

Approved 6/21/05

**TOWN OF HAMPDEN, MASSACHUSETTS**  
**BOARD OF SELECTMEN/BOARD OF HEALTH**

June 7, 2005  
7:00 pm

625 Main Street  
Town House

Present: James D. Smith, Duane E. Mosier, John D. Flynn  
Guests: Jason Poole, The Reminder, Doug Farmer, Wilbraham-Hampden Times, Suzanne McLaughlin, The Republican

Meeting called to order at 7:00 pm by James Smith.

7:00 pm      Walk-Ins

Chris McDonald from Park and Rec came before the Board to discuss the layoff situation and ramifications of the layoffs. Chris asked whether the clerk's salary could be paid out of the revolving fund? He will work on a new job description so the position will be somewhere between the clerk's current position and the position which existed for the Director. Chris will need to do a job description for Sue Gorman (current clerk), then get it to the Personnel Committee and then perhaps to Tabor Associates for their input. James Smith told Chris McDonald that if the position is paid for out of revolving accounts then any benefits, including health insurance, workers comp, etc, must also be paid for out of the revolving account.

7:15 pm Donald Dorn: Mr. Dorn came before the board and expressed concern about the noise pollution from heavy equipment used by his neighbor across the street. He stated that there are trees pushed down in the wetlands and backfilling of the wetlands. Mr. Dorn says he has called Con Comm and has not had his phone calls returned. The Board will contact Mark Feeny to investigate whether there are any violations. The Board will also contact Con Comm and ask that they do sight visits at the two locations brought forward by Mr. Dorn.

Patty Ehlers: A resident from Town came in with a prepared statement to bring before the Board. She represents a group of citizens who wish to petition the Board for a re-vote of the override question. It was their opinion that the message was not clearly stated by the Board as to the consequences of a failed override vote. James Smith responded that numerous meetings were held at which a full and detailed account of what would result from a failed override and that the budget supplement clearly showed what those results would be. He also stated that he was not of the mind set to ask for a revote, as he felt that the general population had already made it quite clear as to how they felt about the budget and a proposed override. James Smith felt that it would be disingenuous of the Board to ask for a revote.

Duane Mosier expressed his discontent with the failed vote, but agreed with J. Smith that he would not support a revote of the question. He supports the elective process and must support those voters who failed to pass the override question. Not only were there a number of meetings, but the newspapers all carried articles explaining the details of the override.

It was explained to P. Ehlers that a petition could be brought forward to the Board which would require a Special Town Meeting to be called, but that an override ballot question can only be approved by the Board of Selectmen. It was further explained that there is proper wording which must be used for a ballot question and that consequences of a failed vote could not be stated in the proposed question as she had requested. Further, any resident can bring forward 200 signatures on a petition for a special town meeting to reallocate funds that currently exist.

Patty Ehlers stated that she will seek a special town meeting by bringing forward a petition with a properly worded warrant article.

James Smith reiterated his position on a new override and stated emphatically that he would not disenfranchise more than a thousand voters in order to give into the demand of a vocal minority.

Peter Nossal asked if the BOS is planning a Special Town Meeting in the fall to solicit new budgets and requests specifically by the departments most affected by the failed vote.

James Smith responded that he believes that we will have a Special Town Meeting as there will be housekeeping issues that will have to be addressed. We can then revisit some issues relative to available funds at that time.

John Flynn suggested that with possible changes in revenue, state aid, and school assessment that these items may all be on the agenda for a Special Town Meeting.

7:30 pm Fire Truck Bid Openings: A motion was made by John Flynn requesting that fire truck bid submittals be closed at 7:30 pm. Second by Duane Mosier. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.

American LaFrance – East Hartford

TOTAL \$151,901.00 fully equipped unit with cab with chassis  
Bid bond of 10% enclosed.

Fleet Masters, Windsor, CT

TOTAL \$172,166.00 fully equipped unit with cab and chassis  
Bid bond enclosed for 10%.

Sarat Ford, Agawam, MA  
2005 Ford cab and chassis only  
\$38,880.00 after rebates  
No bid bond.

A motion was made by John Flynn to have the bids presented to the Fire Chief to take under advisement. Second by Duane Mosier. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.

Fire Chief, Peter Hatch to get back to the Board with his recommendation by June 21, 2005.

7:45 pm Jeff Farnsworth, Acting Police Chief: Jeff came before the Board to discuss possible staffing solutions to his reduced force as a result of the failed override vote.

There may be an additional layoff of the most junior staff member should attrition not occur at the end of July.

There will most certainly be times when an officer will be working a shift alone.

One of his recommendations is that a patrolman be appointed as an Acting Sgt. for a period to replace the position vacated by Jeff when he was promoted to Acting Chief. If a 2<sup>nd</sup> Sgt. is appointed, then he would work 3<sup>rd</sup> shift.

Duane Mosier feels that an Acting Sgt. is a good idea, and that voters would be supportive of that. The rate of pay needs to be discussed. This number is figured into his budget already, at a standard Sergeant's rate.

James Smith would like the Police Union at our next mtg. on June 21.

The Department will need additional reserve officers as well.

The Acting Chief and secretary are both certified to work the dispatch desk.

An agreement may have to be worked out with the IBPO to allow more frequent emergency staffing of dispatch by officers. Jeff has a department meeting to discuss staffing with the two unions on 6/9. He will meet with IBPO, Dispatch and Reserve officers separately, then as a full group.

Jeff Farnsworth asked about a line item transfer for expenses incurred for advertising for 2 positions which required physicals and psychological evaluations to be performed for a total of \$3400. BOS will approve transfer request and it will be forwarded to Advisory for approval.

