

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

May 14, 2007
6:30 pm

625 Main Street
Town House

Present: John D. Flynn, Richard R. Green, Vincent J. Villamaino
The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm by John Flynn.

6:30 pm Cliff Bombard, Town Accountant: The Board requested that the Town Accountant and Town Treasurer meet with them to discuss the issues raised in the mailing regarding the prior treasurer's job performance. The Board received a response from the Treasurer stating that she was not in office at the time and did not see any benefit to meeting with the Board since the issues had been resolved.

John asked the Town Accountant for clarification of these issues. Cliff stated that the IRS notice was essentially an audit letter that could have been sent to any number of people in business. He also noted that the threat that the town might lose their health insurance provider was not consistent with the attachment sent out from Boston Mutual (the Town's life insurance provider). The issue of health insurance possibly being cancelled might have come from the Scantic Valley Regional Health (and this is the same group who recently were convinced the Town was in arrears in payments in the amount of approximately \$30,000, an error of their treasurer's to which they recently admitted). Also discussed was the Costco card that had been used by many departments, some of whom did not take responsibility in getting those charges paid. In the end, Cliff explained these occurrences never cost the town any money and were all fully resolved, as many of these situations occur in business frequently and over time get resolved.

Cliff then explained the subject of properties being in tax title and the subsequent auction the town may have to get delinquent properties off the books and back on the tax roll. When the property is auctioned off, all prior uncollected taxes get paid immediately as part of the auction process.

Cliff also notified the Board that the auditors will start their annual audit the week of May 21st.

7:00 pm Dana Pixley, Highway Superintendent: Dana came before the Board to review his list of road improvements for this construction season; to prioritize the projects and to hear the Board's suggestions. After some discussion about available funding, Rick suggested a meeting be held with the Advisory Committee and the Treasurer to determine how best to proceed with the bonding process for the \$1.5 million

voted for infrastructure improvements. At the same time, the projects will be put out to bid through the Central Register for more precise numbers. The priorities of the projects will be reviewed again once costs and the funding process are determined.

Transfer Request: A motion was made by Rick Green to request that Advisory transfer from the Reserve Account an additional \$266.20 into line item 52.1 to pay the per capita share for the O'Conner Animal Shelter, seconded by Vinnie Villamaino. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.

Minutes of May 8, 2007: The minutes of May 8, 2007 were reviewed and a motion was made by Rick Green to approve the minutes as corrected, seconded by Vinnie Villamaino. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.

Conservation Commission Update: The Conservation Commission updated the Selectmen regarding the issues at the end of River Park Drive and assured the Board that the situation is under control. Con Comm has voted on an order of conditions, and this Board will receive copies of those orders. Charlie Schmitt talked to Russ Morton about both River Park and Genevieve.

Transfer Station Work: The Board discussed the grant money received and the re-working of the location of recycle bins. We will confirm the meeting date with Allied Waste and Tom Cronin.

Town House Building Committee: The Board would like to meet again with the Town House Building Committee to discuss next priorities.

Town House Generator: John had a conversation with Senator Gale Candaras regarding the possibility of a grant or outright purchase of a generator. If the Town purchased one, it would probably not be reimbursed for it.

Senior Center and Town House Generator Specs: This office will get the specs for the generators and have an engineer review prior to going out to bid on both of them.

Computer Purchase: Rick Green made a motion to approve the purchase of a new computer for the Selectmen's Office in the amount of \$863.00, seconded by Vinnie Villamaino. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.

Letter to the Board: The Board reviewed a letter sent from Eunice Easton requesting a public censure of the Treasurer for the mailing that went to residents prior to the election. Rick stated that one Board censuring another in public is not within the purview of the Board. He feels that one elected official is not in a position to censure another elected official's actions. All of the Board members voiced the same opinion; that they are not in the position to censure another. However, the consensus of the Board's was that they personally felt that it was irresponsible to send such a controversial mailing without allowing adequate time for rebuttal.

Engineer Review: Tall Pines: Tighe and Bond submitted a proposal for the subdivision review of the Tall Pines construction project. It would be approximately \$11,000, to ensure roads are built to accommodate the Town's emergency vehicles.

John Flynn noted the need to talk with the Planning Board about adding subdivision regulations to the existing PURD bylaw.

Howlett Hill: The Board is expecting the matter to go to court in the near future.

Hearing Request: The Board responded to a resident regarding a request for a hearing with the Police Chief. They did not feel the request merited further follow up.

At 8:45 pm a motion was made by Rick Green to adjourn, seconded by Vinnie Villamaino. VOTE: Rick Green yes, John Flynn yes, Vinnie Villamaino yes.

Respectfully submitted:

Pamela B. Courtney
Administrative Assistant

/pbc