

Approved 4/24/17

TOWN OF HAMPDEN, MASSACHUSETTS

BOARD OF SELECTMEN/BOARD OF HEALTH

MINUTES

November 28, 2016
6:00 pm

625 Main Street
Hampden MA

Board Members: John D. Flynn, Norman Charest, Vincent J. Villamaino
Norman Charest was unable to attend the meeting.

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

Guests: John Niemi, Mary Ellen Glover, members of Citizens Supporting Educational Excellence

Police Appointment: Chief Farnsworth and Sgt. Tawrin Seega came before the board with Thomas A Cardano candidate for the position of Part-Time Dispatcher. The Chief introduced Tom, and stated that he is a resident in town, and has been since 2012. He has been vetted by Sgt. Cooney and is recommended for the position. Tom was asked about himself and stated that he has wanted to be part of the local department for some time and Sgt. Seega added that he has studied Criminal Justice and seems like a good fit for the department. His availability is also good and is recommended by those present. John Flynn stated that as a dispatcher, he must be responsive to all callers and he responded that he loves this town, has wanted to be involved for some time and that he works as a jeweler now.

Given the recommendation, a motion was made by Vinnie Villamaino to appoint Thomas Cardano to the position of Part-Time Dispatcher, effective immediately, for a probationary period of 90 days, seconded by John Flynn. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.

John Niemi and Mary Ellen Glover: The board asked John and Mary Ellen to speak about what brought them to the meeting and the School Committee's plans are of a concern to both of them. John Niemi asked specifically if the proposed water and sewer line is installed along Wilbraham Road and Allen Street, as suggested by Jonathan Murray from GreatHorse, if it would be able to accommodate the TWB students and staff. John stated that GreatHorse had included those numbers in the proposed system. John N seemed to think that the SC at some time mentioned that 10M would be needed for new water and septic systems to be installed for TWB and both John F and Vinnie suggested that number was far too high. John F thought maybe the 10M was a total renovation number instead.

Mary Ellen wondered if the board has considered getting out of the regional agreement and John F asked if that were to happen, how many sixth grade students would be enrolled. Mary Ellen is not sure, but contends that regardless of how many students remain at TWB that one algebra class could be taught along with two other math classes. She noted again that the Middle School Model is not the only model that could be used for these students; it's just the

model that the SC wants to use. John asked what other options are and Mary Ellen suggested that there are others that she could show to the board.

It was also stated that Wilbraham would have to “allow” Hampden to de-regionalize. The town and Mary Ellen have requested a copy of the original Regional Agreement from 1956. Mary Ellen received a copy, but the board has not. That must be reviewed to see what rights the town has. The de-regionalization would also have to be approved by the State, but the exact process is not known at this point.

John F pointed out that Hampden owes no debt to Wilbraham; that our responsibility is for the debt incurred for the new Minnechaug and nothing else. He also stated that the property that Minnechaug is located on is deeded to the District, to both Hampden and Wilbraham and that neither town owns it.

John also asked about the SC meeting scheduled for tomorrow night being cancelled and is now rescheduled for two weeks out on December 13th. The meeting had been scheduled for TWB, but the change is due to a seminar for new SC members to understand the job parameters.

Mary Ellen and John N asked where we go from here? They explained that it’s becoming more and more hostile, and has increased with the robo call that went to parents giving them the option of having their children go to WMS. That brings up other issues: how is transportation handled? Do parents provide transportation? Is there an application or criteria involved or do parents just call and tell the administration that they wish to transfer their student to WMS? John F asked if the education can be made equitable with the money we currently have and Mary Ellen contends that it can and must. The Regional Agreement purports that all student’s education will be equitable.

John and Mary Ellen stated that after the historic Special Town Meeting vote, at which Hampden resoundingly voted against unification and Wilbraham voted for unification (with far few voters) that the SC didn’t even take five 5 minutes at their next meeting to discuss the vote. John and Mary Ellen feel that the message from the SC is clear.

National Grid Pole Petition for Chapin Road: A representative from National Grid came before the board to request a pole installation on Chapin Road to accommodate a long span. The only abutter notified was the builder, Rosebud Builder. After reviewing the plan, a motion was made by Vinnie Villamaino to approve the location and installation, seconded by John Flynn. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.

Solar Agreement with Syncarpha Bondsville, LLC: Rose Crowley, our town counsel for solar matters presented the final agreement between the Town of Hampden and Syncarpha Bondsville, LLC (being built in Palmer) to purchase net metering credits. Rose then explained the terms of the agreement:

This agreement will allow the town to purchase these credits at a reduced cost for a twenty year term. There are also two five year extensions in the agreement should we opt to use them. Those credits will be applied to the town’s energy bill and we will receive a 25% discount on our cost per Kwh, which right now, at today’s cost would be reduced from approximately 16 cents to roughly 12 cents per Kw hour.

We are effectively an off taker of net metering credits. About 95% of the credits will be purchased by a group in Andover MA and we will purchase the remainder offered. Vinnie asked what kind of savings we could anticipate annually and Rose did a calculation based on the Town using 310,000 kW hours per year, at 16 cents per kW cost, would be a savings of approximately \$12,500.

Our agreement allows for 310,000kW hours per year. Regardless of whether the cost of electricity rises, the town is guaranteed a reduced rate of 25%.

What happens if the rates decrease to a large degree? Our cost will only go down to 8 cents/kWh, no less than that.

