

Office of
SELECTMEN
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BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING MONDAY, APRIL 13, 2015
MEETING MINUTES
GLADYS L. HURRELL REHOBOTH SENIOR CENTER

Present: Michael Costello, Chairman; Fredrick “Skip” Vadnais, Vice Chairman; Susan Pimental, Clerk; David Perry and Gerald Schwall

Also Present: Jeff Ritter, Town Administrator

1.0) Executive Session: At 6:00p.m. S. Pimental made a motion to enter into Executive Session, pursuant to Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 30A, and Section 21; (2) to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel or to conduct collective bargaining session or contract negotiations with nonunion personnel and (3) discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigation position of the public body and the chair so declares.

Second, D. Perry. Roll Call Vote – Pimental – Aye; Perry – Aye; Vadnais – Aye; Schwall – Aye; Costello – Aye. Voted 5-0

Topics of Discussion: Police Patrolmen Contract

1.1) Call to Order at 7:16p.m.: The Board and the public participated in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

2.0) Consent Agenda

Warrants: M. Costello read the weekly Warrants: 15-40A, Withholdings, \$21,472.96; Payroll: 15-41B, \$813,380.22; Invoices: 15-41, \$287,673.55; and Snow Removal, 15-41S, \$4,312.22. S. Pimental made a motion to approve the weekly Warrants as read. Second, D. Perry. Voted 5-0

Minutes: S. Vadnais made a motion to approve and release the Meeting Minutes from April 7, 2015. Second, S. Pimental. Voted 5-0

M. Costello noted the Board, in Executive Session, voted to approve and hold for release the Executive Session Meeting Minutes from April 7, 2015.

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3.0) Open Forum – Announcements:

M. Costello announced the next regular meeting of the Board of Selectmen will be held on Tuesday, April 21, 2015 starting at 7:00p.m. at the Senior Center (Monday is a holiday – Patriots Day).

Jane Foster, Animal Control Officer was present and informed the public of a growing issue and that is the increasing number of dead fish being discovered in shallow ponds. This is due to the extremely cold winter. Many ponds are impacted, bass and sun fish are being discovered. Just let nature take care of them. However, the Commonwealth Environmental Police have been notified.

George Solas was present and reported he has a pond on his property and wondered if he should do anything. J. Foster said no, let nature take its course.

Town Administrator’s Report: J. Ritter reported that Mass DoT has started pothole repairs along Rt. 44.

There will be a joint meeting this Wednesday evening with the School Committee, Finance Committee and the Board of Selectmen at the Senior Center starting at 7:00p.m. The topic for discussion is the FY 16 budget.

There is also in the planning stages a pre-town meeting to be held on Thursday, April 30th the location and time are to be determined.

The surplus equipment sale is going along as planned. M. Costello suggested staging all the equipment behind the Public Safety Building.

Governor’s Councilor, Robert Jubinville dropped of materials at the Selectmen’s Office last Friday morning. If the Board has any interest in meeting with him he would be willing to come to Rehoboth and meet with the Board.

4.0) NEW BUSINESS: Action Item #1: Discussion with Acting Chief Trombetta Re: Review of Capital Improvement Inventory List:

Chief Trombetta was present and recommended to the Board that for Fy16 the Police Department purchase two (2) vehicles instead of the three (3) previously recommended. Two (2) of the older detail vehicles can be sold. They both have 180,000 miles on them. G. Schwall asked about replacing the detail car with a retiring front line car. If a front line car would normally become a detail car is there any opportunity for that vehicle to be used by another department. Acting Chief Trombetta stated he would look into that option.

He also announced that the Department was starting a distracted driver program to educate residents and others exactly what is distracted driving.

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Action Item #2: Review of Revised Volunteers Use Policy as Submitted by Animal Advisory Committee: Richard Panofsky and Amy Heard from the Animal Control Advisory Committee were both present. Also, Jane Foster, Animal Control Officer was present.

The policy was explained to the Board regarding the use of volunteers at the animal shelter. The Committee has worked closely with the Town's Insurance Agent Don Backlund to come up with the framework for the use of volunteers which will ultimately limit the town's exposure and liability once the training program has been introduced and volunteers have signed a release of liability holding the Town harmless.

The first step is for the Board to approve the use of the volunteer's policy. The Committee will then come up with a training program. All paperwork and releases are to be filed at the Selectmen's Office.

M. Costello stressed to J. Foster that she was the final decision making authority regarding the use of volunteers. She will decide who is trained, how they are trained, and when they are trained. J. Foster will retain complete and absolute authority over the operation of the Animal Shelter.

J. Foster stated she currently already has volunteers who have been trained. M. Costello stated they would have to be trained again, complete the paperwork and file it with the Selectmen's Office.

