



TOWN OF BLANDFORD
Board of Selectmen, Minutes
November 10, 2014

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

Open Meeting:

7:00 p.m. Mr. Levakis formally called meeting to order, provided notice that meeting may be recorded.

Posted Agenda Items:

1. Warrants: None this week
2. Bruce Cooper: Not in attendance
3. Discussion with School Committee Members and Gateway Superintendent Regarding DESE Needs Conference: DESE is holding a public hearing on December 3, 2014 to review and receive public input regarding the Worthington withdrawal.
 - a. Mr. Montanaro: Is the School Committee planning on making a statement regarding whether they are or are not in favor of the withdrawal? Mrs. Crane: The School Committee did vote against the withdrawal last February. DESE has a list of questions they need answered. It is important for residents to come and voice their opinions, especially regarding the financial impact. Mr. Hopson: DESE will welcome questions at the meeting, however the withdrawal was already voted on by the legislature.
 - b. Mr. Montanaro: asked the School Committee members to present to DESE what the withdrawal will mean to the school, impact of losing \$600,000.00 to the budget should there be no changes in revenue. Mr. Montanaro asked that the School Committee demonstrate the impact in the change of education. Mrs. Crane: the education plan that was submitted stated that they would not change the level of education. Important for towns to express the need for financial assistance that will last for longer than one year.
 - c. Mrs. Crane: the loss of Worthington students is spread throughout the district, there is no simple solution. The legislature stated that they would hold the other six towns "harmless". It's important that residents come to the meeting and ask what this means. Mr. Hopson: Residents will be able to post any questions in advance on the school blog.
 - d. Mr. Van Workhoven: impact on Blandford will be about \$80,000.00. The only way to make this up this will be to significantly cut back on services or to have an override.
 - e. Mr. Montanaro: concerned that with the process moving forward things will fall through the cracks without mediation. Mr. Hopson: will be requesting state funding for an actuary to determine how much Worthington owes for Hampshire

County Retirement. Will be drawing up a separation agreement and hopes all will come to a reasonable agreement.

4. Welcome Committee: Mrs. Bocon and Mrs. Montanaro presented Board with goals, method, structure and budget. See attached. Selectboard approved of committee working under the Recreation Committee.

Old Business

1. Highway Department: Mr. Levakis assigned Mr. Montanaro as Liaison to the Highway Department as Mr. Dolby is away often. Mr. Levakis noted that he has recently received complaints and concerns regarding the Highway Department procedures. Mr. Montanaro will address how to make the Highway Department as effective as possible and will outline what might be holding them back and how the Board can support them. He has a meeting scheduled with the Highway Superintendent tomorrow.
2. Water Leak: Using a robotic camera device, the Water Department found the water leak on Route 23 located across from the entrance to Sunset Road. Plan to attempt to fix without having to dig up the new road.
3. BOH: Members not present. Mr. Levakis stated it is mandatory that they attend next week. Mr. Dana Wojik present to discuss invoice from Wojik Electric. The bill was paid late and did not include the 1.5% interest he had charged. Mr. Levakis will follow-up. He stated that the invoice was held up in the BOH department and hadn't been given to the Accountant.
4. Highway Outline: Read and reviewed.
 - a. Chester Road Shoulders: Lane Construction will be completing the work.
 - b. Loader Repair? Pins being replaced.
5. Water Department Rules and Regulations: next week.
6. Highway Department Sick and Vacation Accruals: Mr. Montanaro unable to get into Treasurer's office as she has been away. Revisit
7. Personnel Policy: Board prefer to update policy piece by piece
8. Quote Watson Park Fence and Asphalt Removal: Quote from M&M Site Services. Mr. Levakis motion to approve proposal from M&M Site Services to remove chain link fence at the Watson Park Gate and surrounding the tennis courts as well as to grind up and remove the asphalt as stated in proposal contingent upon inclusion of Watson Park Gate at the current price and change of payment due from 15 to 30 days, and with a Town Counsel approved contract, Mr. Montanaro second, unanimous vote.
9. Police Department Pay Scale & Policies: Chief submitted pay rates for surrounding towns. Blandford is the lowest by about \$4.00 per/hr. Discussion regarding the budget voted for the Police Department. Mr. Montanaro: point is that the Selectboard received a letter from the Police Chief stating that two members of the Police Department have been promoted but this had not been reflected in their pay scale. Mr. Montanaro had asked the Police Chief for the policy in the police department which includes protocol for increasing rates with promotions. Chief Hennessey stated previously via email that he would provide this policy to Mr. Montanaro. Mr. Montanaro stated that if the promotion rates are within the budget, he doesn't foresee a problem.

Note: ideally the Police Chief would approach the Finance Committee prior to making the promotions.

Note: Where are the police cruisers being kept? Mr. Dolby to follow up.
10. Speed Survey Nye Brook Road: Chief Hennessey is borrowing the machine and will be doing the speed survey soon.
11. Special Event License: Selectboard is still unclear if we need the application. Mrs. Kronholm: required in bylaws. Mr. Levakis asked that Police Chief, Fire Chief, Emergency Management, BOH, and Zoning be at the next meeting to discuss further. Discussed fee.

12. Last Mile: Mrs. Kronholm and Mr. Reichart attended meeting last week and distributed paperwork to the Board.
13. Highway Department Garage Construction: time frame has been changed a bit as determined by the Central Registry. Cara outlined on the board.
14. Employee Breaks: Clarification – breaks are required for any employee working over six hours, not just full-time employees. Mrs. Kronholm noted that this was unclear in minutes posted online. Mr. Montanaro motion to amend statement from 10/3/14 minutes to state that any employees working over 6 hours are required to take a 30 minute unpaid break, Mr. Levakis second, unanimous vote.

New Business

1. Closing the Books: Accounting closing with SoftRight today, waiting to hear back from Jim Podolack, DOR, who is out of the office until Thursday.
2. Veteran's Day: Mr. Montanaro motion to allow the Highway Department employees to work on Veteran's Day at regular rate of pay and use that holiday the day after Thanksgiving, Mr. Levakis second, unanimous vote.

Future Consideration

1. FEMA: Mr. Levakis discussed writing letters to state reps regarding frustration with FEMA and MEMA's continued requests for documentation.
2. Permit Process: tabled
3. Maple Lane: remove from agenda
4. Fairgrounds: Waiting on BOH and Building Inspector's reports. Mr. Levakis asked Cara to have Fire Chief in next week to discuss the invoice they had previously submitted to the Union Agricultural Society. Discussion regarding whether or not invoice should be waived.
5. Shepard Farm: Water Department tried to test the water, however the pump failed.

9:47 p.m. Mr. Montanaro motion to adjourn, Mr. Levakis second, unanimous vote.

Submitted by: Cara Letendre

William Levakis

Andy Montanaro