

Approved 5/23/16

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

MINUTES

May 9, 2016
6:00 pm

625 Main Street
Hampden, MA 01036

Board Members: Vincent J. Villamaino, John D. Flynn, Norman Charest

Guest: Resident John Niemi

The meeting was called to order by Vinnie Villamaino at 6:00 pm

Board Realignment: The board, as is customary, decided on a realignment after the annual election.

Vinnie Villamaino made a motion to appoint John D Flynn as Chairman, Board of Selectmen, seconded by Norman Charest. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.

A motion was made by John Flynn to appoint Norman Charest to Chairman, Board of Health, seconded by Vinnie Villamaino. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.

A motion was made by Norm Charest to appoint Vincent Villamaino to the third seat, seconded by John Flynn. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.

John Flynn made a motion to appoint Norman Charest as Chairman of Board of Selectmen, in John's absence, seconded by Vinnie Villamaino. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.

A motion was made by Norman Charest to appoint Vinnie Villamaino to Chairman of the Board of Health in Norman's absence, seconded by John Flynn. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.

Annual Town Meeting: John Flynn suggested that a reminder be made for the Town Meeting signs to be put up prior to ATM and for the automated call to go out to all residences reminding people of the meeting date.

Town Clerk: Eva Wiseman sent a note to the board regarding the possibility of a school vote happening this this fall with a request to consolidate possible elections. The board discussed and are certain that this question will not be ready for this fall's town meeting and therefore the request is moot at this point.

GreatHorse/DEP update: The monitor testing will be done at GreatHorse on May 10th and DEP representative, Jim Bumgardner will be on site for the testing. The results will be filed electronically.

Main Street/Church: The status of the agreements for water use are relatively stagnant. Our town counsel is working with the various attorneys hired by homeowners.

Solar: Check for \$15,000 has been received and deposited into the General Fund. John updated the board that Ameresco does not have off takers for the credits they will generate.

Somers Road Solar Installation: John mentioned that he has received complaints from various residents regarding the conditions at the solar installation. The fabric fencing is loose and blowing around. John

asked that the Project Manager, Alana Chain at Altus Solar be notified to have someone come out to take care of the issue.

Academy Hall Renovation: There continue to be maintenance issues that must be dealt with prior to having the historical contents of the basement returned prior to Memorial Day. The building has been checked for rodent and insect infestation and water damage. Some of the lower boards in the basement should be replaced as they have rotted.

Gina Kahn, Director-Safe Schools/Healthy Students Program: Gina came before the board to discuss the Carol White Physical Education Grant Program which she has presented to the board in the past. The district was not awarded the grant last year, but Gina would like to pursue the funds again this year as she has for the past 5 years. The grant is an equipment grant and would provide funding to reestablish the challenge course that used to exist at the old Minnechaug High School. The course would help students to set fitness goals. There would also be support from YMCA people who could come in to help engage the students in fitness programs and to work on nutrition goals. This grant is not lifelong, but rather a jumping off point. Gina explained that she is not a grant writer and that she pursues those grants that seem most important to the district. Norm wants to know the particulars of the grant, how much, for how long, what does the town have to match. Gina responded that the grant monies range from \$330k to \$800k per year and she is hoping to receive \$400k. She explained that the grant requires an "in kind" matching commitment, which means that we have people who provide man hours; that the training funding side would be on the district and once instituted, perhaps the positions won't need to be sustained.

After some discussion, a motion was made by Norman Charest to approve the grant application, seconded by John Flynn. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.

The application will be signed by all parties and forwarded to Gina Kahn for submittal.

Leadership Forum for Community Partners in Prevention: Gina also discussed a forum that will be held on June 10th from 8:30 am to 1:00 pm at which various trainers who will facilitate discussion about Drug Free Communities and Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America. A motion was made by Norman Charest for a board member to attend the forum, seconded by Vinnie Villamaino. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.

Police Department: Chief Farnsworth came in with Sgt. Mike Cooney and a candidate for the Reserve Officer position, John Gormally. Norman knows Mr. Gormally and will recuse himself from any vote. Jeff explained that Mr. Gormally has been fully vetted by Sgt. Cooney; that he is a retired officer from Springfield and references were checked. Based on the Chief's recommendation, a motion was made by Vinnie Villamaino to appoint John Gormally as a Reserve Officer, for a probationary period of six months, seconded by John Flynn. VOTE: All in favor and so voted. Norman Charest recused himself from the vote.

