



TOWN OF BLANDFORD  
Board of Selectmen, Minutes  
February 4, 2015

**Attendance:** Andy Montanaro, Bill Levakis, Adam Dolby and Mary Kronholm – Secretary  
Stand-in

**Open Meeting:**

7:030 p.m. Mr. Levakis formally called meeting to order, provided notice that meeting may be recorded.

**Posted Agenda Items:**

1. Finances

- a. Land Auction: held on December 1<sup>st</sup> brought in \$74,000.00
- b. Chapter 90 & Strap Grant funding
  - i. In January we received \$495,000 in Strap Grant money.
  - ii. In January we received notice that \$383,740.43 in reimbursements for completed projects has been approved and will be sent to the Town shortly.
  - iii. We are still owed \$60,508.21. We are in the final stages of submitting all necessary paperwork.
  - iv. For FY16 we have been allocated \$387,302 (increased from \$258,201) and have \$129,383.22 in reserves for road projects.
  - v. Mr. Montanaro: working with Highway Department regarding software for road work estimates. This program will be ready for use by next Friday. We will be prioritizing roads to set where we will fund repairs. Highway will present recommendations to the Selectboard, for next summer. Looking into how we can start the process earlier (i.e. bidding) – get approval earlier and work with DOT to get work done earlier.  
NOTE: repairs may exceed cash on hand and we may have to come up with additional funding.
- c. FEMA
  - i. Hurricane Irene
    1. Hiram Blair Road

- a. Expected: We have provided all documentation requested and are waiting to hear back regarding the \$516,346.
      - i. We can appeal if we are not satisfied with the amount they decide to reimburse us.
    - b. Berkshire Consulting: We are waiting on the court's ruling regarding the \$12,150.50 that was allegedly stolen.
  - ii. Ice Storm
    - 1. BRD:
      - a. Paid settlement of \$725,000 (original price was close to \$900,000).
      - b. Expecting 75% reimbursement from FEMA.
      - c. We have submitted all necessary paperwork.
- d. Forensic Audit: Across all financial offices. An ongoing project. If there is wrongdoing, we can move forward.
- e. Wired West
  - i. Selectboard signed a letter of interest to continue participation.
  - ii. There will be informational meetings held for residents to discuss cost.
  - iii. Mr. Dolby- Power Point presentation.
    - 1. 32 of 44 towns have signed on
    - 2. Total cost could be as high as 2.8 million. However this number will come down and we will get 1 million from MBI. Wired West will walk us through the financial process.
      - a. Annual cost to town \$100,000 - \$155,000. Breaks down to about \$100 per tax payer per year.
    - 3. Ability to bundle TV, Data, and Phone over the fiber optic line.
    - 4. Maintenance is included if 100% join.
    - 5. "Most critical infrastructure" Good for the area; resale value; ability from work from home.
- f. Worthington Withdrawal
  - i. Estimated cost to Blandford of \$100,000
  - ii. There is currently a lawsuit pending to negate this; we have requested a "stay of execution". We are budgeting as though there are six towns in the district. No word on mitigation funds from legislature.
  - iii. Mr. David Hopson: Worthington has requested withdrawal of the suit. Probably no mitigation funds. School district is facing a million dollar short fall. "If we can get through this coming year, we should be ok."
  - iv. Who is responsible for Insurance and Retirement? Mr. Hopson: There will be a legal decision; probably will fall on Worthington to carry their "fair share".
  - v. What is to stop other towns from leaving? Mr. Hopson: cost is significantly higher, \$35,000 to \$40,000 per student for Worthington to have their own school.

- g. Current Functionality of Financial Offices
  - i. Cohn Resnick – Tony V speak
    - 1. Working with the Software firm and an outside consultant to build the integration town needs. As well as building in a monthly reconciliation.
  - ii. SoftRight now linked – Tony V speak
    - 1. Software purchases were made independently in all offices. The financial officers have worked to fix the problems in their own offices.
  - iii. DLT A funding through PVPC, an assessment of our needs regarding a regional accountant.
- 2. Springfield Water & Sewer and State Police
  - a. State Police
    - i. Revision of patrol booklet to include resident access on Shepard Farm and Knittell properties
    - ii. Sign change on Herrick Road Gate from “No Trespassing” to “No Vehicular Access”
  - b. Springfield Water & Sewer: willing to work with the Town. Mr. Levakis and Mr. Young will be meeting with them again.
- 3. Highway Garage Project: will be getting repaired ASAP using funding set aside. If not repaired, insurance would no longer cover.
- 4. Job Descriptions and Personnel Policy
  - a. Selectboard has made significant progress with the help of volunteer Laurie Parent
- 5. Question and Answer Period
  - a. Mass Pike access for residents? Federal Government and Federal Highway are not interested in adding an exit. No longer on the table.

8:38 Mr. Montanaro motion to adjourn, Mr. Dolby second, unanimous vote.

Submitted by: Cara Letendre & Mary Kronholm

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William Levakis

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Andy Montanaro

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Adam Dolby