

Approved 1/16/07

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

December 18, 2006
6:30 pm

625 Main Street
Town House

Present: Duane E. Mosier, John D. Flynn. Richard R. Green is absent due to illness.

6:30 pm Walk-Ins - Lori McCool, Board of Health Agent: Lori came before the Board to discuss a variance request for 329 Chapin Road. The soil was too wet to perc, due to the high water table so a soil evaluation was required per Title V. This is a voluntary repair to the system. It is a recommendation of Lori McCool to grant a variance to 329 Chapin Road to repair and expand the existing system. A motion was made by Duane Mosier to grant a variance on 329 Chapin Road to allow the repair and expansion of the existing system as allowed by Title V, and was seconded by John Flynn. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.

Hampden County Health Coalition: Lori talked about the need to establish a Medical Reserve Corp for Hampden, but the possibility exists to form a regional group in lieu of on our own. Lori did state that there is some work that should be done in preparation for smaller incidents in town, and must recognize that the town would probably be on our own for the first 72 hours of an emergency situation at the least. There are some requirements that must be fulfilled when we put together a COOP plan. Lori suggested that the town should establish an advisory Board of Health in the event two of the Selectmen are out with the flu; the town will have a body in which to seek direction to seek direction from.

Lori will also gather information on outdoor wood furnaces from surrounding communities so the Board of Health can work on either regulating the furnaces or banning their use in town.

6:40 pm Andrew Smith, Pioneer Valley Planning Commission: Andrew came before the Board to revisit the acceptance of the PVPC Valley Vision which had already been reviewed and discussed by the Planning Board and the Board of Selectmen. John and Duane agree that they don't believe there is a great deal of applicability for Hampden with this Valley Vision 2. As John stated, no one is opposed to managed growth. John suggested that a meeting be set with PVPC in the coming year, to come in and explain the benefits of Valley Vision for Hampden. Andrew explained that there is no contract to sign, and there are no requirements of the Town to endorse the plan. There could be a possible financial benefit from the State if we were to endorse the plan.

We will schedule time to meet with the Planning Board, and have Andrew Smith come in as well to explain the plan so it can be signed by January 2007. The Board will schedule a date with the Planning Board (attempt to meet on January 10, 2007 at 7 pm).

7:00 pm Police Chief Review: Jeff Farnsworth came before the Board to begin the process of a performance evaluation for the past year. His contract was signed on February 27, 2006.

Duane acknowledged that the Board has not formally established a format in which to perform a review but there are a number of items that should be reviewed on an annual basis.

John did remark that given the few emergencies in town in the last year that they were well handled by the department. Since one situation is on-going, there will be additional staff hours required for court time and as a result budget demands.

Community Policing: The school has an officer available and accessible for the students and the Senior Center has Mike Cooney from the full time ranks and Kevin Carroll from the Reserve ranks filling the vacancy left with Gary Courtney's departure. Mark Galarneau will be handling the lock box program for our seniors. The youth golf program has continued with good participation and the Chief pursued and received a grant for \$28,500 for additional town wide programs. There are no classes available for a RAD officer right now, and Chief Farnsworth was the last officer qualified to conduct the training course.

Communication: The Board discussed the areas of communication and teamwork within the department and Duane stated that he feels comfortable with the status of the department now.

In-House Policy Book: The in-house policy book was also discussed, and it was agreed that this has been maintained by the Chief.

Certification: The Chief then mentioned the possibility of a new program for certification that Jeff would like to pursue which will require that a significant amount of new policies be approved. This would allow us a chance to compare to industry standards, providing the town with a benchmark.

Training: The Chief stated that maintaining the training budget allows for good exposure for all officers in the department and is a practice he intends to continue.

New Policies and Procedures: These are presented in a timely fashion by the Chief and the Board is satisfied with the way in which they are currently handled. The Chief is also distributing electronic copies of policies through the computers in the cruisers so they can be referred to easily by the officers.

Emergency Management: The officers are NIMS 700, 100 and 200 trained and are scheduled for another class. Duane asked for a list of those who have participated in training so we have it in this office.

Mass Chiefs Training and Education Committee: The Chief has been appointed to the training committee and he would like additional training for reserve officers, perhaps aligning with local colleges. Chief Farnsworth currently attends a monthly meeting, but they may be scaled down to a total of 8-10 meetings a year.

Western Massachusetts Chiefs Association: The chiefs meet 10 meetings a year. Western MA Chiefs group is an effective group and well organized. They are currently working on providing group training with East Longmeadow, West Springfield, Longmeadow, and Southwick.

Other Topics:

- Road Detail memo: The Chief sent a memo to the Board regarding road details and the police department members questioning the detail shift duties not being offered to them, but instead being handled by the Highway department members. When the issue was discussed, the Chief stated that he is not always informed of road projects being done, and his need to know what projects are ongoing so he can make his department aware of such. The Highway Superintendent will be asked to keep the Police Chief informed of upcoming projects.
- Evaluation of officers: Duane will research the evaluation form to be used by the Chief.
- Amber Alert Policy: The Board will review the policy and vote on it.
- Mobile Communications: The Board will review the policy and vote on it.
- Vacation Schedule: The Chief informed the Board that he will be out of town from 12/24-12/30, but may be reached via cell at any time.
- Pension Reform Act: The Chief had a question pertaining to this and the possible effect it may have on Physical Abilities Testing required by the State. The Board learned that those employees going through the Academy are the only employees that must go through the PAT.

Tabor Salary Numbers: The Board will review the Tabor numbers to better reflect the increases available for town employees.

Outdoor Stove Regulations: The Board will wait further information from Lori McCool regarding regulations passed in surrounding towns relative to outdoor wood furnaces.

Library Tabor Request: The Board will submit a request from the Library Trustees to have the staff position for Technical Service to be reviewed by the Tabor Group to determine if the grade level should be changed. The Board will ask that the Personnel Committee review the request first prior to sending the request to Tabor. Any work done by Tabor shall be paid through the Library budget.

Building Department: A computer is on order for the Building Department's use (paid for through the Revolving Account) in an effort to have all permit information accessible.
Conservation Commission: A computer has been ordered for Con Comm as well as voted at Town Meeting.

A motion was made to adjourn at 8:37 pm by John Flynn, and seconded by Duane Mosier. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.

Respectfully submitted:

Pamela B. Courtney
Administrative Assistant

/pbc