

PRESENT: Selectmen Joseph A. Sergi, Patrick J. McNabb, and Joseph Hallisey; John Moak, Town Administrator; Peggy Mazzola, Administrative Assistant

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 PM.

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES: On a motion by Mr. McNabb and seconded by Mr. Sergi, with Mr. Hallisey abstaining, the minutes of the meeting of February 22, 2010 were approved. On a motion by Mr. McNabb and seconded by Mr. Hallisey, the minutes of the meeting of March 15, 2010 were unanimously approved. On a motion by Mr. McNabb and seconded by Mr. Hallisey, with Mr. Sergi abstaining, the minutes of the meeting of March 8, 2010 were approved.

APPROVE WARRANT/SIGN PURCHASE ORDERS: The Board signed the warrants.

PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS: Mr. Sergi remarked that since the last Board meeting the Board appointed our new Police Chief, David Scott, who is present this evening. There was a change in process as the Board was negotiating with Chief Scott; as the negotiation progressed the Board felt that we had the best candidate for the permanent position in Chief Scott. Mr. Hallisey commented that a key point was a seamless transition. Mr. McNabb remarked that the negotiations with Chief Scott were very reasonable, and the Town got a good deal and well qualified candidate. The Board congratulated Chief Scott on his promotion.

Mr. McNabb read a notice of vacancies on the Board of Fire Engineers. Citizen Activity Forms or letters of interest are due by April 8th.

Mr. McNabb read a resolution honoring Daniel Jefferson on having obtained the Eagle Scout Award. Mr. Hallisey read a resolution honoring Ian Hammond on having obtained the Eagle Scout Award. Mr. Sergi read a resolution honoring Taylor Sleczkowski on having obtained the Eagle Scout Award.

Mr. Sergi announced that the Fire Department is now accepting on line burning requests, and explained the process.

Mr. Sergi announced that the Town has received the 2010 Common Cause e-Government Award with distinction for the Town's website; the Board thanked Webmaster Jeff Sauer for his great work with the site.

Mr. Sergi stated that Library Director Deb Spratt is present along with many residents who asked for a discussion with the Board. Generally the Board prefers that these types of discussions go through the Town Administrator and be placed on the agenda, but he would entertain a brief discussion. Ms. Spratt explained that the Finance Committee, after agreeing to a viable solution to the budget problems, cut the library's budget by 5%. Ms. Spratt stated she feels the library was unfairly targeted. Mr. Sergi stated unfortunately the Board does not have the specifics of the Finance Committee's approach to the budgets, but the reality is that the Town has a \$550,000 structural deficit, and cuts must be made to all departments; there was no guarantee given to the library that it would be fully funded in FY '11. A lengthy discussion ensued; it was agreed to place the library on the April 5th agenda, and to have the Finance Committee join the meeting.

Mr. Sergi announced that Nashoba Publications Reporter Don Eriksson informed him that he will be moving to warmer climates and this will be his last reporting of a Selectmen's meeting. The Board thanked Mr. Eriksson and wished him the best of luck.

APPOINTMENTS/RESIGNATIONS:

Item #1 – Joint appointments to Nashoba Valley Technical High School, with NVTHS appointing authority: Present were NMRSD Committee members Sue Fitzgerald and Kathy Low. It was determined that a quorum of the appointing authority was present. The appointing authority reviewed letters from Al Buckley and Donald Bradanese, both of whom were requesting reappointment to the NVTHS Committee. Following a brief discussion, and on a motion by Mr. McNabb and seconded by Mr. Hallisey, it was unanimously voted to reappoint Al Buckley to the NVTHS Committee, term to expire 3/31/2013. On a motion by Mr. Hallisey and seconded by Ms. Fitzgerald, it was unanimously voted to reappoint Donald Bradanese as alternate member to the NVTHS Committee, term to expire 3/31/2013. A brief discussion followed regarding the NMRSD budget.

