



TOWN OF BLANDFORD
Board of Selectmen, Minutes
January 5, 2015

Attendance: Andy Montanaro, William Levakis, Adam Dolby and Cara Letendre – Secretary

Open Meeting:

7:03 p.m. Mr. Levakis formally called meeting to order, provided notice that meeting may be recorded.

Posted Agenda Items:

1. Sanctuary Regarding Excise Tax: Mr. and Mrs. Sanctuary provided Board with letter summarizing issues they have had with receiving an abatement for an excise tax. (see attached). Board spoke with Tax Collector who explained that bill has to be paid prior to processing an abatement. Mr. and Mrs. Sanctuary were concerned with the amount of time the abatement took to be processed. They just received their refund check, began process in November. Mr. Levakis provided them with his personal number to call if they have anymore issues. Board asked Cara to put Financial Officers on agenda for next week to review abatement and refund process.
2. Job Descriptions (Town Administrator & Town Manager):
 - a. Mr. Montanaro would like to ask Finance Committee to look into funding for a Town Administrator. Board agreed on need to fill this position.
 - b. Mr. Levakis: look at surrounding Towns' budgets for Town Administrator.
 - c. Mr. Montanaro: interested in part-time or sharing the position.
 - d. Town Clerk: we need a full-time Administrator with knowledge of how the Town and State run.
 - e. Mr. Dolby: concerned that the need to hire someone to fill this position to manage several small positions is an indication of how poorly handled some of these positions have been up to this point. Current challenge is that the Selectboard is acting as a Town Administrator.
 - f. Mr. Montanaro: Selectboard has been unable to complete employee reviews. Personnel need guidelines and follow-up. Mr. Levakis will commit to completing financial officer's reviews with Finance Liason and Selectmen Secretary review.
 - g. Mr. Levakis: Board has to take appointments very seriously.
 - h. Mr. Montanaro: Clearly if we continue as we are we will not be successful. As we are putting together the budget for FY16 now, it is the time to discuss funding an Administrator. We have to stop dumping jobs on Cara.
3. Minutes: Mr. Dolby motion to approve meeting minutes from 12/22/14, Mr. Montanaro second, unanimous vote.

- 4 Water Department Positions and Reporting Relationships:
 - a. Mr. Montanaro concerned about the fact that Water Department Commissioners sign each other's time cards. To avoid conflict of interest, would like to look for way to fix this. As to avoid appearance of irregularity.
 - b. Mr. Levakis: Water Commissioners are an elected board. The Selectboard oversees and has to sign off on their payroll. We are allowed by law Special Town Employees for a town our size.
 - c. Mr. Dolby: Problem is the appearance of impropriety.
 - d. Mr. Levakis: Not hiding anything, need people in those positions who know the water system.
 - e. Mr. Dolby: suggested bringing in some new employees to train. Need for knowledge transfer. Also avoid overtime pay. Mr. Levakis: stepped down as Chair of Water Commissioners to train Mr. Boomsma. Mr. Levakis agreed to put an ad in the paper for part-time help.
 - f. Mr. Levakis: Used to contract out leak repairs, costs the town a lot more money. Spoke with attorney's to set-up a legal way for the Commissioners to work on the leaks as opposed to just overseeing. Cost the Town less money.
 - g. Mr. Montanaro: no insinuation that anyone is doing anything wrong. We can resolve the conflict by having the Field Commissioners do the supervision and hire workers other than the Water Commissioners to do the labor.
 - h. Mr. Levakis: Water Department hasn't increased rates since 2005 due to good management

Old Business

- 1 Springfield Water and Sewer Commission: Mr. Levakis and Mr. Young working on setting up meeting with Spfld Water and State Police.
 - a. Mr. Montanaro asked Mr. Young to provide Board with a brief summary of problems and recommended solutions.
- 2 Shepard Farm BDR Report: Conservation and Historical Commission to review report and then Selectboard will follow-up.
- 3 Highway Department Superintendent: (out on Bereavement Leave)
 - a. Mr. Montanaro:
 - i. Discussed Road Hotline number 848-1421
 - ii. Brad to present road software in January
 - iii. Hotbox- manufacturer was in last week to do training (Mr. Levakis believes Hotbox can be used in the winter to fill potholes. Mr. Montanaro will follow-up.)
- 4 Highway Department Outline: none for this week.
- 5 Highway Sick and Vacation Accruals: Tabled
- 6 Tax Collector Salary: Mr. Van workHooven reported that Mrs. Massee is fine with salary or hourly rate. Either way she will have to stay within her budgeted salary. Mr. Montanaro asked Finance Committee to look into the numbers and get back to the Board with a rate.
- 7 Police: Chief Hennessey out sick. Mr. Dolby aggress that the response time is much quicker in the cold weather when the vehicles are kept at police officer's homes, under cover.
- 8 Highway Garage Bid: Cara spoke with Mr. Ebreo from EDA Engineering and he stated that the lack of experience Clayton & Davenport Trucking seemed to have with buildings was a red flag for them. Mr. Montanaro motion to choose Evergreen Construction for the repair of the Highway Garage Project based on

the recommendation from EDA for the amount of \$123,500 contingent upon funding approved from Stabilization and other sources at a Town meeting, Mr. Levakis second, unanimous vote. Cara will work on the contract and contact both companies.

- 9 Town Insurance: Employees are actually paying only 27% of insurance as opposed to the agreed upon 30%. (change occurred because of a rate change at Blue Cross) Tabled for now.
- 10 PVPC: would like to use DLTA money to have someone access what our needs are for a Regional Accountant. Board agreed.

New Business

1. Trespassing at Salt Shed: Highway Department employees expressed concerns about residents going into the Salt Shed. The area is posted and gated and is not meant to be accessible to the public. Mr. Levakis will notify Police Chief to issue citations to anyone trespassing. Mr. Levakis asked that this be put in the Country Journal.
NOTE: Sand and salt is still available for residents at Highway Department Garage.
2. State of Town Address: Mr. Levakis would like to have a town meeting to make residents aware of where the Town stands financially, etc. Mr. Montanaro: need to schedule a Special Town Meeting to move remainder of funding for the Highway Garage also. Board agreed to schedule Special Town Meeting for February 4, 2014 with the State of the Town Address to follow (Cara will check with Town Moderator).
3. Annual Town Meeting: Town Clerk provided schedule of events to Selectboard in preparation for Annual Town Meeting.
 - a. 3/16/15 warrant sent to Finance Committee for recommendations
 - b. 3/23/15 budget complete
 - c. 4/1/15 town report complete
 - d. 4/27/15 mini town meeting
 - e. 5/4/15 town meeting
4. Town Clerk's Computer: Akuity provided a quote of \$157.00 for additional memory to be added to computer. Board: agreed to take funding out of Town Clerk's budget.
 - a. Discussed storing of information onto server rather than just individual computers. Currently store all SoftRight information on server as well as offsite. Mr. Dolby will follow-up.
5. Computer in Assessor's Office Not Working: Mr. Dolby will meet with volunteers to discuss options.
6. Highway Budget: Mr. Levakis and Mr. Montanaro have Highway Department Secretary working on it.

10:05 p.m. Mr. Levakis motion to adjourn, Mr. Dolby second, unanimous vote.

Submitted by: Cara Letendre

William Levakis

Andy Montanaro

Adam Dolby