

Office of  
SELECTMEN  
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**BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
MEETING MONDAY, MAY 4, 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 6:30p.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, G. Schwall. Roll Call Vote – Pimental – Aye; Perry – Aye; Vadnais – Aye; Schwall – Aye; Costello – Aye. Voted 5-0

**Topics of Discussion:** Clerical Collective Bargaining Contract; Dighton Rehoboth Contract Negotiations Update

**1.1) Call to Order at 7:06p.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: 15-43A, Withholdings, \$29,011.93; Payroll: 15-44B, \$87,121.04; Invoices: 15-44, \$49,597.82; Veterans: \$11,923.93. S. Pimental made a motion to approve the weekly Warrants as read. Second, G. Schwall. Voted 5-0

**Minutes:** D. Perry made a motion to approve and release the Meeting Minutes from April 27, 2015. Second, S. Pimental. Voted as amended 5-0

**3.0) Open Forum – Announcements:** M. Costello announced that the Board of Selectmen have been invited to the Dedication of the Standish House Administration Building and the

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unveiling of the new Superintendent's Gallery at Bristol County Agricultural High School on Thursday, May 21<sup>st</sup> at 3:00p.m.

Town Meeting will start on May 11, 2015 at the Dighton Rehoboth Regional High School auditorium starting at 7:00p.m.

The next regular meeting of the Board of Selectmen will be on Monday, May 11, 2015 at Room 211 at the High School. A Public Hearing has been scheduled for 6:00p.m.that evening.

**Town Administrator's Report:** J. Ritter reported that the PowerPoint presentation from last Thursday evening's Financial and Town Meeting Summit has been posted to the front page of the town's Web site.

G. Schwall took the opportunity to thank all those involved especially the Chairman of the Finance Committee Michael Deignan for a clear well thought out presentation. He did note there was a problem with the audio about 1.5 hours into the presentation and he will work toward getting a voice override to the audio tape.

J. Ritter stated he received an e-mail from Cheryl Withers (Head Dispatcher) which stated she will retire as of July 1<sup>st</sup>. G. Schwall made a motion to accept the notice of retirement from Cheryl Withers effect July 1, 2015. Second, S. Pimental. Voted 5-0

J. Ritter requested to carryover about five (5) vacation days until the end of June. G. Schwall made a motion to approve this request from J. Ritter. Second, S. Pimental. Voted 5-0

J. Ritter said he planned to attend a FEMA reimbursement meeting at Bridgewater State University Wednesday afternoon. If all goes according to plan the Town could receive about \$60,000 in storm related damage reimbursements for the January 26<sup>th</sup> blizzard.

J. Ritter announced a new communication tool that the Town is now using by way of the "Rehoboth Newsletter – May 2015" edition. He thanked Town Clerk Laura Schwall and Helen Dennen for their help. The objective is to issue a new edition on the first of each month.

There is a scheduled project meeting regarding the Rt. 44 & Rt. 118 intersection project with the Selectmen on Tuesday, May 26<sup>th</sup>. It is important for the public and others to provide input.

Finally, he was informed by the renter of the property at 248 Winthrop Street that they would be departing at the end of May so that site can be added to the surplus property list.

M. Costello asked that J. Ritter look into the status of the substation upgrade and the double poles along Blanding Road and Summer Street.

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**4.0) NEW BUSINESS: Action Item #1: Meeting with the Dighton Board of Selectmen:**

M. Costello provided an update on how the Regionalization/Deregionalization Committee was established. He noted that Dighton faced a challenge with its growing school age children and Rehoboth has a challenge with the condition our existing schools.

Rehoboth has appointed three (3) members to the Committee, Michael McBride, George Solas, and Kathryn Farrington.

Selectman Menges from Dighton said they had three (3) appointees but one stepped down due to a scheduling conflict. The Dighton members are Alice Adams and Allison Welch. Dighton Selectman Cronin said it is essential that we learn how to work together there are many pros and cons and to research the alternatives to determine what options make the most sense.

S. Vadnais asked about how to organize the Committee and if a temporary Chairman could be designated to get the ball rolling to have an organizational meeting? G. Schwall said he viewed the work of the Committee to be similar to the work of an AdHoc Committee where there is a start and end date.

The two (2) Boards agreed to target May 1, 2016 as the date for the final recommendations to be received and Michael McBride would serve as the convening Chairman to get the process moving.