ACTION ITEMS:

Item #1 – Discussion: Army Community Covenant update: Army Community Covenant Committee members Stephen Themelis, Joe Mazzola, Tony Saboliauskas and Joe Radwich were present. Mr. Themelis updated the board on the status of the covenant, and thanked the Board for its endorsement. Mr. Themelis briefly explained what the covenant is, and stated they have over 30 sponsors. The signing will take place on Monday, April 19th at 2:00 PM at the VFW. Rep. Hargraves will be one of the speakers at the event. Mr. Themelis thanked the members of the Covenant Committee for their efforts. Mr. Themelis stated the covenant signing will be open to the public. The Board thanked Mr. Themelis and members of the covenant committee for attending the meeting.

Item #2 – Discussion: Request for waiver of hiring freeze, with Town Clerk Lois Libby: Ms. Libby stated it will be a difficult transition for the new Town Clerk, and she is asking for additional hours for the assistant to help the new clerk. Mr. Hallisey and Mr. McNabb were both concerned that if the Board approved this request, it would be inundated with more requests for increased hours. Mr. Sergi remarked that we have a structural deficit that isn't going away and didn't feel the Board should be approving these types of requests until the Town Administrator and Finance Team come to us with a better picture. The Board took no action on the request.

Item #3 – Discussion: Request for waiver of hiring freeze to replace administrative assistant, with Chief Scott: Chief Scott stated that Cathy Forrest, the Police Dept. Administrative Assistant, will be retiring in August. If the new person starts at step 4, there will be an annual savings of \$3,500. Mr. McNabb asked if there was money in the budget for overlap for training. Chief Scott stated there is. Mr. Sergi asked if there was other clerical staff at the Police Department. Chief Scott stated that a clerk works 12 hours per week, mostly during the evening. Mr. Sergi remarked that if the Board didn't address this request, the department would be down yet another person. Mr. Hallisey stated this request is different from the request of the Town Clerk as the department will be replacing a person, and will realize a savings in salary. Mr. Sergi stated he had no problems approving this request. Mr. McNabb remarked this subject factors in to something he wanted to discuss, but agreed the position needs to be filled.

Mr. Moak stated this position requires a unique skill set and is a vital part of the administration and suggested the new person not start until after July 1st. Mr. Sergi suggested a two-week transition. Mr. Hallisey and Mr. McNabb agreed, noting that if Chief Scott feels more time will be necessary after review of the candidates, he can come back before the Board.

On a motion by Mr. McNabb and seconded by Mr. Hallisey, it was unanimously voted to waive the hiring freeze to fill the position as discussed, with the new person to begin work no earlier than July 26th, allowing for a two-week training period.

Item #4 – Discussion: IT Systems Analysis, with Systems Administrator: Mr. Sergi had requested the report included in the packets on the challenges and needs of the IT Department, realizing his limited

availability and the reason that Joe Traverso is not present tonight. Mr. Moak stated that he can schedule Mr. Traverso at a future meeting or at the upcoming budget meeting to discuss capital needs, including servers and the physical nature of the wiring in Town Hall. Mr. Sergi asked what the cost would be for these capital needs. Mr. Moak stated there is an article on the ATM warrant for \$5,000 to replace servers, which was recommended by the Capital Program Committee. Once we have firm numbers for painting Town Hall and replacing the heating system, and provided we get some incentive from National Grid, we could dedicate some money to the wiring.

Mr. Sergi asked if the Board would be brought up to date on prior year warrant articles. Mr. Moak stated that the Capital Program Committee discussed this issue, and will be getting together in September to look at overall capital planning; this is one of the reasons that Mr. Moak has asked all departments to develop goals and objectives.

Item #5 – Discussion: Town Report dedication: Mr. McNabb read the nominations for the Town Report dedication for Ann O'Donnell, Margaret "Sis" McGrath and Den Connors, noting that this is a very difficult decision with three great nominees. Mr. McNabb nominated Margaret "Sis" McGrath. Mr. Sergi stated this is a difficult decision as all three people contributed greatly to the Town; Mr. Sergi nominated Ann O'Donnell. Mr. Hallisey stated this is a difficult decision as he did not know any of the nominees, but based on the information provided he nominated Margaret "Sis" McGrath. On a motion by Mr. McNabb and seconded by Mr. Hallisey, it was unanimously voted to dedicate the 2009 Annual Town Report to Margaret "Sis" McGrath.

