

Approved 2/19/13

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

February 4, 2013
6:30 pm

625 Main Street
Hampden, MA 01036

Board Members: Vincent J. Villamaino, John D. Flynn, Norman Charest
The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm by Vinnie Villamaino.
Norm Charest was ill and unable to attend the meeting.

In attendance was Tom Couture, our engineer from Tighe and Bond Engineering.

Jeanne Broderick, Resident of 601 Main Street: Jeanne came before the board to get a status report on the water remediation issue that the town has been working on. The board told her that the well be drilled this week, that a contract has been signed with the driller. Once done, the water will be tested, a manhole will be added, trenching will be done for piping, electric will be completed and her water will be supplied by the new well to be located on town property at the Highway Garage.

Jeanne brought in pieces of piping as well as pans that she suggests are affected by the water conditions in her home. She has a concern about the health issues. She thinks that her plumbing may need replacing. There are pinholes in her piping now.

The consensus of the group was to get an expert into her home to analyze the pipes and determine what may have affected them. There was the suggestion that plumbing has a shelf life and this may just at its end. Tom Couture will try to find an expert to help in determining the causes of the pinholes.

Our town counsel has worked on an Easement Agreement to assure residents that if/when they sold their house; the water rights would run with the property and not with the owner of the home. There would be an exception to the water allowed, for example, the filling of a pool would not be part of what the town would agree to on any basis.

Police Department: Jeff Farnsworth, Police Chief came before the board with a Reserve Officer Candidate, Nichole Gura. A background check has been done by Officer Seega and Joe Henry and she comes highly recommended. The chief knows her dad who is also in the Law Enforcement community. This position would fill the position recently vacated by now full time officer, Mike Meaney. The board asked a few questions and a motion was made by Norm Charest to appoint Nichole Gura to the position of Reserve Officer, for a probationary period of six months, effective this day, seconded by John Flynn. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.

New Policy, Medical Marijuana Use: The Chief brought forward a new policy to be accepted by the board which involves the prohibition of Police Officers from smoking marijuana at any time. A motion was made by Norm Charest to approve the policy, seconded by John Flynn. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.

The Chief also reported to the board that he has acquired a new computerized fingerprinting system that normally would cost \$26k that the Chief was able to get for \$500. The board recognized his diligence in acquiring this piece of equipment.

Police Budget: The board reviewed the department budget in preparation for the meeting with the Advisory Board. There was discussion about the Chief's car which will need replacing. It will be out of warrant soon which will result in maintenance costs. Salaries are the biggest piece of the budget, costs have risen 64k in salary and 62k in cruiser maintenance. Jeff will get hard numbers for the review with advisory, (as to transfers done during this year).

New officer position: The Chief explained a need for a new officer for Monday thru Friday position. This would be a "utility officer". There has been an increased need in court time for the department as well as a need for increased evidence processing. This officer could cover 20 weeks of time with current staff and would probably be closer to 30 weeks, The board suggested that Jeff will have to sell this to advisory and stress the need for this officer. Vinnie asked about hiring a retired State Trooper to fill the position; the Chief responded that he would consider this avenue. Jeff needs to show where he falls short in the department, and will need numbers to present to Advisory as well as to voters at Annual Town Meeting. Jeff projects that this new officer would cost 25k, and that includes everything, There is currently one car in budget and a second can be discussed at fall town meeting.

COA Budget Review: Becky Moriarty and all members of the Board of Directors for the Senior Center arrived for a preliminary budget review with the board prior to review with the Advisory Committee. The group would like to add a receptionist at a 15 hour position at \$10.05. The suggested hours would be 9:00 am to noon, Monday through Friday. This would help with a need for consistency in daily operations at the front desk. Rudie Voight would also like an additional hour a day for his daily custodial work at the center. The utility line item is looking good, and less than half the budget has been used to date. The idea of capital improvements was discussed; what to plan for as there may be a need for work on the parking lot within the next three years. At this point berms need some repair and the lot should be relined. Vinnie has offered to do the berm work as a donation. Also discussed was the need for an increase of 5% in the building maintenance line.

Highway Budget Review: Dana Pixley came before the board for his budget review prior to meeting with the Advisory Board. There was talk of warrant article, building maintenance, roofing and equipment needs. The roof may go another year, but he needs a chipper, roller and mower. That estimate is \$110k; Dana will crunch numbers and check to see what we might get in trade ins.

Dana has a part time worker and uses him for 2 days through the summer for road projects and would like to continue to use him for his seasonal worker. His name is Bob Varanka and is semi-retired and does a good job.

They discussed increasing the budget by \$10k for the snow and ice budget to bring it closer to the real costs expended every year.

Also discussed was putting \$50k into paving and trying to determine how to get the \$40k needed for the ten weeks of salary that the department has never been funded for. Dana typically takes that money out of State Aid money that should be used for projects and not for salaries.

The board is reviewing a \$2m bond on the warrant which would have to go to vote at town election. If that was done, then the \$50k for paving projects would not move forward.

The highway members' contract needs to be finalized so Dana can finalize his budget.

Dana also mentioned that the radio that the police use to contact highway is dead and there is a need for a new one. Police Chief had a quote for \$1400 for a new radio and Dana said he bought the same radio for approximately \$400. Dana will contact Jeff with this information so a new radio can be purchased.

Fire House Floor Cracks: Floor cracks have recently been discovered in the new floor in the addition by Deputy Chief, Dave Markham and we have asked Charlie Schmitt to review and give the board a status on the problem.

Election Date: Town Clerk, Eva Wiseman presented information to the board relative to upcoming elections and the possibility of combining two elections on the same date to save money and to make it easier for residents to hold one election. A motion was made by John Flynn to change the town election from May 6 to April 30, seconded by Vinnie Villamaino.
VOTE: All in favor and so voted.

Highway Truck Loan: There were signatures for the Board to sign to enable borrowing for the new highway truck. The loan is for less than .5%.

Sign Request: The board was contacted by a resident on Scantic Road requesting a sign for Deer Crossing and a speed limit sign. It was discussed with Dana Pixley who had checked his records and found that only one deer has been picked up by his department over many, many years and therefore failed to see a need for a sign. The board agreed with his recommendation. The resident will be contacted.

ZBA recommendation: The ZBA met and sent a notice to the board that they would like to appoint Mark Barba as a full time member and Mark Casey as an alternate. The board agrees with their recommendation and will inform the ZBA.

Minutes of January 28, 2013: These minutes will be reviewed when Norm has a chance to review them as well.

Correspondence: Reviewed without comment.

NOTE: Safety Meeting, Tuesday, February 12 at 6:00 pm

With no further business, a motion was made by John Flynn to adjourn the meeting at 8:22 pm, seconded by Vinnie Villamaino. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.

Respectfully submitted,

Pamela B. Courtney
Administrative Assistant

/pbc