There is a shortfall penalty that provides the town protection, as Syncarpha will have to pay us a certain percentage if they don't generate what they are committed to or will provide credits to be used in future months.

Syncarpha is committed to be online and operational in March 2017, and if not, they will pay a penalty of \$100/day to the town. If not online by May 18th, the town may walk away from the agreement.

These credits are currently subsidized by State and Federal governments as they want to get solar up and operational.

Given this information, a motion was made by Vinnie Villamaino to approve and sign the Solar Net Metering Credit Agreement with Syncarpha Bondsville, LLC, seconded by Norman Charest. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.

Transfer Station Solar Installation: The board asked Atty. Crowley about the status of the transfer station solar agreement with Ameresco who are coming back online to discuss construction. Given that they will be selling to a municipality, is a plus for the project to proceed. There was discussion of some fencing being installed along the sides of the road at the transfer station and that is something that will be discussed later.

As a reminder John mentioned the need to work with the Planning Board to combine the 3 parcels of land into one to alleviate any potential barriers to the start of the project.

Scantic Valley Artisans Group: The SVAG will have a permanent home at the Senior Center soon and there is a request from Becky Moriarty for permission from the board to have a sign installed to let the public know about upcoming events. The board approved and asked that the Building Inspector be notified to make sure the installation falls within the parameters of zoning bylaws.

State Contract Reimbursement Signing: Highway Superintendent, Mark Langone submitted reimbursement forms for the board to sign now that the Main Street and North Road project has been completed. He also submitted his 2016 Completed Projects Report.

Firefighters Health Coverage: Chief Gorski had asked the board about allowing heart and respiratory coverage to extend from age 65 to 70 as there is a member who could benefit from such coverage now. The board reviewed the cost quoted and agreed to approve the coverage.

The Chief will be notified of the change. John also asked that the Chief attend the BOS meeting on December 19th to discuss the department budget for 2017.

AMR Contract Renewal: The board discussed its decision to renew the current contract with AMR who have provided ambulance service to the Town and East Longmeadow for some years. The board received a report from Chief Farnsworth that the call times have improved given AMR's policy of having one ambulance in Hampden at all times. The Town Council in EL will be contacted to see if they wish to renew as well. Contact will be made with AMR with the hopes of having a contract ready for signing in the next week or two.

Notes:

- MRC Meeting December 8 – See flyer
- DEP and Stanton Auction Release: So noted.
- Ogoley Agreement Signed and Check released: So noted.
- Volunteer for Water Commission: The board reviewed a letter from a resident who is interested in serving on the Water Commission. His letter will be forwarded to the Commission Chairman, John Plaster.
- Memo of Understanding for Federated Church: The board will send a memo to the Church so work may begin on a water line extension to the resident at 596 Main Street.

Chief Farnsworth

- Security of Town House: The board discussed the removal of the antennae on the town house and reinstallation to the fire house. It was determined that the antennae should remain where it is, as its removal could damage the roof. Instead, the money can be put to use for camera and monitor installation at the PD to monitor the town house. The board has a quote for the cost for equipment and installation from Valley Communication.
- Town House Access: The board discussed the need for committee members to get into pick up their mail, etc. Although they have access to the town house, they do not have access to the office that houses the mailboxes. There will be further discussion about this to come up with a solution.
- Funding of Administrative Position: Cliff Bombard responded to a request from Chief Farnsworth regarding possible funding for the new administrative position created at the Police Station. The board would like to meet with Cliff at 6:45 on Monday the 12th to ensure funding is in place for future years.
- Personnel Meeting: Chief Farnsworth has to meet with the Personnel Committee regarding the new administrative position in the Department.
- Regional Dispatcher: The Chief discussed the change in the dispatcher regionalization plan that may go from 5 towns participating to 3 towns. Those are Hampden, Longmeadow and East Longmeadow. Jeff said that securing a location for all 5 towns is difficult, but with 3 communities sharing dispatching through Hampden, the plan would be feasible.

Community Preservation Commission: Members are: Doug Boyd, Beth DeSousa, Cindi Connors, Phil Grant, (CC), Connie Witt (HHC) Deanna Vermette (HHA), Dave Turcotte (P&R) John Matthews (PB)

John asked that Tyler Witkop, Wilbraham Hampden Times Editor be notified of a vacancy on the commission, to be appointed by the Moderator. Those interested should contact the BOS for more information.

Capital Planning Commission: The board would like to re-establish this group and need volunteers to come forward. Mary Ellen Glover said that the Citizens Supporting Educational Excellence group have interest in participating and after their meeting on Saturday, they will have names to present to the BOS.

Note: Remind Advisory about the new minimum wage increase and what effect that might have on current employees.

Federated Church and Water Line: Highway Superintendent, Mark Langone is working with Billy Bond and CT Valley Well to trench and lay pipe to carry water to the home at 576 Main Street. The church has agreed to allow the town access across their property for the installation. The plan is to get this done before the ground freezes.

Water Commission: The board received a letter of interest from resident Tom Pope who would like to volunteer for the vacancy on the Water Commission. The letter will be forwarded to the commissioners.

Note: At next week's meeting, discuss remarks for the Department Head Budget Meeting on the 12th at 7:00 pm.

With no further business, a motion was made by Vinnie Villamaino to adjourn the meeting at 7:05 pm, seconded by Norman Charest. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.

Respectfully submitted,

Pamela B Courtney
Administrative Assistant

/pbc