Item #6 – Discussion: request for waiver of hiring freeze to replace dispatcher: The Board reviewed a request from Communications Director Frank Quattrochi for a waiver of the hiring freeze to replace a dispatcher who transferred to the Fire Department. Following a brief discussion, and on a motion by Mr. McNabb and seconded by Mr. Hallisey, it was unanimously voted to grant the waiver.

OLD/NEW BUSINESS:

Item #1 – Discussion: FY '10 year-end projections and FY '11 budget: This item was tabled to the next meeting.

Item #2 – Discussion: Review ATM/STM Warrant: This item was tabled to the next meeting.

Item #3 – Discussion: Town Administrator Report: The Board reviewed the report. Mr. Moak stated there has been a suggestion to change the start time of the Special Town Meeting so that the Town can immediately address the STM articles prior to getting into the ATM articles. The Board agreed to this change.

Mr. Moak remarked the Board of Health has amended its budget in order to increase the hours of their clerical staff from 15 to 25 per week, and the Finance Committee requested that the Board of Health request a waiver of the hiring freeze from the Board. Mr. Moak stated that no approval is necessary from the Selectmen. Mr. Sergi confirmed that opinion as long as the board stayed within their appropriation.

Mr. Moak remarked that the Board has copies of an e-mail from Rep. Hargraves relative to naming the covered bridge.

Item #4 – Discussion: formation of Covered Bridge Committee: Mr. Moak reviewed an outline for this committee. He is not positive that a Town committee can be a 501c(3) organization, as he has not gotten into the financial aspects, but we need to get the committee going so we can talk about it. Elfie Parker voiced her objections to the formation of a town committee appointed by the Board. Mr. Sergi stated he would not want people saying they represent the Town when they don't have that official capacity, but he doesn't want to impede the work of the committee. Mr. Moak commented that this committee would not have to do anything involving money. Mr. McNabb asked if Ms. Parker's concern was that this was getting

political, and asked what the alternative would be. Ms. Parker stated she has received e-mails that some work is being done and should be turned over to the Town. It was noted that Fisheries and Wildlife would prefer to work with a governmental entity than a private group. Following a brief discussion, and on a motion by Mr. Hallisey and seconded by Mr. McNabb, it was unanimously voted to form a Covered Bridge Committee comprised of 7-9 members appointed to staggered three year terms as outlined in the committee charge prepared by the Town Administrator.

Item #5 – Licensing Authority: Common Victualler’s License renewal: Mr. Moak stated he has received letters from the three businesses that the Board asked him to look into as well as a payment schedule from each. Mr. McNabb stated that until we have a policy in place he was not in favor of holding up any licenses. Mr. Sergi stated that had the Board not held up this license the Town may not have gotten the tax dollars it received. Mr. Hallisey stated he believes the Board made the right decision. On a motion by Mr. McNabb and seconded by Mr. Hallisey, it was unanimously voted to approve the Common Victualler’s license for Dr. Davis Ice Cream stand, expiring December 31, 2010.

Item #6 – Discussion: Mill Master Plan: Mr. Sergi stated the Board must formally adopt the Mill Master Plan. Following a brief discussion, and on a motion by Mr. McNabb and seconded by Mr. Hallisey, it was unanimously voted to accept the Mill Master Plan as prepared by VHB.

Item #7 – Any other Old/New Business: The Board briefly discussed the aftermath of the recent storms and flooding. The Board commended the Town employees for their work during the storms.

Mr. Moak stated that there is concrete work being done on a retaining wall at the Main Street dam. The wall became loose and was leaning against the penstock. Mr. McNabb asked who was doing this work. Mr. Moak stated the Swift River Hydro and the State are involved in this project.

ADJOURNMENT: On a motion by Mr. McNabb and seconded by Mr. Hallisey, it was unanimously voted to adjourn at 9:52 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Peggy Mazzola, Administrative Assistant

APPROVED:

Joseph A. Sergi, Chairman

Patrick J. McNabb, Clerk

Joseph Hallisey