

Approved 3/29/10

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

March 15, 2010
6:30 pm

625 Main Street
Town House

Board Members: Vincent J. Villamaino, John D. Flynn, Richard R. Green
The meeting was called to order at 6:31 by John Flynn. Vinnie Villamaino was not in attendance due to illness.

Resident, Steve Hapgood arrived at the meeting to discuss the tax rate for the town and his displeasure with that given the increase we can expect with the new school. The board explained that the taxes did not go up last year and that within the next few years, the rate will go down prior to the school debt becoming a reality.

Fire Chief, Mike Gorski: Mike Gorski came before the board to recommend a promotion member, Bryan Markham to the position of Lieutenant. Bryan is currently in the fire officer training program.

A motion was made by Rick Green to appoint Bryan Markham to the position of Lieutenant in the Fire Department, effective immediately until June 30, 2010, seconded by John Flynn. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.

The board then asked about the proposed Saturday burn to take place on Chapin Road this weekend. The training exercise is scheduled to go, and the chief asked if the police could put an officer on site for traffic control. The board will request same from the Chief and get back to Mike Gorski with a response.

Highway Budget: Dana Pixley, Highway Superintendent came before the board to review his budget submittal prior to his meeting with Advisory. He has requested a level service budget for a five man crew as he has done in past years that allow some money for certain road projects to be completed during the year. The proposed budget will be forwarded to Advisory for their review.

Road Conditions: The next item discussed was the cost of salt and sand and the condition of our roads during the winter. Our roads have always been in the best condition when compared to surrounding communities and it was determined that our residents have come to expect the high level of service from the Highway Department and rather than risk safety, the board will continue to have the roads maintained in the same fashion regardless of the cost of materials.

Leave of Absence: Department member, Lauren Comstock has requested a medical leave of absence as allowed in the Employee Handbook. The board will send a letter to grant approval for Lauren's leave of absence.

Equipment Purchase: Dana stated that he would need two new sanders for two of the trucks in the fleet, in that they normally have a ten year lifespan and these two are at the end of that span. The board debated whether they should be purchased through the snow and ice accounts (as has been done in the past) or voted at town meeting through a warrant article. A decision was not rendered; it will be discussed further.

Brush Trimming: Dana mentioned that he had talked with Phil Grant from the Conservation Commission regarding the trimming of brush along property from the VFW towards the town house and the need to fill out an application for Conservation approval. This is trimming that has taken place on a routine basis and will continue to be done.

Town Accountant and Town Assessors: Cliff Bombard and the Assessors were invited in to discuss the Assessor's Overlay Account and what monies could be expected to be returned to the General Fund, but the Assessors could not make the meeting. Cliff then discussed the Enterprise Fund and past comments from our State contact at the DOR. Cliff stated that a closer estimate should be made for the revenue versus expenditure figures. John will look more closely at the number given.

The board will ask that Cliff and the Assessors attend a meeting in our office on Tuesday, the 23rd at 10:00 am.

Warrant: The board reviewed the warrant again and will add the Senior Tax Work-Off Abatement Program and revise the article to allow news cameras in the meeting.

Police: Policy Reviews: The board will review these policies at the next meeting.

- Fire Department Paging
- Traffic Accidents
- Dead Bodies
- Crowds and Demonstrations

- Letter of appreciation

Miscellaneous:

- Transfer Request: The board submitted a revised request for transfer from the Advisory Board for the Veteran's Benefits account in the amount of \$5,500
- Tree Cutting on River Park Drive: A resident came in with information on tree cutting that is taking place within wetlands on River Park Drive. Calls were made to members of the Conservation Commission and the State Forester to make them aware of the cutting. Calls were not returned to this office.
- Ethics Training Status: There are a number of employees who have not completed the ethics' training and a reminder was sent to those people that training must be done by April 2, 2010.

- Planning Board Minutes: Reviewed without comment.
- House Relocation: The contractor working for Sue Bower for the house relocation sent a letter stating the proposed date of the move will be May 15th. That information has been forwarded to all necessary departments and the board will await a bond amount to be determined by Dana Pixley, Highway Superintendent, in the event any damage is done to town property.

Thomas J. O' Connor Animal Shelter: The board sent a letter of termination to the Animal Shelter and received a call requesting a meeting with board members. There will be a meeting to discuss this with a Ms. Harris on Tuesday, March 23rd at 3:00 pm in this office.

School Budget: The budget was submitted by the school and will be reviewed with Advisory tonight.

Police Issues: The board will check with Brett Purchas regarding some outstanding issues department members had with the treasurer and the retirement board and withholdings. The board will check with the Police to ensure those issues have been addressed to their satisfaction.

With no further business, a motion was made by Rick Green to adjourn the meeting at 8:40 pm, seconded by John Flynn. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.

Respectfully submitted,

Pamela B. Courtney
Administrative Assistant

/pbc