

Approved 1/17/06

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

January 3, 2006
7:15 pm

625 Main Street
Town House

Present: James D. Smith, Duane E. Mosier, John D. Flynn
Guests: Cindy Bailey, Bill Olmstead, Doug Farmer, Wilbraham-Hampden Times, Larry Forrest, Mike Forrest, Martha Farnsworth

The meeting is called to order at 7:15 pm by James Smith.

7:00 pm Walk-Ins

Cindy Bailey, a resident in Town came before the Board to discuss street lights. She was concerned about the intersection at East Longmeadow Road, at which she had a car accident recently. John Flynn has contacted National Grid regarding certain lights and the costs associated with changing wattage of bulbs and/or turning more lights on.

7:30 pm Sgt. Jeff Farnsworth: James Smith re-stated that Chief Trombly has requested a return to his previous position on the police force. At the Board's last meeting, Jeff Farnsworth was discussed as a possible replacement for the Chief's position. Sgt. Farnsworth was invited to the meeting tonight to discuss the offer of the Chief's position. James Smith stated that he appreciated Jeff's willingness to work with the Board previously. He then asked what Jeff's goals for the department are now. Jeff's response was to try to stabilize the department, work on policies and procedures, contract issues, to get back to day-to-day operations in the community, and to redirect existing staff to the areas in which they can provide the most benefit to the department. Duane Mosier added that there is a tough road ahead financially and this needs to be considered in Jeff's planned management of the department. John Flynn commended Jeff for his willingness to step forward, and stated the Board's appreciation of Jeff's dedication to the Town and the department. Jeff Farnsworth added that if we all work together as a team, we have a better chance at success. He has a desire to stay with the people he works with, and appreciates the spirit of cooperation they display.

The Board went on to discuss contract issues and James made the point that in reviewing contracts in the area, he feels that several towns are being ill served by contracts that are being entered into. They are lucrative in nature, offering a golden parachute, and allowing for the return to high level position should the chief wish to revert to a previous position. He feels as though you may not get best efforts from the chief as a result.

Mass General Law currently allows for a 3 year appointment only, not for an extended period of time which is what some of these contracts allow.

Duane states that some towns are ensuring a position without having funding available, which puts the Town in a tenuous position.

James cautioned against entering into one contract that might impact another contract.

A motion was made by Duane Mosier at 7:40 pm to enter into Executive Session to discuss a contract with a potential candidate for the Chief of Police position with return to Open Session, seconded by John Flynn. VOTE: Duane Mosier yes, John Flynn yes, James Smith yes.

A motion was made by Duane Mosier to leave Executive Session at 7:55, seconded by John Flynn. VOTE: Duane Mosier yes, John Flynn yes, James Smith yes.

A motion was made by Duane Mosier to appoint Jeff Farnsworth as Chief of Police pending successful negotiations and signing of contract with Jeff Farnsworth assuming duties only at the at the time of finalization. Motion seconded by John Flynn. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.

1. Minutes of December 5, 2005: Minutes were reviewed and a motion was made by John Flynn to approve as corrected, and was seconded by Duane Mosier. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.
2. Minutes of December 19, 2005: Review of these minutes was deferred until the next meeting on January 17th.
3. Budget Numbers: The Board discussed how to best approach the school budget versus town services, the option of an override vote before town meeting, bond situation for infrastructure repair, etc.

The Board received notification from Dr. Gagliarducci that our student population has increased slightly and we will see approximately a 1% increase in the Town's assessment as a result.

The Board discussed the Town Report. Bid specs will go out to interested parties in the next few weeks so they may bid on the job. There are residents in Town who are interested in helping out with the process and once reports from all departments are received in this office, those residents will be contacted for their assistance.

4. IBPO Meeting: Duane Mosier met with Bob Dickson, Union Representative for the IBPO at their request regarding proposed language relative to a Chief's appointment. James' position is that this should be part of a contract negotiation, not a stand alone document. The Board agrees with that position. Bob Dickson

will work to set a date for further mediation with the IBPO with Brian Harrington, State Mediator.

5. Chief's Contract: Discussed in Executive Session.
6. Mark Feeney, Building Inspector: Mark came before the Board to discuss inspection fees and has brought forward proposed changes. These will be forwarded to Peter Hatch for his input, the inspectors are currently being reimbursed for their work and the goal is to ensure the inspectors are compensated for their professional expertise and not to generate revenue.

The Board discussed the school committee upcoming vote regarding the drawings for Minnechaug. James and John researched MGL regarding the School Committee's borrowing abilities and the process that must be followed. The Board can convene a town meeting to allow the voters to decide. Should the vote fail, then the School Committee can bring it forward again.

John feels as though the school committee should bear responsibility in bringing forward information on the project and getting it out to the community.

James suggests that the vote would be a vote to "disapprove" the borrowing by the school committee, and it could only go forward if it were contingent upon 2.5% override.

The Board feels as though the overwhelming consensus in the communities is that something needs to be done with the building one way or another.

John feels as though this board needs to work/discuss the issue with the Wilbraham Board before making a decision about the vote. Jim and John will attend the school committee meeting on the 10th, and then discuss with the Wilbraham liaison. He will get their position on the issue prior to our next meeting on the 17th. At that time, how to best proceed can be discussed, working within the 60 day timeframe.

Jim Kibbe, Chapter 61A Land: The Board received a letter from Jim Kibbe regarding 35 acres on South Road which is designated as 61A land. The Board will forward to Minnechaug Land Trust for their input prior to making a decision on the Right of First Refusal.

Transfer Station Operation: Duane has requested that the Board vote to form a committee to evaluate the transfer station operation and the bid process. The Board discussed keeping the commitment time on a short term basis only to work on the bid process. The Committee would be responsible to the BOH, and charged with making recommendations at the Board of Selectmen's meeting by April 3, 2006.

A motion was made by James Smith to form a Transfer Station Committee to establish the bid criteria for Transfer Station Operations and was seconded by John Flynn. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.

Duane brought forward resumes for the BOH Coordinator's position. The Board will review these and determine possible candidates.

A motion was made by Duane Mosier to enter into Executive Session at 10:00 pm to discuss details of the Police Chief's contract without a return to Open Session and was seconded by John Flynn. VOTE: Duane Mosier yes, John Flynn yes, James Smith yes.

A motion was made by John Flynn to adjourn meeting at 10:20 pm and was seconded by Duane Mosier. VOTE: John Flynn yes, Duane Mosier yes, James Smith yes.

Respectfully submitted:

Pamela B. Courtney
Administrative Assistant

/pbc