

Approved 12/11/07

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

November 20, 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.

7:30 pm Personnel Committee: The Committee members present were Don Collins, Carol Fitzgerald and Bill Gouzounis. The Board asked that the Personnel Committee discuss and give their opinions on two issues.

The first was the Tabor Schedule which has been used for prior years in determining increases for town employees. During the discussion with the Board in an attempt to understand where the rates are now and where we want to go in the future, it was determined at last year's meeting that the Board would work to get employees to the 95% number recommended by Tabor. During the next year, the two groups would meet to determine how best to give step increases and/or merit increases. Perhaps the steps will increase from 6 to 11, bringing the increase rates down before maxing out. Perhaps the increases will be given every other year. This will be determined over the coming year.

The other issue was that of Holiday Pay and who was eligible for the benefit. The Personnel Committee determined that the Employee Handbook would be revised to more clearly define holidays for full time as well as part time employees. In that 40 hour employees get a full day for a holiday, those 20 hour employees are entitled to a proportionate share of a day, equating to 4 hours of pay.

Cemetery Maintenance Decision: The Board discussed a request made by the Cemetery Commission in which they asked for different scheduling of the maintenance of the cemeteries. The Board voted to recommend the money spent by the Public Grounds (\$9,256.00) be turned over to the Cemetery Commission allowing them full control of the mowing schedule. Given that they are elected officials, they can seek additional funds at town meeting as other elected officials do. The Board will invite the Commissioners in to discuss the transition.

Minutes of November 5, 2007: The minutes were reviewed and a motion was made by Rick Green to approve as presented, seconded by Vinnie Villamaino. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.

Minutes of November 13, 2007: The minutes were reviewed and a motion was made by Rick Green to approve as presented, seconded by Vinnie Villamaino. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.

2007 Construction Project Review: The Board reviewed the project review compiled by Dana Pixley, Highway Superintendent and recognized his accomplishment in coming in under budget for the 12 jobs completed, the quality of those completed projects and the extent of the report showing funding sources, etc for each project.

Funding for Beaver & Dam Removal: Dana Pixley submitted a letter to the Board regarding the annual problems of beavers building dams, flooding roads and then the intervention needed for their removal. The cost can get quite high and the town has some responsibility if they are on town owned property. Property owners seeking removal of beavers and dams on their property must bear the removal cost themselves. As a result, the Board agreed that a line item should be established for the Animal Control Account with adequate funding to handle upcoming problems.

The other related issue is the problem with trees gnawed by beavers and then in danger of falling that become a safety issue. In particular, there is a tree one on Mill Road that has been tied to others to alleviate it from falling onto the bridge. This will be monitored and dealt with as soon as possible.

Outdoor Wood Furnaces: The Board received comments from the DEP in response to their submittal of regulations for the operations of Outdoor Wood Furnaces. The Board will review those recommendations; 1) changing our proposed fee schedule, 2) reducing the setback from the residence, 3) and a few other minor changes. The Board will then notify furnace owners that they must come into compliance with the regulations prior to beginning their burning season. The approved regulations will be printed and inserted into The Wilbraham-Hampden Times to best notify all residents.

Injunction Letter: The Board received a letter of injunction regarding property on North Monson Road related to zoning/use restrictions. A copy will be forwarded to the Planning Board to ensure the information is on record for future homeowners/landowners.

Performance Evaluation: The Board received a copy of the evaluation done on COA Director, Becky Moriarty.

School Budget Meeting: The Board will attend the scheduled budget meeting on December 6 at 7:00 pm. Advisory will attend as well.

Town House: The Board will contact a few people from town to see if they are interested in inspecting and cleaning the roof drains prior to winter.

Advisory Hearing: Warrant Hearing scheduled for Monday 11/26 at 6:30 pm in the Auditorium.

Special Town Meeting: Monday, 12/3 at Thornton W. Burgess School for one warrant article.

Board of Selectmen: The Board will take their meeting on the road on Tuesday, December 11 to the Senior Center at 11:30 am.

Bulk Drop Off Day: Scheduled at the Transfer Station for December 1.

Tree Lighting: The event has been scheduled for December 2 at 6:30 pm.

Treasurer: The Police had a question about their insurance and the Board asked that Tracy Sicbaldi get a response from Nationwide to ensure the problem has been resolved.

Historical Society: The Board would like to speak with the Historical Society about a warrant article for Annual Town Meeting to do some essential cleaning in the interior of Academy Hall as a result of the bats over the years.

Rick Green made a motion to adjourn at 9:04 pm. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.

Respectfully submitted:

Pamela B. Courtney
Administrative Assistant