

Selectmen's Meeting
Monday, January 6, 1997
Page School-Professional Development Room
Washington Street, Ayer, MA 01432

7:30p.m. Open Session

The Board met with Chairman Miller, Selectman Hamel and Selectman Norstrom.

The Minutes of December 9, 1996, were read and accepted.

Chairman Miller requested if there was anyone present who wished to speak under Public Input. No one stepped forward.

Chairman Miller called for a motion to accept the Agenda of 1-6-97, Selectman Hamel moved to approve the Agenda of 1-6-97 as presented, 2nd by Selectman Norstrom, VOTE: unanimous, so moved.

TOWN CRIER: Chairman Miller made the following announcements.

1. Chairman Miller invited all Town residents to attend the Grand Opening of the Ayer Library scheduled for 1-19-97 from 1-4pm. Chairman Miller congratulated the Library Trustees on the renovations to the Library, stating his pleasure with the new addition and renovations to the old building and encouraged all residents to attend. Selectman Hamel & Norstrom echoing the Chairman's praise of the new addition.
2. Chairman Miller announced the Town Hall would be closed on Monday, January 13, 1997 in honor of Martin Luther King's birthday.

The Board approved of the re-installation of a street light at Markham Circle recommended by the Police Chief due to youths congregating in area at night. The Board approved of the re-installation of the light not to exceed approximately \$6.00 per month to the Street Lighting Account.

The Board met with Representative Robert Hargraves and Fire Chief Paul Fillebrown, present for the awards was Paul Fillebrown Jr. Representative Hargraves stated he was present this evening to present certificates to Ayer's three Young Hero's honored at the State House on December 17, 1996 by Lt. Governor Paul Cellucci, Secretary Kathleen O'Toole and Fire Marshall Stephen Coan. Representative Hargraves presented to Nicholas Abbott, of Gardner Lane, Ayer, Ma, Jonathan Teken and David Teken formerly of Pleasant St., Ayer, Ma citations from the Com. of Mass. House of Representatives and pictures of the Ayer young hero's taken at the State House. Rep. Hargraves stated these young people carried out heroic actions to get people/family members out of burning buildings safely as they were taught what they have learned from the SAFE Program which Rep. Hargraves gave credit to the Ayer Fire Dept. for conducting these classes in the schools. Fire Chief Fillebrown stated the SAFE Program brings a full-time firefighter and a part-time on call volunteer into the classroom to lead lessons on fire safety which he stated these classes were conducted by Lt. Paul Fillebrown Jr. who deserves the credit for instituting this program with the Ayer School Department.

Chairman Miller also took this opportunity to present to each of the Young Hero's Town of Ayer Certificates of Merit to each of the Young Heroes from the Ayer Board of Selectmen. Chairman Miller thanked everyone for coming in and again congratulated Ayer's young heroes for their heroism.

The Board met with James William's, Chairman of the Ayer Planning Board. Mr. William's stated he was before the Board this evening due to the resignation of Colleen Norstrom from the Planning Board. Mr. William's stated two (2) applicants have requested consideration to serve in Mrs. Norstrom's vacated seat. Robert Ancil, Atty. and Russell Smith prior Chairman of the Ayer Planning Board. Selectman Norstrom stepped down from the Board due to Conflict of Interest and excused herself from the discussion.

The Board met with Atty. Robert Anctil of Ayer, MA who gave a brief overview of his background and why he wished to serve on the Planning Board. The Board conducted a brief question and answer session with Mr. Anctil and thanked him for his interest in serving the Town. The Board met with Russell Smith who gave the Board a brief background of why he wished to serve on the Planning Board again. The Board conducted a short question and answer period with Mr. Smith and thanked Mr. Smith for his interest in serving the Town.

