

Approved 4/24/17

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

MINUTES

November 14, 2016  
6:00 pm

625 Main Street  
Hampden MA

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

Guests: Mary Ellen Glover, Rita Vail, Connie Witt, Mahlon Peterson, Tyler Witkop, The Wilbraham Hampden Times

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm by John Flynn.

Highway Superintendent, Mark Langone: Mark came before the board to give an update on a number of projects.

- Stafford, St Germain and Bennett Road will all be chip sealed in spring once the weather is warm enough. That will be the final step in the roads repairs.
- The Main Street and North Road project was a disappointment to Mark, as he was not happy with seams where they met the back of the berm. As a result he had Lane Construction come back to town to heat the seams and press them together which made a huge difference in the quality of the seam. The final bill has not been paid for this project and Mark is still haggling with the Supervisor. Once that is done, he can complete his Chapter 90 paperwork and be finished with the project.
- He is working on the Small Bridge Program with the DOT and will have a final deadline of February to get information submitted to them.
- He has ordered more road salt, to top off what is already on site and the plows and sanders are all ready to go.
- He met with School Superintendent, Al Ganem regarding winter storm procedures and noted that the Police are now checking the streets for impediments to plowing.
- Mark will also ensure the lights are on the front tree in time for the tree lighting event.
- He is also working on Rock A Dundee to try to expand the turn around to allow space for buses to turn around in.
- Norm mentioned that he had asked that Mark do a summary of the Main Street/North Road project so the board has something to stand on when the time comes for the next round of paving projects. Given the delays on this project and the workmanship, no one wants a repeat of this.

Citizens Supporting Educational Excellence: Members of the group, Mary Ellen Glover and Rita Vail came before the board to hear the contents of the letter the board will write to the School Committee. Mary Ellen will receive a copy of the letter as well.

Mary Ellen asked about getting groups together; with a formal invitation for participation,

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rather than having the school committee show up to a meeting without letting those on the agenda know about it. She feels there would be a better chance to work through the issues if it was done with the spirit of cooperation.

Water Issue at 596 Main Street: Mahlon Peterson, new owner of the home on Main Street came before the board to discuss the quality of his water. He brought cups to show the residue that is left on dishes after they have been washed in a dishwasher. He also shared the water report showing the elevated level of sodium in his water. The board acknowledged that there are others who have had problems with their water and they assured Mr. Peterson that they will work with him for a resolution. Given that the new well at Academy Hall has been supplying others with water, the town will now make a connection to 596 Main Street. John asked if he had done a Title 5 at the house, but Mr. Peterson was told to hold off for a bit and use the system before doing the inspection. He agrees to work with the town, and will expect to hear from the board later this week.

Tax Classification Hearing: The Board of Assessors met with the BOS for the annual tax hearing to set the tax rate. They discussed the factors that contributed to the town's growth this year, which include Columbia Gas, GreatHorse and growth in 10 new residential building lots. Carolyn Reed explained the items to be voted on.

- The first is for the Selection of Minimum Residential Factor. A motion was made by John Flynn to value all taxes at a single rate, which mirrors past practice, seconded by Vinnie Villamaino. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.
- The next item is regarding Open Space Discount. Since the town currently has no properties classified in Open Space, no vote is required.
- The next vote is for a Residential Exemption. A motion was made by Vinnie Villamaino to not adopt the residential exemption for seasonal/vacation homes, which mirrors past practice, seconded by John Flynn. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.
- The last vote relates to Small Commercial Exemption. A motion was made by Vinnie Villamaino to not adopt the commercial exemption, which mirrors past practice, seconded by John Flynn. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.

The end result of the hearing is that the tax rate has been set at \$19.29 per thousand, which is a reduction of 7 cents from this year's rate of \$19.36.

Academy Hall: Connie stopped in to update the selectmen on the status of the painting project at Academy Hall. The painter has sanded a part of the building, using three different techniques, which would give us different periods of longevity with the paint. The board urged Connie to continue on her mission.

Police Chief: Jeff came before the board to discuss a number of items:

Classification of New Employee: Jeff has not gone through the review process with Personnel about this newly created position. He has set it up for a 24 hour per week position and intends to pay the salary out of the Pistol Permit fees (\$5k), using \$5k out of the Detail line and using other monies from the 911 grant. He explained that he had discussed this with Cliff Bombard

and was given the go ahead to proceed with this process.

Town House Security: The board asked about the plan to monitor the town house remotely by the PD and Jeff detailed the equipment that will have to be purchased to make that happen. He will need a new PC and monitor and is waiting from specs from Valley Communications.

There was also discussion regarding moving the antennae from the Town House roof to the Fire Department, but there is really no need to do so. It will remain where it is.

Regionalized Dispatch Center: Letter from IBPO Dispatchers, stating that regional dispatch would be a contractual discussion.

A motion was made by Vinnie Villamaino to go into executive Session to discuss contract negotiations and personnel issue with return to Open Session at 7:00 pm, seconded by Norman Charest. VOTE: Vinnie yes, Norman yes, John yes.

With no further business, a motion was made by Vinnie Villamaino to leave Executive Session and return to Open Session at 7:22 pm, seconded by Norman Charest. VOTE: Vinnie Villamaino yes, Norman Charest yes, John Flynn yes.

Town House Maintenance: Jane Budynekiewicz, BOH Coordinator came before the board to discuss ongoing maintenance issues with the Town House. The septic system has backed up and Fletcher Drain came in and cleaned the system as best they could. Dennis Chaffee, plumber suggested taking the three toilets out of the vacant PD station, cap them all and dispose of them, at a cost of \$750.00.

We currently have 3 septic tanks, one totally dry, and 2 that are not in good shape. We could remove the tank that is near the Christmas tree on the front lawn, as the kitchen sink goes into that tank. The other tank is on the other side of the property. In addition, the front wall in the auditorium is bulging in and will need someone to determine the cause of that problem and possible solutions.

Jane offered her services to be the Town Manager and would be happy to handle these issues.

Board of Health: The board reviewed a plan requesting a variance request at 100 Main Street to allow a reduction of separation from well to system from 4 feet to 3 feet. The plan was recommended by Lorri McCool, BOH Agent, and a motion was made by Vinnie Villamaino to approve the variance, as recommended, seconded by Norman Charest. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.

Water Issue: John will talk with Tom Couture regarding hooking the Peterson home up to the well at Academy Hall. The Peterson's live a few homes northwest of AH.

Mass Gaming Commission: The town has an opportunity to reply to the Gaming Commission relative to compensation for the community once the casino has been completed in Springfield.

With no further business, a motion was made by Vinnie Villamaino to adjourn at 7:40 pm, seconded by Norman Charest. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.

Respectfully submitted,

Pamela B Courtney  
Administrative Assistant

/pbc