Regarding the joint dispatch proposal both Boards agreed to continue gather information and to keep the options and lines of communication open. Selectman Cronin stated that the whole project depends upon the amount of money the Commonwealth will commit to the project.

Selectman Menges said they completed negotiations with the Police Officers and he is now pleased to report there is one municipal rate for details. This should resolve an issue from last year.

Finally, the two (2) boards coordinated their plans for the upcoming Memorial Day Parade.

**Action Item #2: Discussion With the Town Moderator and the Town Clerk Re: May 11, 2015 Special Town Meeting and Annual Town Meeting Motions:** Town Moderator, Bill Cute and town Clerk Laura Schwall were present. B. Cute provided an overview of both Warrants. He stated that he would allow Dr. Azar an opportunity to present the School Committee budget and also allow the Chairman of the Finance Committee to do the same.

G. Schwall asked about the difference between when an article item is tabled and when a deferred action on an article. B. Cute said to table means to no longer consider deferred action mean the article could be reconsidered at a later date.

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G. Schwall said he believed both stabilization articles (#13 & 14) in the Annual Town Meeting Warrant will be tabled.

S. Vadnais will present and explain why the kennel articles (#15 & 16) in the Annual Town Meeting Warrant are important.

B. Cute estimated the meeting would take two (2) evenings to complete. He also noted that the Moderator was given more power last Fall at the Special Town Meeting in that the Moderator will have to be convinced that new information either in favor or against a motion will be reconsidered.

**Action Item #3: Request for Signage on Martin Street:** S. Pimental made a motion to approve a request for the installation of a “Go Slow Children” sign near the baseball fields on Martin Street and to defer action concerning a “Hidden Driveway” sign near the driveway at 21 Martin Street until the Police Chief could investigate further. Second, S. Vadnais. Voted 5-0

**Action Item #2A: Meet with Tax Collector to Discuss Tax Title Properties to be Auctioned:** Cheryl Gouveia, Treasurer/Collector was present and briefed the Board regarding the current status of the tax title properties.

There are currently six (6) accounts available for auction. S. Pimental asked about the total owned in past due real estate taxes. C. Gouveia said approximately \$446,813 is outstanding in principal and interest. Abutters may purchase parcels for back taxes owed. S. Vadnais asked if the accounts have to remain in Land Court for three (3) years? Also, the Perryville Road site could be significant. C. Gouveia said no only one (1) year.

G. Schwall said this is a hard process taking people land but it should be noted that C. Gouveia works well with the public and is willing to place people on payment plans. S. Pimental said the process takes a long time.

**Action Item #4: Vote to Approve One Day Liquor License Application for Rumford Hunting & Fishing Club:** S. Pimental made a motion to approve a One Day Wine & Malt Liquor License for Robert Lockhart, Rumford Hunting & Fishing club, Inc. with a licensed premise at South Seekonk Gun Club, 61 Reed Street, on May 9, 2015 from 1:00p.m. until 8:00p.m. including the transportation of alcohol May 8<sup>th</sup> and May 10<sup>th</sup>. Second, S. Vadnais. Voted 5-0

**Action Item #5: Vote to Approve Budget Amendments for Veterans - \$740.25; Board of Selectmen \$125.00 and Special Year End Budget Amendment Board of Selectmen \$1,600.00:** S. Pimental made a motion to decrease budget line items 015433-55100 Veterans Education by \$230.00 and budget line item 015433-57140 Veterans Registrations by \$175.00

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and budget line item 015433-57120 Veterans Hotel/Meals by \$335.25; and to increase budget line items 915433-57110 Veterans in State Mileage by \$190.00 and budget line item 015433-55860 Veterans Flags by \$549.05. Second, D. Perry. Voted 5-0

S. Pimental made a motion to decrease budget line item 011253-52910 Board of Selectmen Contracted Services Custodial by \$125.00 and to increase budget line item 011253-52920 Board of Selectmen Contracted Services Refuse by \$125.00. Second, G. Schwall. Voted 5-0

S. Pimental made a motion pursuant to G.L. Chapter 44, Section 33B to approve the following budget amendment and to forward it to the Finance Committee for consideration to decrease budget line item 011253-52420 Board of Selectmen Contracted Services Equipment Repair and Maintenance by \$1,600.00 and to increase budget line item 011223-54200 Board of Selectmen Office Expense Supplies by \$1,600.00. Second, G. Schwall. Voted 5-0

**Action Item #6: FY16 Budget Discussion with Finance Committee:** Michael Deignan, Chairman of the Finance Committee, Colleen Simpson and Kelly Hamilton-Welzel were present.