S. Vadnais noted this is not only a liability issue but it is also about implementing the new regulations promulgated by the Commonwealth. These actions will help bring Rehoboth into compliance. But you, J. Foster, as the Animal Control Officer are responsible for implementing this policy.

J. Foster noted that her current volunteers have been trained and they have specific duties.

M. Costello said this policy is a guideline and acknowledged that change can be very hard to accept.

A. Heard noted that these policies will help staff do a better job with safer working conditions.

S. Vadnais said we are going to be looking at posting hours, establishing a feral cat policy, and raising funds for the shelter to make it more financially independent.

G. Schwall asked if the Animal Control Officer had any input into creating the policy. R. Panofsky said J. Foster attends all the meetings of the Advisory Committee and has provided her input. G. Schwall then suggested the Animal Advisory Committee work with J. Foster to determine a periodic training schedule for new members to insure for new volunteers, the ACO's

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time is used effectively. He also expressed some concern over the provision of the policy that would allow certain volunteers to have access to the shelter without the ACO being on site.

The Committee agreed to go back and take a look at what a training program would look like for volunteers.

S. Vadnais made a motion to approve and adopt the policy regarding the use of citizen volunteers at the Animal Shelter. Second, S. Pimental. Voted 5-0

Action Item #3: Vote to Close (Continued Public Hearing) – on the Application for a Class II Auto License for Car Crazy Auto, LLC, 51 Winthrop Street Per the Request of the Applicant: S. Vadnais made a motion to close the Public Hearing. Second, S. Pimental. Voted 5-0

S. Vadnais made a motion to allow the applicant to withdraw his application without prejudice. Second, S. Pimental. Voted 5-0

Action Item #4: Vote to Approve Letter of Designation for Bradley Marshall to Vote at GATRA Advisory Board Meetings: S. Pimental made a motion to accept the recommendation from Linda Sherman, Council Aging Director, to designate Bradley Marshall, CAO Outreach/Shine Coordinator, as the individual designated to vote at GARTA meetings on behalf of the Town of Rehoboth. Second, G. Schwall. Voted 5-0

Action Item #5: Vote to Authorize DRRSD to Make Modifications to Facilities for Capital Improvements: S. Vadnais stated there is no money attached to this request and it is an energy efficiency program that would benefit the Schools. G. Schwall noted that this is a follow-up action that was recommended in a previous meeting with the School Department. Also, the program is similar to the one implemented at the Bristol Plymouth Regional Technical High School.

G. Schwall made a motion to approve the request. Second, S. Pimental. Voted 5-0

Action Item #6: Vote to Approve Snow & Ice Invoices for \$5,319.98 for a Total Deficit of \$163,908.55: S. Pimental made a motion to continue deficit spending for snow and ice removal authorizing payment of invoices totaling \$5,319.98 for snow and ice removal which will result in a deficit balance of \$163,908.55. Second, G. Schwall. Voted 5-0

Action Item #7: Vote to Approve Budget Amendment for Police - \$3,105.16; Fire - \$161.46; Board of Selectmen \$600.00 and Fire - \$115.48: S. Pimental made a motion to decrease budget line item 012052-51990 Police Holiday Replacement in the amount of \$3,105.16; and to increase budget line item 012052-51550 Police Court Time in the amount of \$3,105.16. Second, G. Schwall. Voted 5-0

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S. Pimental made a motion to decrease budget line item 012203-55802 Fire Hose Replacement in the amount of \$161.46; and to increase budget line item 012203-55801 Fire Turnout Gear/Equipment in the amount of \$161.46. Second, G. Schwall. Voted 5-0

S. Pimental made a motion to decrease budget line item 011873-52135 Board of Selectmen Facilities Maintenance South Fire Station Gas in the amount of \$600.00; and to increase budget line item 011873-52125 Board of Selectmen Facilities South Fire Station Electric in the amount of \$600.00. Second, G. Schwall. Voted 5-0

S. Pimental made a motion to decrease budget line item 012203-55802 Fire Hose Replacement in the amount of \$115.48; and to increase budget line item 012203-52420 Fire Equipment Repair/Maintenance in the amount of \$115.48. Second, G. Schwall. Voted 5-0

Action Item #8: Appointment of Bristol County Advisory Board Member: S. Pimental made a motion to appoint Michael Costello as a member of the Bristol County Advisory Board for the Town of Rehoboth. Second, G. Schwall. Voted 5-0

Action Item #9: Vote to Approve Payment of \$6,370.64 for Funds Received from the State Library Board to the Antiquarian Society as Second Payment for Operation of the Blanding Library: S. Vadnais made a motion to authorize payment in the amount of \$6,370.64 to the Rehoboth Antiquarian Society which represents the second half amount received from the State in support of the Town for the operation of the Blanding Library. Second, S. Pimental. Voted 5-0

Action Item #10 & 11: Review of May 11, 2015 Special Town Meeting and Annual Town Meeting Warrants & Approval of Board of Selectmen Budget Statement and FY2016 Budget Discussion With the Finance Committee & Fire Truck Recommendation: M. Costello brought up the budget statement. There needs some minor editing. G. Schwall will work with J. Ritter to refine the document.