Fire Chief and Police Chief: Both chiefs came before the board to discuss an operational issue that occurred over the weekend. The board suggested that the two chiefs work together to resolve the issue and if that can't be done, then they should come back to the board. John had talked with Mike Callan who told him that this discussion was to be about procedure only, that no names should be mentioned. It was noted that there are some concerns with AMR, our ambulance provider and that there needs to be better communication between the fire and police departments. Jeff suggested that a new policy will be written and forwarded to the board for their approval and then implemented. Chief Gorski stated

that the town might get a phone call from an individual but John expressed that the town has no liability in this case and that both departments are covered.

Highway Superintendent Contract: Norman will review and negotiate any final details with Mark Langone. A draft will be given to Mark for his review as well.

Highway Department Contract Review: Lauren Comstock contacted this office to say that the draft contract looks good to him and that the department members are ready to sign. The contract will be done in final form and delivered to the Highway Department members for their signatures.

Transfer Request for Academy Hall: A motion was made by Norman Charest to transfer \$1,000 from the Reserve Fund to Academy Hall Maintenance to take care of ongoing maintenance issues at the building, seconded by John Flynn. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.

Entertainment License Request: A request has been made for an Entertainment License for Gio's Pizzeria. The board discussed and a motion was made by Norman Charest to approve an entertainment license that mirrors what La Cucina's license states, seconded by John Flynn. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.

Correspondence:

- Stormwater Reporting Changes
- Minimum Wage, follow Federal guidelines
- Request for Bench Placement: A request has been made by a family member to have a bench installed in memory of JoJo Garecki. The board stated that Park and Rec Commissioners are in charge of park properties and should handle the request. The board wholeheartedly supports the placement of the bench and will let the commissioners know this.
- Unregistered Vehicle Complaint: The Police had been asked to report on a property with a number of unregistered vehicles. The property owner will be sent a letter notifying him of the bylaw and his requirement to get the property cleaned up or to apply for a special permit to have the vehicles remain.
- DOT Notice
- Health Insurance Open Enrollment: FYI for the Board.

Town Hall Renovations:

- Police space reconfigured
- Back stair repair: The work will be awarded to the Hemingway brothers.
- Town House floors: Given the upcoming move of the Police Department, the board agrees that we should wait to have the floors refinished until the move happens.

Memorial Day Parade: John asked the status of parade preparations and Art Booth will be contacted as will St. Mary's Church to ask about the use of their parking lot for parade set up.

Town House Security: The board will contact Valley Communications who is working on the new Police Station to get a proposal for a security system at the Town House once the PD moves from the building.

Norm explained the process of taxing properties in town and with new building, how the value is calculated. Full value is not assessed until the building is totally complete, but during the building

process a percentage of completion is determined and taxes are levied on that value. Initially, the property is shown as new growth but in the following years it shows as part of the town's value. The town does not tax to its limit; we collect taxes only to meet our budgetary needs.

Jon Niemi, resident asked for some time with the board to discuss the structure of the School Committee and wondered who oversees the committee and Peter Salerno, Chairman of the committee. John remarked that many comments made by Chair Salerno are insulting and rude and wonders what oversight anyone has over the chair and the committee. The board responded that there really is no oversight, as this is an elected group and voters have the power at the polls to make changes. John Flynn did suggest that all schools have a school council, made up of parents and suggested that John N research who is on the council for TWB. John N remarked that staffing changes have been made for some time with great teachers being pulled from the Hampden schools to work in the Wilbraham schools. John told of Mr. Taylor, science teacher was recently pulled out of TWB and moved to WMS. If, as has been suggested, that Hampden is receiving an inferior education due to inequities, then what could possibly be the reason to take the most seasoned teacher out of our schools and transferring him to WMS? In addition, Peter Dufresne was taken from TWB and transferred to WMS. It doesn't help that the timing of these changes just looks bad, even if the rationale is justified. It was stated that Marty O' Shea doesn't want to make any changes to upset Hampden any further. John N stated further that the School Committee has done nothing to improve TWB, and only continue to take things away rather than adding anything of value. The board stated that the school did not even ask for the full allowed budget increase of 2.5% and yet must make budget cuts now.

John N asked if there has been any research into the town getting out of the Regional Agreement and what the costs would be to run our two schools. John F stated that the board had not been asked the question about costs and Norman and Vinnie both said that there is an option to pull out of the district for our two schools. John did say that he has been working on a spreadsheet with historical data to try and determine what the costs might be if the town did opt out of the agreement for the coming year. John N remarked that in one report it was noted that WMS has a 10,000 gallon oil tank that needs to be removed and replaced now, as it is original to the construction of the school. John N thanked the board for their time and a motion was made by Norman Charest 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