Weapons of Mass Destruction: The Police will attend a seminar to be held in town hall on June 18<sup>th</sup> here all training costs will be 100% reimbursable.

8:00 pm Library Trustees: The Library trustees came before the Board to discuss a number of issues relative to the closing of the library on June 30, 2005.

The \$10,000 grant from Mass Board of Library Commissioners is no longer available to us due to the failed Proposition 2 ½ override for the \$10,000 matching funds.

The Trustees will receive information from Library Commissioners as to how to best store materials. The Board has requested a copy of those recommendations from the Trustees.

COBRA enrollment (for health insurance) was discussed and the Trustees were given information to be provided to library employees.

Duane Mosier expressed his feelings about the loss of personnel in the library and how it is a huge loss for the Town, as they are major contributors to the town.

The Board and Trustees discussed periodic monitoring of the library facility to check for any problems such as rain leaks. The Trustees said they will perform their own monitoring and will also let our office know who to call should a problem exist.

Ellen Bump is looking into the preservation of historical documents which are currently housed in her office. She is researching archival storage.

Kathleen Hutchison made the point that the library cannot be certified through any type of donated funds. **The money must come from Tax Revenue only.**

The Trustees will notify the Board after their meeting on 6/8 as to how funds will be disbursed by year end.

Inventory needs to be done once closed.

James Smith made the motion that Carol Fitzgerald be appointed to the Personnel Committee for the remainder of Ron Kidd's position (2 years and remainder of June).

John Flynn seconded the motion. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.

Police Chief Search: Jeff Farnsworth has been appointed until June 30, 2005. The Board must discuss how to conduct search.

The options they wish to pursue are either:

- Do local search, or
- Appoint from within as there are strong candidates from within the department, let qualified applicants apply, review them. There is a good possibility of finding a good candidate in house.

A motion was made by Duane Mosier that the Board limit the search initially internally to all qualified members of the Town of Hampden Police Department. The motion was seconded by John Flynn. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.

A motion was made by Duane Mosier to ask Personnel Committee to take the lead on the search for Police Chief. The motion was seconded by John Flynn. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.

James Smith will contact Jeff Farnsworth to see if he is still interested in Acting Chief's position while the Board conducts a search for a new Chief.

1. Software for Tax Collector – Existing software is DOS base, and they are going to discontinue support and the users need to upgrade to a new program. John and Duane to further investigate. There is hardware available for the Collector's use as well.
2. Department of Revenue – School Building Assistant Program - Regional School District's Excess and Deficiency account – BANS due in October. Date when

your ban payments are due kicks in when the state money is transferred to the district.

3. Letter from Regional School Committee re: Excess and Deficiency account – James spoke with Scott Chapman regarding going through the budget process/approval on the 14<sup>th</sup> and will then know if they can honor the commitment for the \$50,000 reduction. The Committee will make the decision at that time.
4. Sight line issue at 217 East Longmeadow Road – Bill Gouzounis has been asked to trim the trees in front of his home. He is working towards a resolution of the situation.
5. Memorial Park Project: The Board reviewed a letter from Sue Rauscher explaining her proposal for Rec Park improvements and a copy of a survey she wishes to conduct. The Board feels that this should be handled strictly by Parks and Rec.
6. Questions/answers regarding layoffs

Motion made by Duane Mosier to revise employee handbook under **LAYOFF** to delete “Employees who are laid off may be given first consideration for subsequent vacancies in the grade from which laid off, if no in-house candidate is selected, **for up to 1 year**” and add “...**for up to 13 months**”. Additionally, the following will be added to the paragraph, “Vacation pay will be restored to the level you would otherwise be entitled to without an interruption of service.” Second by John Flynn. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.

Meeting Minutes May 17, 2005: Motion made by Duane Mosier to accept as corrected, second by John Flynn. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.

Minutes of May 24, 2005: Motion made by Duane Mosier to accept as corrected, second by John Flynn. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.

Executive Session Minutes of May 24, 2005: Motion made by Duane Mosier to accept executive session minutes as presented, second by John Flynn. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.

The Board received a request from the VFW to serve liquor in the pavilion on July 2, July 9, and July 16 from noon to midnight. Motion by Duane Mosier to approve as requested, second by John Flynn. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.

A motion was made by John Flynn to support Dana Pixley, Highway Superintendent’s recommendations for layoffs as presented. Second by Duane Mosier. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.

A motion was made by John Flynn to support Jeff Farnsworth’s recommendations to maintain staffing level with two unfilled spots, not requiring layoffs at this time and to revisit the issue in July to see if further attrition has negated the need for further layoffs. Second by Duane Mosier. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.

**NOTE:** School Committee to discuss a public meeting at their meeting on June 14. This refers to the meeting requested by Townspeople attending the Board's meeting of May 24<sup>th</sup>.

The Board would like to meet with Wilbraham Board of Selectmen to discuss the Minnechaug proposal. They will speak with Wilbraham BOS on the 15<sup>th</sup> to discuss how best to proceed.

Joan Day, a resident in town suggested to James Smith that a proposal be made to Senator Brian Lees to request reimbursement for school transportation. James will respond to her by letter.

At 10:55 pm a motion was made by Duane Mosier to go into Executive Session without return to Open Session for the purpose of discussing IBPO negotiations. Second by John Flynn. VOTE: Duane Mosier yes, John Flynn yes, James Smith yes.

Respectfully submitted:

Pamela B. Courtney  
Administrative Assistant

/pbc