

Approved 11/25/13

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

November 18, 2013  
6:30 pm

625 Main Street  
Hampden, MA 01036

Board Members: John D. Flynn, Norman Charest, Vincent J. Villamaino  
The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm by John Flynn.

Tax Classification Hearing: The annual hearing was published in The Reminder as required. The Board of Assessors came before the board to discuss the tax classification as they do annually. Eva Wiseman, Tax Collector was present as well. With little discussion, a motion was made by Vinnie Villamaino to keep the taxes at a single rate, for residential and commercial properties, seconded by Norm Charest. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.

The board has asked that the tax rate be lower than \$18.06, and will wait for Cliff Bombard, Town Accountant to return from vacation. They will ask that he attend the next meeting on the 25<sup>th</sup> to revisit revenues. John mentioned that the town might receive extra local contributions if lucky. The tax rate will be set at the meeting on the 25<sup>th</sup>.

Cable Ascertainment Hearing: This hearing was published in The Reminder as required. No residents were present. Tom Cohan from Charter Cable came before the board to hear from any residents about the cable service and to discuss renewing the contract for the service. Charter would like to extend the contract for ten years and the board will consider that. At the last contract extension, the town was able to get cable access in our town buildings for \$5 for each location. We would like to continue at that rate. Tom will check into that for the board. He also mentioned that with this contract comes the ability to have a cable access channel. We do not have the staff available for that option.

Police Business: Chief Farnsworth and Sgt. Mike Cooney came before the board to discuss a number of issues.

New Position: The Chief brought forward a job description for a new position that he would like to implement. This would not require the hiring of a new person, but rather would go to one of the existing officers. The position would be paid through the existing budget. The officer would not go out on patrol and would be used for court appearances, to collect evidence, to work more as a detective. There are a few officers who are interested in the position and the union has approved the current job description that the Chief is using. There was some discussion about administrative days and exactly what hours would be worked. Jeff thinks the shift should be 8 am to 4 pm but the board was not sure this was the best coverage. Norm offered to work through this with the Chief. Once done, the board will discuss it again.

BOS 131118

Regional Dispatch: The Chief discussed the idea of regional dispatching again with the board and noted that the state is pushing for this to happen. The state is going to issue best practices across the state and if we maintain our own dispatch center, we won't be funded by the state. If we participate in the regional plan, the state will pay for the location of the station. They will fully fund a new communication system for the Police and Fire departments. The towns of Longmeadow, East Longmeadow, Wilbraham and Monson are interested in joining as well. The Police Department needs to get rid of old copper lines and are not yet wired in with the Broadband system in place at the town hall. John said the state will take care of that connection. The question was asked as to who would appoint dispatchers for the region? A dispatcher advisory board might be in control. A meeting will take place on Thursday that the Chief will attend. There is no commitment at this point; it is in early discussion now. Fire Chief Mike Gorski was not available to attend tonight's meeting and sent an email with comments he wanted included in the minutes. They are as follows:

- This is probably a once in a lifetime opportunity.
- Regionalization will allow for better trained dispatchers.
- More than 1 dispatcher on at a time to better respond during emergencies. The new EMS requirements for dispatchers require extended telephone contact which can interfere with the handling of additional incoming calls when only one dispatcher is on duty.
- Better coordination of mutual aid requests and fulfillment.
- Next Gen E911 will be rolled out in the next 18-24 months and will make a single dispatch operation extremely difficult to run with the new requirements of the technology.
- Regionalization will also upgrade all our current communications systems at no cost to the town.

Chief Farnsworth reiterated that this will improve capabilities, upgrade our communication at no cost to us and allow us to comply with mandates down the road.

The board supports the Chief attending this meeting which is at 10:00 am. The Chief will send email to board members, regarding same.

Search and Seizure Policy: The Chief brought this policy forward and Norman has reviewed it and wants some additional time to discuss it with Jeff. He will do so prior to the board signing off on it.

Appointment of Part-Time Dispatcher: The Chief introduced Danielle Chatterton to the board who then asked her what her about her background. She had interviewed with Sgt. Henry some time ago and was highly recommended, but her school schedule interfered with her being hired. She has graduated with a nursing degree. Sgt. Cooney has met with her and recommends her for the dispatch position as well. The Chief noted that she would take the spot left vacant by Ms. Merrigan. She is CPR certified and also works at StenTel which is a medical transcription company. The Chief does not anticipate any issue with her training.

Based on the recommendations from the Chief and the Sgt. a motion was made by Norman Charest to appoint Danielle Chatterton to the Police Department as a Part-Time Dispatcher for

one year, contingent upon completion of training with a six month probationary timeframe, seconded by Vinnie Villamaino. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.

Fingerprinting Bylaw: The Chief had asked the board a short time ago whether there was any interest on the board's part to work on a bylaw regarding fingerprinting of particular vendors who might work in town, etc. The board has no interest in pursuing this.

Hampden Community Garden: The board will send letters to residents who are willing to bear the cost of a well being drilled at Green Meadows School for watering purposes of those gardeners using the property. The letter is a binding and formal agreement between the residents and the town regarding legal rights with no compensation from the town for the cost of the well.

Energy Program in Auditorium: A group requested a venue for them to educate residents about an energy program that could benefit them. It will be held on November 19, 2013 in the auditorium.

2013 Construction Project Report: The Highway Superintendent submitted his 2013 report and the board asked whether his reporting runs on a calendar year or on the fiscal year.

Chubb Policy for Police and Fire: This policy has been reviewed over the past few weeks and additional information is requested by the board. A meeting with our MIIA representative will be scheduled to answer all questions of the board.

Minutes: The minutes of November 4, 2013 were reviewed and a motion was made by Norman Charest to approve as presented, seconded by Vinnie Villamaino. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.

Reimbursement for Veterans' Services: So noted. Also mentioned was the fact that our Veterans' Agent attended the service held at the Senior Center for Veterans' Day and those attending were familiar with him and knew him.

Complimentary Letter: The board received a letter commending the Highway Department on the condition of the roads in Hampden.

Green Meadows and TWB Walk Thru Assessments: Ed Cenedella, Facilities Director for HWRSD is preparing a report to be presented to the Advisory Board.

Residential Electricity Aggregation in Hampden: Reviewed without comment.

Town Accountant's Request: The Town Accountant has requested that he be allowed to change his employment status from that of an employee to that of an independent contractor. This will be discussed at the board's next meeting. John thinks it may have to go out to bid.

Unemployment Status: So noted.

Letter to request PVPC Assistance: A letter was sent to the PVPC requesting their help through the casino approval process to ensure our needs are expressed and noted by the casino.

Board of Health: A variance was requested by the homeowner at 225 Mountain Road. John made a motion to grant the variance as recommended by Lorri McCool, BOH Agent for a one foot reduction as a result of ledge, seconded by Vinnie Villamaino. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.

- Tiles in front of library, trip hazard – to be noted by Town House Building Committee.

Seeing no further business, a motion was made by Vinnie Villamaino to adjourn the meeting at 7:50 pm, seconded by Norm Charest. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.

Respectfully submitted,

Pamela B. Courtney  
Administrative Assistant

/pbc