

Minutes
Board of Selectmen
January 6, 2003
Police Station Community Room
7:00 p.m.

Chairman Gerard Nolet called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Present: Selectmen Gerard A. Nolet, Brian M. Ashe and Hal W. Haberman (arrived at 7:20 P.M.)

Also Present: Town Administrator Susan Wright.

Acceptance of Minutes: The minutes of the December 16, 2002 regular and executive sessions were accepted as presented.

Announcements: Mr. Nolet began the meeting by explaining the situation with the leaf collection program. He explained the delays that the town came up against due to "Mother Nature" and assured residents that there will be a bag collection leaf program in the spring as per the memorandum by the Superintendent of Streets recommending that action. He also addressed the mix-up over trash collection the Saturday of the big snowstorm on January 3 and 4, 2003. Trash collection was suspended on late Friday and trash was not collected on Saturday. While he defended the decision to cancel the collection, he apologized for the delay in communicating the change in schedule to public. He stated that as town officials we need to do a better job to get the word out when there is a change and he promised the town would in the future. Lastly, he reminded residents to clear snow from any fire hydrants.

Visitor Comment & Questions : There were two residents that were in attendance to ask questions of the Board of Selectmen. Mr. David Hartman asked questions about the Charter Commission idea and was told that an informational meeting would be held at the Police Station Community Room on January 14, 2003 at 4:30 P.M. Ms. Diane Nadeau asked questions about the Police Department reorganization plan.

Longmeadow Country Club Change in Manager Hearing: At 7:15 P.M. the Board conducted a hearing on the application of the Longmeadow Country Club to change their manager to Mr. Brian P. Mullins. Mr. Mullins was in attendance and the Board unanimously approved the change.

Goals and Objectives for the Tree Warden and Building Superintendent: The Board met with Harry Reynolds to review his tree and building department goals and objectives.

Appropriations Committee: Present for a discussion with the Selectmen were members of the Appropriations Committee Steven Marantz, Judd Peskin, Deb Gebo and Paul Pastercyzk, Town Accountant. The Committee wanted to give the Board of Selectmen a sense of where they were coming from for the FY04 budget. Decreases in State Aid are expected and the Appropriations Committee predicts a decrease in local aid of more than \$700,000. The Committee urged the Selectmen to consider implementing a trash fee and to look into seeing if we can coordinate snow removal with the School Department in some way to save money. Mr. Nolet said the Board of Selectmen want to work with the Appropriations Committee on the budget and that the Board of Selectmen respect their involvement in the process. The Committee was thanked for coming in.

Old Business:

1. Sign for American Legion Building: The Board approved installing a new sign and changing the name of the American Legion Building to "The Old Town Hall". The Board approved the sign after determining the cost to the Town would be approximately \$100. The sign was approved to be installed on the building.

2. Leaf Program: The Board discussed a memorandum from the Superintendent of Streets regarding the bulk leaf collection program. Five crews were working until noon on December 20, 2002 at which time work stopped because of poor weather. He estimated that approximately 30% of the total leaves in town had not yet been collected. There is not enough manpower or funds to reinstitute the bulk collection in the spring in the remaining areas. It was the recommendation of the Superintendent that a bag collection of the entire town be conducted in the spring. The program would run about one month and could be accomplished with the remaining funds in the program account. The Board agreed that this was the only way to complete collection of the leaves within the budget available.

3. Charter Update: It was noted by the Board of Selectmen that a meeting had been arranged with state officials to get questions answered about the Charter process. The meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 14, 2003 at 4:30 P.M. at the Police Station Community Room.

Town Administrator's Report:

Mileage Stipend: The Board reviewed the mileage stipend given to employees that use their own vehicles in the course of town business. The current stipend of 25 cents per mile has been in place for many years and it was requested to be reviewed. After reviewing the monetary impact of an increase and reviewing the current IRS allowable amount of 36.5 cents per mile, the Board voted to increase the mileage stipend to 30 cents per mile effective July 1, 2003. This will cumulatively affect town budgets by an estimated \$750.00.

School Budget Report in Town Report: There was discussion about the level of detail provided on the school budget in the Town Report. A very detailed report could be put into the town report taking up eleven pages. The Town Accountant offered to work with the School Business Manager to come up with a one page report that would provide more detail. It was also suggested that the more detailed and lengthy report could be put on the Town Web Site.

Letter from Republican Town Committee re: Polling Places: The Board decided a working group should be formed to examine how to deal with issues related to parking and/or a second polling place for elections. The Committee should include representative from the Republican and Democratic Town Committees, a representative from the Schools, Louise Lines, Town Clerk, Mike Kirby, Safety Officer and a member of the Selectmen. The Board stated that the proposed solution should be convenient and workable for the Clerk's Office.

No Left Turn at Wolf Swamp: The Board reviewed a memorandum from Mike Kirby but could not visualize his request. The Board asked that the Safety Officer submit a sketch to go with his request to be considered at the next meeting. The Board also wanted confirmation that the School was in favor of the suggestion.

Correspondence:

Letter of resignation from David Sanborn: The Board acknowledged a letter of resignation from David Sanborn, a member of the Board of Assessors, effective December 31, 2002.

Letter of resignation from Patricia Eckalban: The Board acknowledged a letter of resignation from Patricia Eckalban as an Election Official.

Letter of complaint about the Town Building Commissioner: The Board acknowledged a letter of complaint about the Town Building Commissioner and noted that it had been forwarded to Town Counsel.

Chamber of Commerce Meeting: The Board noted that Gov. Romney will be speaking at the Springfield Chamber of Commerce meeting on January 31 and the Board was invited to be guests of Town Counsel David Martel.

FY04 Budget Request from Mark Denver, Building Commissioner: The Board approved his request to increase his FY04 budget request for education reimbursement by \$190. The Board took no action on his request to increase his vehicle stipend from \$2400 to \$2700.

Seeing no further business, the Board voted to conclude the public portion of the meeting and to enter into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing collective bargaining issues.

Roll Call vote: Mr. Nolet – yes Mr. Haberman – yes Mr. Ashe – yes

Mr. Nolet announced that the Board would not return to open session and adjourned the open session at 8:30 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Wright
Town Administrator