M. Costello said we had a good meeting last Thursday evening and he thanked the Finance Committee for their ongoing support. He had hoped for a better outcome from the School Committee.

M. Deignan said we are still waiting on information regarding Special Town Meeting motion under Article ten (10). J. Ritter will provide.

S. Pimental said she does not know where the School Committee is coming from but she does know they are having a special meeting this Thursday. The goal would be for the School Committee to reduce its assessment.

M. Deignan said if they don't make a motion to reduce the assessment the Finance Committee will do so. He also noted that the general government side of the budget is essentially level funded from last year. However, if further reductions have to be made then we need to be prepared to do so starting with the \$200,000 from the Library.

G. Schwall said Dr. Azar presented the School Committee with a fair spending plan that would accommodate the \$400,000 reduction which would not have any direct impact on the instruction of students. The Rehoboth representatives all voted to support the Superintendent but the Dighton representatives did not. We need to support the Superintendent and the so called 4-4-4 plan (\$400,000 from the Town, \$400,000 from the Schools and \$400,000 from Free Cash) to balance the budget.

C. Simpson said it is important to clearly identify exactly where the reductions will take place if further cuts have to be made for example, closing the Library.

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**5.0) OLD BUSINESS:** None

**6.0) OTHER BUSINESS:** None

**7.0) OPEN PUBLIC FORUM:** Michael Deignan was present and provided a report regarding his work removing illegal signs. There is a serious public safety issue at Barney Avenue and Providence Street. A "Spa" sign has been placed there blocking traffic visibility. It might be helpful for the Police Department to be notified. Perhaps they can send someone out to take a look at it and ask them to move it. At the end of the day this is a zoning issue. Perhaps a letter would help as well.

M. Deignan brought to the attention of the Board another public safety concern at the intersection of Slater Street and King Philip Drive there have been several accidents at that location over the years. He would like a Stop Signs installed on King Philip Drive and one installed South bound on Slater Street.

S. Vadnais made a motion for the Acting Police Chief to speak with M. Deignan and to come up with a recommendation. Second, S. Pimental. Voted 5-0

**8.0) BOARD OF SELECTMEN REPORTS:** S. Vadnais reported that he spoke with Dr. O'Connor the State Veterinarian late this afternoon and confirmed new procedures are now in place with the town Clerk. However, other things came to light during the conversation. The Animal Control Officer is not on the same page as Dr. O'Connor. She has been directives by the State that are not being carried out.

D. Perry said it is not about the health conditions of the Animal Shelter it is about the paperwork not being properly completed. There needs to be a paper trail on each animal to establish accountability. If proper procedures are not followed things might fall through the cracks.

S. Vadnais said Dr. O'Connor received different and or conflicting information from the Animal Control Officer. She got different answers to several questions. She has concerns about the accuracy and timeliness of the information being provided. The Animal Control Officer needs to hear clear expectations from the Board as to what is expected.

G. Schwall asked how he could get up to speed. I was agreed that he and D. Perry would discuss.

J. Ritter recommended the Animal Control Officers job description be brought up to date with the Personnel Board providing assistance and to invite the Animal Control Officer to meet with the Board to discuss expectations.

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G. Schwall reported that the School voted not to allow him to participate on the sub-committee collective bargaining negotiating team. However, by the laws of the Commonwealth he is allowed to remain as the municipal representative on the School Committee for collective bargaining issues and will have a note on the final contract recommendations.

The Town Meeting summit will be broadcast on Rehoboth TV. He encouraged residents to attend the Special Town Meeting and the Annual Town Meeting. He does not want to hear from people who watch from home and then complain about the outcome.

D. Perry stressed the importance for all residents to come to Town Meeting and to vote.

**9.0) EXECUTIVE SESSION:** None

**10.0) ADJOURNMENT:** S. Pimental made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:05p.m.  
Second, G. Schwall. Voted 5-0

Respectfully submitted,

J. Jeffrey Ritter  
Town Administrator  
Approved 5/11/15