Chairman Miller called for a Joint Vote by the Ayer Planning Board and the Board of Selectmen. James William's Hamel placed the names of Atty. Robert Anctil and Russell Smith for nomination 2nd by Selectman Hamel. VOTE: James William's-Russell Smith, William Oelfke-Russell Smith, Joseph Wallace-Russell Smith, Selectman Hamel-Russell Smith and Chairman Miller-Russell Smith. Russell Smith 5 votes Robert Anctil 0 votes. Motion carries for Russell Smith. The Board welcomed Mr. Smith to the Ayer Planning Board.

The Board met with Timothy Henzy, Grant Administrator. Mr. Henzy opened the discussion by announcing the Weld-Celluci Administration Director Jane Willis Gumble of the Dept. of Housing and Community Development announced January 8, 1997 the awarding of a \$132,500.00 grant to the Town of Ayer to rehabilitate five (5) homes. Mr. Henzy stated this current Federal round of funding for Ayer has never before been at this high a level. Mr. Henzy stated this round of funding makes up for the loss of Mass. Small Cities Program funds which Ayer lost out on its bid to receive funding. Mr. Henzy stated it indicates an awareness in the state office the town has real needs with regard to housing. The grant is meant to be used for single-family owner occupied dwellings whose owners have low to moderate income households. To qualify a family's income must be less than 80% of the median income. Eligible homes for rehabilitation will come from a list Henzy has of homes requiring rehabilitation and he would also accept applications from other residents meeting the programs qualifications. The program would provide a maximum of \$25,000 for each household.

The Board on another related matter voted to approve Mr. Henzy's salary at \$32,000.00 and took under advisement a salary stipend for Mr. Henzy for his additional work load for the Economic Development Director's position while she has been out on maternity leave. The Board praised Mr. Henzy on his performance and for his willingness to take on the additional responsibilities in Ms. Sultan's absence.

The Board met with Police Chief Donald Haapakoski. Chief Haapakoski advised the Board that his department has just received notice of being awarded another grant from the State Dept. of Public Safety in the amount of \$7,000.00 to upgrade the computers and provide computer training allowing the department to tie into the Criminal Justice History Board files.

The Chief advised the Board to the \$150,000.00 dollar U.S. Dept. of Justice Grant will fund two new officers to bring the Department up to the MMA's recommended total of 18 over a three year period. The applicants must include a female and minority officers.

The Chief advised the Board to the status of the new police station. Chief Haapakoski advised the Board to the Dept. receiving 118 requests for plans for general contractor. The deadline for bids is January 23, 1997. Chief Haapakoski stated he plans to have plans available for the Jan. 30, Police Design Committee Meeting.

The Board approved of the Mutual Aid Agreement with Devens and agreed to review the departments updated policy prior to the next Selectmen's Meeting.

The Chief advised the Board to recent incident re: a Suicide/hostage situation on Washington St. which ended successfully with the help of the State Police Special Operations Team. The situation was handled quietly and properly, lasted about 6 hours, no one was hurt with the person was taken to the hospital, the Chief praised his department for handling the operation very well.

The Board took up the Appointment of Town Counsel. The Board reviewed the 4 candidates: Atty. Robert Anctil of Ayer, MA., Atty. Cornellius Sullivan of Ayer, MA, Atty. Judith Pickett of Littleton and Kopleman & Paige of Boston, MA. The Board after a short discussion regarding the qualifications of the four candidates voted to appoint Kopelman & Paige as new Town Counsel. Vote: Selectman Hamel, aye, Selectman Norstrom aye, Chairman Miller no. Vote 2-1 Motion Carried. Kopelman & Paige new Town Counsel. The Board voted unanimously to appoint Robert W. Gardner Special Municipal Employee until Kopleman & Paige are on board. Robert Gardner to finish up cases near completion and Mr. Gardner to submit a list of cases he will handle and no new cases.

Town Administrator's Report:

See Town Administrator's Report dated 1-6-97

10:15p.m. Selectmen Hamel moved the Board adjourn from Open Session to enter into Executive Session pursuant to M.G.L Chapter 39 Section 23b, Exemption #2, 2nd by Selectmen Norstorm, Vote: unanimous, so moved.

Pauline J. Hamel, Clerk

DATE: _____