

BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Proctor School Library
Minutes of March 7, 2016

Chairman Powers called the meeting to order at 7:30PM. Board members present, in addition to Chairman Laura Powers, were Selectmen Martha Morrison, Steve Lais, Boyd Jackson and Eldon Goodhue. Of the Selectmen's staff, Town Administrator Kellie Hebert and Board Executive Assistant Susan Sordello were in attendance. Other persons present during all or part of the meeting were Topsfield Cable operators Baxter & Ben Demers, Tri-Town Transcript reporter Doreen Burliss, Topsfield Housing Authority members Richard Cullinan, Paula Burke, Rose David, Masconomet School Committee Chair John Spencer, and residents Dick Gandt and Jeanine Cunniff.

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Chairman Powers announced that the Board would go into Executive Session at the end of regular session to discuss collective bargaining strategies for the Firefighters and Call Firefighters Unions and to discuss Topsfield Animal Shelter V. ZBA litigation and would not return to Open Session. Chairman Powers also gave an update on the 02.29.16 working session which included development of the warrant and personnel items regarding classification issues with employees. Selectman Morrison announced the March 19th Grow Spring Expo returns to Topsfield for the 3rd year. Event would be held from 10-3 in the Emerson Center and The Gould Barn. Selectman Goodhue announced a meeting on Wednesday at Town Hall of the 24/7 Fire Study Committee.

APPOINTMENTS: 7:30 – Dick Cullinan updated the Town on the Topsfield Housing Authority's progress at Little Brook Village (LBV). LBV is the sole town-affiliated housing complex and was built 50 years ago. Shared Director, Dianne Drinan has been on the job for a year and splits her time with Georgetown. She has secured funding for several projects at LBV including replacing 50 refrigerators, light fixtures and new heat and A/C units. Institute for Savings had also granted money to replace outside benches and the TV in the common room. Approximately \$750,000.00 in projects have been done at no cost to the town. Within the month, the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) will be starting a project to complete a \$1.529 million renovation project to replace rotted sills and other items that are no longer in compliance. The Topsfield Housing Authority has a plan in place to relocate the residents during the work. There may be some impact to traffic on Washington Street and Mr. Cullinan stated that he may ask for construction signs to be placed on Washington Street. This project should take one year to complete. Selectman Goodhue thanked the committee for all of their hard work.

7:53 – John Spencer, Chairman of the Masconomet School Committee came before the Board with a capital request of \$200,000.00 for telecommunication

replacement at Masconomet Regional School. Mr. Spenser understands that the Town warrant has been closed and asked for it to be opened and to add this request. After a discussion regarding the reopening of the warrant, the Board agreed that the warrant would not be reopened. Chairman Powers stated the Masconomet stabilization fund that had been created 8 years ago to deal with such unexpected items. Mr. Spenser explained that the stabilization fund would be depleted significantly and that they would like to save that fund for an emergency. Mr. Spenser stated that they are trying a new approach to the budget process.

CITIZENS QUESTIONS & COMMENTS: None heard.

GENERAL BUSINESS

Old Business

Town Administrator, Kellie Hebert, reviewed the draft town meeting warrant and list of articles. Hebert reported that there are no surprises and just wanted to update the Board as to progress. The Financial Management Team will meet and coordinate with the Finance Committee shortly. One key number that they are working on is the reserve for salary and wages since there are unknown factors concerning the 24/7 Fire Study and the reserve police officer contract.

Minutes

Selectman Morrison made a motion to accept the Joint Minutes of the THBC/Historical Commission of January, 13, 2016, the BOS Working Session Minutes of January 20, 2016, and the BOS Minutes of January 25, 2016, seconded by Selectman Lais; so voted 4-0-1; Selectman Goodhue abstained. Selectman Morrison made a motion to accept the BOS Work Session Minutes of February, 3, 2016 and the BOS Executive Session Minutes of February 3, 2016 and to hold until all matters are resolved, seconded by Selectman Lais, so voted 4-0-1; Selectman Jackson abstained.

Selectman Morrison made a motion to accept the BOS Working Session Minutes of February 17, 2016, and the BOS Minutes of February 22, 2016, seconded by Selectman Goodhue; so voted 5-0.

Correspondence & Reports

Correspondence

Selectman Morrison discussed the letter from the Massachusetts Historical Commission regarding their looking favorably on the design approach to the Town Hall renovation. Selectman Lais questioned next steps in regards to the Conservation Commission memo, it was determined that all items had been closed out and that the commissioner is taking care of everything.

Reports

Selectman Goodhue asked to bring up another issue regarding unsigned, undated responses on the Town website and questioned if that is a customary practice. Selectman Morrison replied that if a document came from a Town group with a formal request it would be put on the website. It is not the website administrators purpose to censure or edit any items. She went on to remark that Town Boards can submit any rebuttal as long as they go through the proper channels. Selectman Goodhue brought up a second issue questioning how the Town handles a HIPPA complaint. Administrator Hebert stated that she was not aware of any specific complaint but any and all complaints should be made directly to her.

At 8:47 PM, Selectmen Morrison made a motion to go into Executive Session with the Fire Chief to discuss collective bargaining strategy with respect to the Firefighters and Call Firefighters Unions and to discuss Topsfield Animal Shelter V. ZBA litigation; seconded by Selectman Goodhue. In a roll call vote, a yes vote was recorded for Chairman Powers, Selectman Morrison, Selectman Lais, Selectman Jackson and Selectman Goodhue. The Board would not return to open session.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Sordello, Executive Assistant
Board of Selectmen

Approved as written at the March 21, 2016 Board of Selectmen's meeting.

Per the Open Meeting Law, the documents that were either distributed to the BOS before the meeting in a packet, or at the meeting were:

1. Agenda
2. Preliminary BOS Minutes – Joint Session on 01.13.16, Regular meetings of 01.25.16 and 02.22.16, Work Sessions of 01.20.16, 02.03.16 and 02.17.16 and an Executive Session of 02.03.16.
3. Letter from Mass. Historical Commission
4. Letter from John Thompson, Wire Inspector
5. Letter from DCR
6. Letter from the Conservation Commission
7. Personnel Advisory Committee Minutes of 01.07.16
8. Preliminary draft warrant and list of articles
9. Masconomet telecommunications information sheet
10. Memo from Topsfield Housing Authority regarding Little Brook Village projects.

Pursuant to the 'Open Meeting Law,' G.L. 39, § 23B, 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.