The Chairman of the Finance Committee, Michael Deignan was present. He stated the Finance Committee met again last Thursday and Friday. They met with the Acting Police Chief Trombetta and Michael Brady both agreed to reduce the Police Department budget by about \$177,000.

However, the Town budget is only about \$100,000 above last year's spending plan. The Finance Committee is recommending to cut \$400,000 from the Town, \$400,000 from the Schools and use \$400,000 from Free Cash to balance the budget.

S. Pimental asked where did they find the \$400,000 in spending reductions on the Town side. M. Deignan stated that \$177,000 came from the Police Department, they cut the two new

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positions and the upgrade to the Highway Superintendent, there were some reapplications to the CoA budget, and the health insurance line has been adjusted.

M. Deignan also noted the School Committee visited the Finance Committee on Friday evening and there was a spirited conversation about the use of Free Cash. George Solas, a member of the Finance Committee said he told the School Committee the Town does not have the revenue to support the Schools especially given the declining number of students attending and there needs to be a fundamental change in how the School Department approaches the budgeting process.

S. Pimental said a good first step would be to implement an immediate hiring freeze. There are many posted positions and openings. That would be the first step. She does not believe the School Committee is there yet and has not made a distinction between needs and wants in their spending plan.

Regarding the acquisition of the two (2) Fire Department vehicles. The Finance Committee is recommending that both vehicles be purchased instead of leased because there is no way of knowing if we would be able to make the lease payments in future years.

S. Pimental asked about the Free Cash balance. M. Deignan said approximately \$430,000.

G. Solas said he has watched every School Committee meeting that was available. He wanted to try to compare FY14, FY15 and FY16 budget process to try to determine what was budgeted to what was actually spent over the three fiscal years. He identified 132 different accounts with zero dollars spent from those accounts. That translates to approximately \$700,000. He looked at the account again for FY14 and there was \$72,000 in unspent funds. FY15 to date there appears to be \$300,000 in unspent funds. One example, the position of electrician was budgeted at \$52,000 but nothing has been spent.

D. Perry confirmed the School Committee does not use zero based budgeting. It is their responsibility to manage the budget.

Regarding the Fire trucks. M. Deignan said there is no compelling reason for there to be two standalone articles. S. Pimental agreed. Chief Barresi was present and confirmed the immediate need to address the vehicle issues because it is placing the firefighters in danger.

S. Vadnais made a motion to keep the two (2) Fire Department vehicle articles in the Special Town Meeting Warrant. Second. S. Pimental. Voted 5-0

S. Pimental made a motion to include both items under Article 3 of the Special Town Meeting Warrant or the FY15 Capital Plan. Second, S. Vadnais. Vote 5-0

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G. Schwall made a motion to fund both items out of Free Cash as a direct purchase. Second, S. Pimental. Voted 5-0

Action Item #12: Vote to Appoint Kathryn L. Farrington to De-Regionalization/Full Regionalization Review Committee: S. Pimental made a motion to appoint Kathryn Farrington to the De-Regionalization/Full Regionalization Review Committee effective April 13, 2015 through June 30, 2015 subject to talent bank for being submitted. Second, G. Schwall. Voted 5-0

5.0) OLD BUSINESS: None

6.0) OTHER BUSINESS: S. Pimental made a motion to appoint and designate as the Dighton/Rehoboth municipal representative to the Regional School District's collective bargaining team Selectman G. Schwall. Second, D. Perry. Voted 5-0

7.0) OPEN PUBLIC FORUM: Robert McKim was present and stated the School Committee should be provided only the net minimum. They need to understand that the times when business as usual are over and they have to prepare their budget in a different way.

8.0) BOARD OF SELECTMEN REPORTS: S. Vadnais said State Representative Steven Howitt spoke with him recently about using Chapter 90 funding for other and more flexible spending items. J. Ritter prepared several letters for the Board to sign this is a good first step.

Also, he said that Representative Howitt was looking for a list of all the Veterans from Rehoboth. J. Ritter will work with the Veterans Agent to locate the list and send it to S. Howitt.

M. Costello said there was a need to look at the Public Safety Building roof. The new construction is three (3) to five (5) years out and the roof needs a temporary repair.

Also, the dozer should be included in the surplus property sale.

9.0) EXECUTIVE SESSION: None

10.0) ADJOURNMENT: S. Pimental made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:58p.m. Second, G. Schwall. Voted 5-0

Respectfully submitted,

J. Jeffrey Ritter
Town Administrator

Approved on 4/21/15