** Present for the leaf collection discussion was Recycling Commission Chairman Irwin Pers and member Arlene Miller. Ms. Miller reviewed the results of the bag leaf collection program. Advantages of the program over the traditional bulk leaf curbside pick-up included the program was less weather dependent, loose leaves did not clog the drainage basins during the rainy fall, the town was much cleaner through out the season and the DPW was able to have time to prepare for winter activities. Mr. Ashe commended the Recycling Committee for developing a well-run program. Dr. Papale noted that the Recycling Committee did an excellent job selling the program to the public. It was noted that only 87 households were unable to get their leaves collected off the tree belt and enforcement efforts would begin when it was feasible.

Ms. Miller gave a budget summary, which showed the program cost \$22,644, which included the cost of the bags, the payment to the farmer to spread the leaves and the temporary labor that was required. The income from the program included \$17,895 in bag sales (37,200 bags sold). Therefore the actual cost to the town was \$4,749. It was noted that whether the town had offered a bag collection program or not, the \$10,000 expense for the farmer would have been incurred to provide residents with a leaf drop off site in the meadows. Therefore it was concluded that the bag program did indeed, pay for itself.

Mr. Haberman stated that the biggest complaint he heard was that the bags were too small. It was noted that a spring leaf collection program would be offered for two weeks in April. The Committee then presented the Board of Selectmen with options for leaf disposal to consider for the fall of 2004. These were:

1. To reinstate the bulk loose-leaf curbside pick-up program at a taxpayer cost of \$140,000.
2. To collect any bag on the curb and not sell specially marked bags at a taxpayer cost of \$25,000.
3. To only provide a drop off site in the meadows and pay the farmer to plow leaves under at a taxpayer cost of \$10,000.
4. To repeat the pre-paid bag program at a cost of \$23,000 but with projected revenue of \$18,000 for a total taxpayer cost of \$5,000.

The Board noted they would consider the options and choose one to budget for in FY05.

**Old Business:**

1. *Ely Road Update:* Ms. Wright reported to the Board that there had been recent correspondence from Mr. Paquette and that she would be speaking with Town Counsel regarding a response.

2. *Town Counsel Request for FY05 Retainer/Hourly Rate Increase:* The Board discussed Atty. Martel's written request and asked Ms. Wright to get more information from the School Dept. on the amounts provided to Attorney Martel. Dr. Papal also asked for a comparison of rates among Town Counsels. He stated that he had reviewed the detailed monthly bills of Town Counsel and felt that usage of Town Counsel's time had been appropriate. Ms. Wright was asked to obtain some other rates for comparison.

3. *Dunn Road:* The Board asked Ms. Wright to set up a meeting with Mr. Ottani, the main petitioner for Dunn Road. The purpose of the meeting would be to discuss the recent opinion of Town Counsel of the status of Dunn Road following the Special Town Meeting vote and what measures the Board of Selectmen might pursue relative to the vote.

4. *FY05 Budget Update:* The Board reviewed the material presented by Ms. Wright and asked for permission to distribute the draft budget with the proposed reductions to Dept. Heads asking for their feedback.

#### **New Business:**

1. *Police Chief Interim Appointment:* After a brief discussion the Board voted unanimously to appoint Capt. Robert Danio acting Chief of Police effective January 10, 2004.

2. *Superintendent of Streets Interim Appointment:* After a brief discussion the Board voted unanimously to appoint Richard Haraty as acting Superintendent of Streets effective January 6<sup>th</sup>, 2004.

3. *Assistant Assessor Request for Travel Stipend Adjustment:* The Board discussed Robert Leclair's request and asked Ms. Wright to have Mr. Leclair and Building Commissioner Mark Denver track their mileage for a period of six months, since they are the two Dept. Heads who receive such a stipend. The Board will then make any necessary adjustments for FY05. The authorized Mr. Leclair to increase his mileage stipend for FY05 from \$2,100 to \$2,400 for budget planning purposes. It was noted that mileage data is necessary to justify the stipend amounts and to allow for comparisons of other options.

