

Approved 11/19/07

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

November 13, 2007  
6:30 pm

625 Main Street  
Town House

Present: John D. Flynn, Richard R. Green, Vincent J. Villamaino  
Guests: Dave Quill, Judy Hatch, Richard Hatch, Kathy Foster

The meeting was called to order by John Flynn at 6:30 pm.

Special Town Meeting: The Board discussed the need for a Special Town Meeting to clarify the language of a warrant article approved at Annual Town Meeting last year

A motion was made by Rick Green to call a Special Town Meeting for the purpose of establishing a budget for the operation of the Transfer Station Enterprise Fund for FY08, seconded by Vinnie Villamaino. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.

The Board will finalize the necessary language for the warrant article and schedule the Special Town Meeting for December 3<sup>rd</sup> at TWB at 7:00 pm.

It was suggested that the Board of Assessors conduct the Tax Classification Hearing at 7:30 pm at TWB immediately following the Special Town Meeting.

6:30 pm      Cemetery Commission: The commission came before the Board to talk about the maintenance of the lawns at the cemeteries. Their concern is that they are being mowed too often and would like to have more input on how and when the maintenance is done. It was suggested that Dana Pixley, Highway Superintendent come up with a cost estimate for his department to perform the work on a weekly basis, and present that number to the Board of Selectmen. It would then allow the Cemetery Commissioners to hire someone on their own and allow them to schedule the work as they see fit.

There was also discussion about the fence that exists at the Prospect Hill Cemetery that is in disrepair and in need of replacement with new fencing or the planting of shrubbery. It was noted that the shrubbery comes with its own maintenance issues, which the Commission assured could be managed. They are working on a price for the shrubbery to discuss with the Board. Prospect Hill could also use some large boulders to act as guardrails up top. The Board remarked that there are plenty at Green Meadows School that could be used for such a purpose.

John reminded the Commission that if they had further suggestions, a town meeting is coming up in April and this would be the time of year to prepare a warrant article should additional funds be needed for a specific improvement.

The commission also noted their need for additional property, as the cemeteries are running out of space.

Town House Repairs: Joe Grant came before the Board to discuss the ongoing improvements to the front of the town hall. The further Joe got into the project, the more disrepair he discovered. There is the need for re-pointing of some brick work and improvements to the existing copper in the amount of \$2,400.

A motion was made by Rick Green for Joe Grant to proceed with the additional work on the town house in the amount of \$2,400, seconded by Vinnie Villamaino. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.

Department Head Meeting: The Board met with Department Heads/Elected/Appointed Officials to discuss the schedule in preparation of Town Meeting in April. This will require good communication between Advisory and the Selectmen's office, the timely completion of budget preparations, timely town report submittals, etc. John is working on a final Tabor Schedule to be distributed to each department for salary adjustments, and once the Personnel Committee approves it, the schedule will be distributed.

Chief Farnsworth:

American Medical Response: The Chief and John met with the representative from the ambulance company to discuss the timeliness of responses in town. AMR acknowledged their concern and assured them that it was not a regular occurrence nor would it continue to happen.

Temporary Officer: The Chief submitted a contract to allow the hiring of a current Reserve Officer as a Temporary Full Time Officer for the period of December 3, 2007 until April 25, 2008. This will temporarily alleviate the need for a search for another full time officer. The Board agreed with the recommendation.

A motion was made by Rick Green to allow the Board to approve the temporary employment of William Jacques as a full time officer, and was seconded by Vinnie Villamaino. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.

Budget Discussion: The Chief discussed the status of his budget and noted that the salary line item is still in the black, but not at the amount he had predicted. The salary account was hit heavily due to two trials with associated court costs and Dispatcher Ryder being out on disability.

Reserve Officer: The Chief requested the Board's input on a Reserve Officer who has failed to meet the time commitment agreed upon at hiring. A motion was made by

Vinnie Villamaino to terminate this officer as recommended by the Chief and was seconded by Rick Green. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.

Reserve Officer Appointment: The Chief introduced the Board to Alexander Sierra who is a candidate for a reserve officer's position. Alex currently works as a an officer in the District Court.

Rick Green made a motion to appoint Alexander Sierra as Reserve Officer as recommended by Chief Farnsworth, for a probationary period of 60 days, until June 30, 2008, seconded by Vinnie Villamaino. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.

Alarm Revolving Account: The Chief spoke with Town Accountant, Cliff Bombard about the monies which could be charged to homeowners and business for repeated false alarm calls, (after three such calls). Cliff suggested that these collected monies should be reimbursed to the department, who could use them for reprint fees.

A motion was made by Rick Green to establish a temporary revolving fund for the purpose of collecting and disbursing fines collected through the abuse of false alarm calls, seconded by Vinnie Villamaino. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.

Conservation Restriction: The restriction for the South Road property recently acquired through the Land Trust required some minor revisions. A motion was made by Rick Green to sign the revised Conservation Restriction for the South Road property, seconded by Vinnie Villamaino. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.

Conservation Commission: A Commission member recently disclosed a potential Conflict of Interest in a matter before the Commission. After a review by Town Counsel and subsequent review by the Board, it was concluded that no conflict existed and the member could continue to act on behalf of the Commission in this matter.

Park and Rec: Park and Rec requested a review by Town Counsel as to the commissioner's role in setting policy/regulations for patrons other than the "summer campers" for the program held in Memorial Park. It came into question as a result of the construction of the Spray Park and people's desire to use the spray park while camp was in session. Dave Martel responded that as Commissioners, they had the right to institute the hours/scheduling/prohibition of other patrons, as they saw fit during the summer program.

Minutes of October 29, 2007: The Board reviewed the minutes and a motion was made by Rick Green to approve the minutes as presented, seconded by Vinnie Villamaino. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.

River Park Drive: The issue of ongoing activities at the property abutting the river was raised and the Board will request that the Conservation Commission get a copy of the letter sent to the property owner regarding certain activities as discussed at a prior Con Comm meeting.

HWRSD Budget: The school has invited the Board as well as a host of others to attend a budget meeting on December 6 at 7:00 pm.

GASBE 45: The Board will ask MMA what obligations we have as a town to comply with the GASBE 45 requirements.

Highway Department: The Highway Superintendent asked the Board's opinion about the offer of salt to residents, as has been past practice for years. The question was raised as to the increased cost of salt. The Board agreed to continue the practice, but asked that Dana Pixley monitor the distribution and use in the event a change in policy needs to be made.

Cable Hearing Date: The Board will schedule a date for an ascertainment hearing before year end prior to finalizing the contract negotiations with Charter Cable.

A motion to adjourn was made by Rick Green at 8:30 pm, seconded by Vinnie Villamaino. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.

Respectfully submitted:

Pamela B. Courtney  
Administrative Assistant

/pbc