

Approved 12/22/08

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

December 15, 2008
6:30 pm

625 Main Street
Town House

Board Members: Richard R. Green, Vincent J. Villamaino, John D. Flynn
Board of Assessors: Stan Witkop, Robert Makuch, Norm Charest (Norm was not in attendance.)

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm by Rick Green.

Tax Classification Hearing: The Board of Assessors and Board of Selectmen held a joint public hearing to determine the tax classification for FY2009. The Board presented all of the options available. If the town sets a rate of a residential factor of one, this status allows for one tax rate for all uses. The Board of Assessors recommends this classification. If we went with a different classification, commercial property would be taxed at a higher rate.

There was then discussion about the exemptions that are available to the town. These are typically recommended for communities with an abundance of rental properties, (such as the Cape). The other exemption pertains to a commercial exemption, but this too is not recommended by the Assessors. As history has shown, the town has always maintained a residential factor of one.

Based on the recommendation of the Board of Assessors, a motion was made by John Flynn to set the tax rate at a residential factor of one, seconded by Vinnie Villamaino.
VOTE: All in favor and so voted.

Based on the recommendation of the Board of Assessors, a motion was made by John Flynn to not adopt the exemptions for all tax classifications, seconded by Vinnie Villamaino. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.

Gun Owner's Action League - Meeting Attendees:

Mark Anderson, 110 Colony Drive:
Janis and Roger DeGrandpre, 185 Raymond Drive
Mike Andre, 26 Chestnut Hill Road
Dennis Smith, 27 Charles Street
Warren Schoonover, 25 Kelly Lane
Daniel Anderson, 110 Colony Drive
Paul Quinn, 49 Devonshire Terrace, East Longmeadow
Paul J. Quinn, 49 Devonshire Terrace, East Longmeadow
Michael Avore, 26 Chestnut Hill Road

BOS 081215

John Mumper, 62 Allen Court Drive

A group of residents came before the Board to discuss the issuance of firearm licenses by the Chief of Police. They are dissatisfied that multiple trips to the station are required, as more and more information is requested, and do not understand why after receiving FBI approval, they need further approval from the Police Chief.

The Board listened and agreed to meet with the chief to gain an understanding of the process and what his needs are. Once done, the board will contact Nancy Snow, a representative of the Gun Owners' Action League who will then contact all residents attending tonight's meeting.

The general discussion centered on the perceived lack of consistency in the permitting process and issuance of a license to carry a firearm. A reference was made to the Northeast Shooters group that is collecting data from various cities and towns to determine how permitting is handled across the state. The residents in attendance wish to see the process become a one step process and feel as if they have been made to return again and again to the Police Department with more and more information to satisfy the requirements of the Police Chief. They would like to see a written policy for the Chief to follow.

A motion was made by Vinnie Villamaino to go into Executive Session at 7:25 pm for purposes of discussing contract issues and then to meet with IBPO representatives, with return to Open Session, seconded by John Flynn. VOTE: Vinnie Villamaino yes, John Flynn yes, Rick Green yes.

A motion was made by Vinnie Villamaino to return to Open Session at 8:30 pm, seconded by John Flynn. VOTE: Vinnie Villamaino yes, John Flynn yes, Rick Green yes.

- Trench Safety Regulations: The Division of Occupational Safety has enacted a new law requiring permits prior to any trench work being done in town, whether municipal or not. It was suggested that the Highway Superintendent take on the responsibility, but another appointment could be made at the discretion of the Board of Selectmen. The Board will ask for the Building Inspector's thoughts on the subject.
- Ticketing Issues: The Board has been working with Town Counsel to resolve some ticketing issues. The majority of them deal with parking offenses in addition to the enforcement of the "no parking ban" that exists during the winter months. In an effort to keep the streets clear while snow removal takes place, a new bylaw was passed at Annual Town Meeting and the printing of tickets will now allow the police to enforce the by-law. In addition there is a by-law passed at the same meeting, prohibiting anyone from leaving snow and ice in the roadway, posing a potential hazard to the traveling public.
- Main Street Culvert: The Board received a recommendation from Tighe and Bond, the engineering firm used by the Town for years on how best to proceed

with the repair to and potential costs associated with the work to replace the existing deteriorated culvert. The board will contact Tom Couture from Tighe and Bond to attempt to get a better estimate on those costs.

- Used Car Dealer's License: The Board received a request to grant a used car license to a Robert Reen, Reen Motor Sports, Inc. of 31 Commercial Drive. The terms of the permit remain the same, with only the addition of "Incorporated" being added. A motion was made by John Flynn to approve the license as drafted, second by Rick Green. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.
- Minutes of December 8, 2008: The minutes were reviewed and a motion was made by Vinnie Villamaino to approve the Open Session Minutes and the Executive Session minutes as presented, second by John Flynn. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.
- Stabilization Account Status: Tracy Sicbaldi, Town Treasurer submitted an account of the activity of the stabilization account for the prior six months. The board will request that Cliff Bombard, Town Accountant review the numbers to ensure the best use of all of the funds.
- River Flooding: The Board wants to investigate any possible avenues to improve and/or manage the conditions of the flooding of the river.
- Cemetery Commission: The Board has requested to see a contract for the plowing of the cemeteries, but have not yet heard from the commission. A memo will be sent to notify them that bills incurred for snow and ice removal cannot be paid until a contract is awarded and signed.

Board of Health:

Variance Request at 25 Wehr Road: The Board reviewed the location of the septic system which is located 80' from the well versus the required 100'. A motion was made by John Flynn to approve the variance allowing the installation of a septic system at a distance of 80 feet from a well, versus the required 100 feet, as recommended by Lorri McCool, Board of Health Agent, seconded by Rick Green. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.

Variance Request at 376 Chapin Road: The Board reviewed the location of an artesian well which would have to be located within 55' of a leachfield versus the required 100' separation. A motion was made by John Flynn to approve the variance allowing the installation of the well 55' from the leachfield as recommended by Lorri McCool, Board of Health Agent, seconded by Rick Green. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.

A motion was made by Vinnie Villamaino to adjourn the meeting at 9:15 pm, seconded by John Flynn. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.

Respectfully submitted,

Pamela B. Courtney
Administrative Assistant
/pbc