

**ASHLAND BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING
MONDAY, MARCH 17, 2014
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL LIBRARY
7 PM**

MINUTES

Chairman Stewart called the meeting to order at 7PM with a roll call. Normand DeWolfe, Phil Preston, Jeanette I. Stewart, Fran Newton, Steve Felton present.

Others Present: Paul Branscombe, Pat Crowell and members of the Public.

RE-ORGANIZATION OF THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Felton nominated Normand DeWolfe for Chairman. Fran Newton seconded. Preston abstained. Stewart Nay. Felton, Newton, DeWolfe in favor. 3-1-1.

Chairman DeWolfe thanked Stewart for her work as the previous chairman. Chairman DeWolfe nominated Stewart as Vice-Chairman. Stewart declined. Chairman DeWolfe nominated Preston as Vice-Chairman. Felton seconded. All in favor.

The following are nominations as ex-officio members of various boards:

Planning Board – Felton nominated Newton to the Planning Board. Newton seconded. Stewart Nay. 4-1 Alternate member: Newton nominated Preston. DeWolfe seconded. All in favor.

CIP Committee – Newton nominated Felton. Stewart seconded. All in favor. Alternate member; Newton nominated Stewart. Felton seconded. All in favor.

Budget Committee – Newton nominated DeWolfe. Preston seconded. All in favor. Alternate Member : Newton nominated Felton. Preston seconded. All in favor.

Joint Loss Committee – DeWolfe nominated Stewart and Preston. Newton seconded. All in favor.

Personnel Policy Committee – Newton nominated Stewart. DeWolfe seconded. All in favor.

Union Negotiating – DeWolfe nominated Stewart and Preston. Felton seconded. Newton Nay. 4-1

Discussion started about moving the workshops to evenings at 6:30 PM. Felton agreed. Stewart said that having the workshops in the evenings at the school library would limit access to anything that they might need at the town office. Preston thought that it would conflict with other meetings. Newton agreed. Discussion continued. Newton moved to have the worksessions on the third Monday at 6:30. Preston said that it should be 7PM to be consistent. Preston seconded. All in favor.

APPROVALS

Minutes of March 3: Preston moved to approve with corrections. Stewart seconded. Felton and Newton abstained. 3-0-2

Minutes of March 12: Preston moved to approve with corrections. Stewart seconded. Felton and Newton abstained. 3-0-2

OLD BUSINESS

Adoption of Right to Know – Procedure for 91-A requests – TA Branscombe explained the new form and policy the he would like the Selectmen to adopt. Discussion about the charge for copies and whether a 50% deposit should be taken. Preston motioned for anyone requesting information for a 91A request they would have to pay for 50% up front. The Selectmen decided to table this until another time.

Town Hall Improvements – TA Branscombe explained that the town hall is on the National Register and that town hall is not ADA compliant according to USDA Rural Development. Northern Community Investment Corporation will be in on Thursday to discuss grants and what can be done.

NEW BUSINESS

Land Use Clerk – Eli Badger asked to postpone this topic until Sue MacLeod could get here.

Impact of default budget on non-union employee salaries – TA Branscombe asked the Selectmen to consider raises for non-union employees. He mentioned that the default budget is higher in some areas. DeWolfe said that he wants to look at the complete picture. Newton suggested appointing a sub-committee to look at the budget. After some discussion, Preston moved to appoint Felton and Newton to a sub-committee to research the default budget. DeWolfe seconded. All in favor.

Land Use Clerk – Susan MacLeod and Eli Badger have worked on a comprehensive job description for a land use clerk. There is no money in the budget. Badger suggested that the building inspector could accept the applications. Clerical work would be done by Paul Branscombe. Preston commented that you can't ask the building inspector to do something that he doesn't get paid for. This would be a short term solution. MacLeod said that the fees should take care of all the fees and a clerk by RSA. The Planning Board can raise the fees. MacLeod said that in Gilmanton they are looking for a land use clerk and the pay will be \$15.50 to \$17.00 and hour. Felton asked for more information on the average number of hours. Badger said that it is not a huge amount of time. Will approach the building inspector to help out.

Economic Development Committee – Felton mentioned that MacLeod has done a template of how it would be structured and presented it to the CIP committee. Will bring this up at the next meeting, April 7th.

SELECTBOARD ITEMS – Received a written complaint from a “concerned taxpayer”. There were several issues: The top of Winter Street and Main Street is very difficult to see beyond the snow banks, the public works department is doing snow removal work during peak hours causing obstruction of traffic. There were no signs warning of workers ahead. Preston said that we have had a “different kind of winter” and the town is doing its best. Included with the complaint were pictures of the gates at the public works department being open on the weekend. After some discussion Tim Paquette, public works director, addressed the concerns. The chairman asked Tim about the open gate. Paquette said that if he is coming in on Saturday and possibly again on Sunday he will leave the gate open in the winter. Paquette also said that the banks on Winter and Main have been pushed back.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Sandra Coleman welcomed the new members of the board. She asked if the new sub-committee should have members of the Budget Committee also. Ms. Coleman asked Stewart if all the money on the Warrant Articles had been sent out. Stewart said yes. Coleman also mentioned that the town trustees were supposed to get \$125,000 for a warrant article for roads, and they didn’t receive the full amount because it was spent on roads prior. Stewart said that was true but the town attorney said that it was okay to do it that way.

Ron Boyce from North Ashland Road said that he has a foot of water in the street up the road from his house, and said that he called the public works director. Paquette was salting the roads at the time he called.

Bobbi Hoerter asked about the public hearing scheduled for April 7th before the selectmen’s meeting.

Lee Nichols wanted to mention that Dots Bread and Butter was awarded favorite for soups. Also, Jeremy Hiltz was awarded #1 contractor.

Ann Sanborn – She said that it should be standard and customary for signs to be displayed when work is being done. There were no police there either. She said that she was concerned about the time of day in the morning that the work was being done. The day in question was during heavy commuting time. She said that she doesn’t like to drop off her child at the bus stop because of the snow piles. She says the town needs to address liability.

Dan Uhlman – He said that the state doesn’t have signage for everything and that there is ice everywhere. He said that it has been a “hell” of a winter and people just need to “suck it up”.

Ann Sanborn – Spoke up again about the state doing work near the post office and that they were warning travelers that there was work ahead.

Kendall Hughes – Asked if anyone had called the state regarding the puddles on Main Street by the Post Office. He also stated that on March 11th the voters voted for no more spending.

Mark Ober – The former public works director/road agent asked the Selectmen how many complaints they have received this winter. He said that if there were several complaints, then he

would have been concerned, but having a few complaints in a winter like we have had this year, he would have let it go right over his head.

There being no further business, it was announced that the next BOS meeting would be on 4/17/14 at 6:30 PM at the school cafeteria beginning with the Time Warner Cable contract hearing with the Selectmen meeting beginning at 7PM or thereabout.

Preston motioned to adjourn at 8:25 PM. Newton seconded. All in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Patricia Crowell
3-20-13