4. *ABCC Year-Round Sunday Liquor Store Openings Discussion:* The Board reviewed information received from the ABCC and Town Counsel's opinion of options. The Board took no action at this time and asked for the current three liquor store licensees to give the Board their comments for the next meeting. The Board also asked that the public weigh in on the issue of Sunday openings.

5. *Cell Tower Co-Location Agreement:* The Board reviewed the request from Sprint to co-locate on the existing cell tower on Pondsides Road and approved the request unanimously.

6. *Highway/Water-Sewer Dept. Administrative Assistant Reclassification:* The Board unanimously approved the reclassification of the position from a Grade 4 to a Grade 5, based on the recommendation of the Personnel Policy Review Board.

7. *Police Chief Search Process:* Mr. Ashe stated that the Board had taken its time considering whether to conduct an in house or out of house search for Police Chief because they wanted to make sure they were doing what is in the best interests of the townspeople. Mr. Haberman stated that his position had not changed, and that he was in favor of an in-house promotion. He felt it was an excellent department, with good morale and that there were qualified candidates. Dr. Papale noted the letters received from the Patrolman's Union and the Supervisor's Union and felt they were well-written and made compelling arguments in support of in-house promotion. Mr. Ashe stated he was in favor of an in-

house search as well as the department was run efficiently, there were few grievances from the staff, few complaints from the residents and a great deal of positive comments about the current department. He felt the Board should look within the ranks first as there are people there who have shown leadership capabilities. It was noted that the Board reserved the right to seek outside candidates if no internal candidates were satisfactory.

### **Town Administrator Report:**

1. *Leaf Program Update:* It was noted that a second letter was sent out to residents who had received the original enforcement letter. The second letter explained that enforcement action would be delayed until the spring.
2. *Emerson Road/Essex Court:* The Board had not other recommendations for the issues raised by Mr. Wacks and Mr. Renius, residents of Essex Court. Therefore it was recommended to forward the Safety Officer's report to them.
3. *Town Hall Mold/Water Situation:* Work is scheduled for late January in the basement. Additional work related to the gutters, dry wells and grading around the building would be done in the spring.
4. *Building Maintenance Consolidation Update:* Ms. Wright informed the Board that the new Superintendent of Town Buildings Fran Boudreau has hired custodians, who have started work this week. Mr. Boudreau also had repaired a major problem with the Town Hall furnace.
5. *Compass Issue:* Ms. Wright has spoken to the resident regarding this issue and the Park and Recreation Superintendent is taking care of the matter.
6. *Charter Update:* The Commission continues to refine the proposed Charter.
7. *Dunsany Road Sidewalks:* An idea about relocating the sidewalks to the side of the street without the trees will be explored.
8. *Cell Tower Update:* Ms. Wright indicated that progress has been slow on the Cell Tower RFP and that she will need to take over the process if it is to proceed.

### **Correspondence:**

*Letter from Russell S. Hubley, Jr. re: Chief of Police:* The Board noted a letter from a resident supporting an in-house search for Chief of Police.

*Letter from Mike Kirby, Safety Officer regarding DPW Snow Removal:* The Board noted a letter of commendation for the DPW because of their cooperation with snow removal at school crossing guard locations.

*Letter from Debby Cartney re: ZBA decision:* The Board noted a letter from Ms. Cartney concerning a ZBA decision. It was forwarded to the ZBA, the Building Commissioner and Town Counsel.

*Notice from School Committee Chair re: School Superintendent Search:* The School Committee invited town officials to meet with the Superintendent Search Consultants on January 6, 2004 at 4:30 P.M.

**Executive Session:**

Seeing no further business, at 8:30 p.m. the Board voted unanimously on a roll call vote (B. Ashe – yes, H. Haberman – yes, J. Papale – yes) to enter into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing contract issues related to non-union staff and to return to open session afterward.

**Return to Open Session:**

The Board returned to open session at 9:10 P.M.

**Police Chief Search Process:** The Board was reminded that they should set the criteria for applicants for the Chief of Police. After some discussion the Board voted to consider applicants from the superior ranks of Sergeant and Captain for the position.

Seeing no further business, the Board voted to adjourn at 9:20 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan L. Wright  
Town Administrator