

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN**  
**Proctor School Library**  
**Minutes of October 15, 2012**

Chairman Eldon Goodhue called the meeting to order at 4:00PM. Board members present, in addition to Chairman Goodhue, were Martha Morrison, Dick Gandt, Laura Powers and Ken Vogel. Of the Selectmen's staff, Town Administrator Virginia Wilder was in attendance. Other persons present during all or part of the meeting were Topsfield Cable Walter Harmer, Tri-Town Transcript reporter Kate Evans, residents Phil Knowles, James Carroll, Alex Carter, Sheryl Knutsen, Sean Cunniff, Vince Guerra, Carole Carter, Mark Lyons, Boyd Jackson, George Anderson, Robert Knutsen, Paula Burke, Kathleen Hoffman, Kim Sherwood, Jeanine Cunniff, Beverly Guarino, Town employees Barbara Michalowski, Lana Spillman, Sue Winslow, Laura Zalewski, Roberta Knight, and Pauline Evans.

Outdoor Exercise Trail: Selectman Gandt made a motion to accept the improvements to Town property known as the "Topsfield Outdoor Exercise Trail Project" as funded and built out by EBSCO on land belonging to the Town at the rear of the EBSCO building at 376-380 Boston Street, seconded by Selectman Morrison; so voted: 5-0.

Weatherization of Town Buildings: Selectman Morrison made a motion to approve an agreement with Northern Energy Services to weatherize 6 town buildings, including Proctor and Steward Schools, DPW Facility, Police Station, Town Hall and the Library for a total estimated cost of \$63,431.00, funding would come from the Green Communities Grant, seconded by Selectman Powers; so voted: 5-0.

Government Review Committee (GRC) Recommendations: Chairman Goodhue opened the meeting by expressing the purpose of the meeting was to begin to openly discuss the Recommendations made by the Government Review Committee. Then Chairman Goodhue stated a question to the Board "would you accept the recommendations with no changes" in theory. Each member provided their opinion. Selectman Powers thanked the GRC for the work they performed and acknowledged the breadth and scope of the examination they performed. Selectman Powers stated she agrees with the theory behind the recommendations and would support moving forward. Selectman Gandt suggested that the reduction of four elected boards and one elected position was a radical change in Topsfield and he was uncomfortable with those recommendations. In addition, he expressed his concern for the costs related to those changes. Selectman Gandt supported the recommendation regarding computer literacy and paper reduction. Selectman Vogel expressed that he likes to keep things simple and expressed he would accept the proposed recommendations as is. Selectman Morrison would endorse moving forward with the recommendations. Chairman Goodhue stated "if it ain't broke, don't fix it" would be his comment on the recommendations. He reported that his approach would be to leave it the way it is and see if the Board could be better Selectmen. There was discussion relative to how the Town operates now and what different visions each Selectmen had relative to the recommendations.

Chairman Goodhue opened up the meeting to questions and concerns from the audience. Sean Cunniff, resident and Library Trustee, stated that he had concerns related to the Library Trustees jurisdiction over the Director and the Library budget. He also commented that as a resident he would like to see a cost analysis of the data presented in the recommendations. Phil Knowles, resident and Chairman of the Board of Water Commissioners and of the Board of Road Commissioners, expressed that in the spirit of cooperation there has developed a friendly environment between the Water Department and Highway Department and the Town

Administrator. However, he noted, it could blow up at any time, and in addition, he did not believe that the same feelings are experienced with the Park & Cemetery Commissioners. Mr. Knowles suggested that the Board of Selectmen take a strong look at the day-to-day operations and believes that there are no clear lines noting that Ms. Wilder has tighten down the relationship, but it does need clear definition. Mr. Knowles further noted that Town Meeting vote approved the abolishment of the three elected Boards and that it had passed at the polls. Bev Guarino, resident and former Town Clerk, provided clarification of Mr. Knowles Town Meeting vote of the merge, stating it was at a Special Town Meeting in March 2005, followed by vote, at the Town Meeting in 2008, but then failed at the polls. There was a discussion regarding this issue. Ms. Guarino said she would research the meetings to clarify what occurred. Sheryl Knutsen, resident and member of the Board of Health, read a statement and submitted a letter from the Chairman of the Board of Health William Hunt. Laura Zalewski, Director of the Library, asked for clarification regarding the reporting structure.

Virginia Wilder, Town Administrator, provided clarification on the reporting structure. Ms. Wilder pointed out she works with all the Department Heads, but that she has no authority, there is no structure to ensure that it will remain the way it exists today.

Paula Burke, resident and Town Clerk, stated that she would not support the recommendation to change the Town Clerk to an appointed position. She submitted a letter from Nantucket Town Clerk, which defended this position.

Jeanine Cunniff, resident and Chairman of the Elementary School Committee, stated her negative opinion of the abolishment of the elected boards.

George Hall, resident and Town Moderator, explained his experience while Chairman of Conservation Commission relative to the impact of Department Heads at Town Hall with no daily supervision. In addition, Mr. Hall expressed, through his knowledge of more than twenty years of municipal law, different community structures and how different size municipalities benefited from management structures. Selectman Gandt requested the data to back that up, and that he believes would begin the process of moving toward a cost analysis.

**Warrants:** The Selectmen signed and approved warrants in the amount of **\$ 406,020.10**. The breakdown is as follows:

Warrant FY13:	
031T	\$ 90,680.55
032	\$ 315,339.55

At 5:49PM, Selectmen Gandt made a motion to adjourn and Selectman Morrison seconded the motion; so voted: 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Rich, Secretary  
Selectmen's Office

*Approved as amended at the May 13, 2013 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. Letter from the Nantucket Town Clerk
3. Letter from William Hunt, Chairman of the Board of Health
4. Letter from Sheryl Knutsen, member of the Board of Health

<p>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.</p>
--