

Selectmen's Meeting
Monday, December 9, 1996
Page School- Professional Development Room
Washington Street, Ayer, MA

7:30p.m. Open Session

The Board met with Selectman Hamel and Selectman Norstrom. Chairman Miller absent. Selectman Hamel advising everyone that Chairman Miller's home was one the homes in Town still without power.

The Minutes of November 4, 1996 and November 25, 1996 were read and accepted.

Selectman Hamel opened the meeting by advising residents to a shelter being established for residents of Ayer who were still without power from the December 6, 1996 winter storm that left the power out in the Town from Saturday the 6th and as of 10:30am this morning 2,356 homes were without power and as of this evening 25 streets in Town were still without electricity. Selectman Hamel advised the viewing public to a shelter being set up at the Federated Church on Washington Street. Residents were encouraged to use the facility especially the elderly. Selectman Hamel expressed the Board's thanks to Selectman Norstrom, Wellman Parker-Civil Defense Director, the Ayer Fire Dept., and the Ayer Police Dept. for all their assistance. Selectman Norstrom echoing Selectman Hamel, stating all the above were instrumental providing help and resources to residents.

Town Crier: Selectman Hamel made the following announcements
The Downtown Business Alliance's children's Christmas Party was canceled on the 8th of December due to the storm and rescheduled to Sunday the 15th of December at the Ayer Town Hall from 2-5pm.

The next Selectmen's Meeting is scheduled for January 6, 1997-with the December 23, 1996 meeting having only housekeeping items to address.

Selectman Hamel took this opportunity to wish everyone a Happy Holiday Season being this the last Selectmen's Meeting prior to the first of the year.

Selectman Hamel advised all those present to the Agenda's first item being canceled and made a brief statement concerning the police investigation. Selectman Hamel stated the investigator has received several complaints. Everyone who wrote a complaint will be contacted, although the deadline has passed for receiving complaints the investigator will still accept complaints. The investigation will probably go through the end of January to reach a conclusion with a full report to be remitted.

Public Input: Selectman Hamel requested if there was anyone present wishing to speak under public Input: Ms. Margaret McCollough requested to be heard re: the petition submitted to the Board on the 25th of November re: Brook St. traffic. Robert Smith, Asst. Supt. of Public Works also requested to speak re: DPW activities re: the storm of 12-6-96.

Selectman Hamel called for a motion to approve the Agenda as amended. Selectman Norstrom moved to approve the Agenda of 12-9-96 as amended, 2nd by Selectman Hamel, Vote: unanimous, so moved.

The Board met with Robert Smith, Asst. Supt. of Public Works, Mr. Smith advised the Board that the department never had a storm that did so much damage. The drivers not only spent long hours behind the wheel but also had to deal with utility lines and trees falling on them, stating one of the DPW trucks was hit by a falling tree with minimal damage, as well as two DPW trucks had utility lines fall on them and had to be rescued by the Fire Dept. The plows sustained damage due to the heavy snow.

Mr. Smith advised the Board to the snow along Main Street being scheduled for Tuesday night, 12-10-96, for removal. The Board thanked Mr. Smith for the update and applauded the work of the DPW crews during the storm and with the clean-up.

On another Mr. Smith stated the need for another driver in the Highway Dept. and that the department had posted the position in house and Douglas Lawton had applied for the position. Mr. Smith requested the Board appoint Doug Lawton to this position, Selectman Norstrom moved to appoint Douglas Lawton to the Truck Driver's position, 2nd by Selectman Hamel, VoTE: unanimous, so moved.

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The Board voted to allow Mr. Smith to begin screening the 20+ applicants for the part-time office clerk's position. Mr. Kreidler to sit in on the final three applicants with the Personnel Board. The closing date for applicants set at November 18, 1996.

The Board met with Ms. McCoughlin of Brook St. who stated she was before the Board re: follow up from the Selectmen's Meeting of 11-25-96 when a group of people from Brook St., Mechanic St. and Park St. had placed a petition before the Selectmen requesting the Boards assistance with excessive traffic and speeding on Brook St. from a Trucking Company leasing space from David McPartland. Mrs. Coughlin stated the neighborhood had retained a lawyer to look into the zoning map stating the by-laws and map hasn't matched since 1972; relative to commercial and residential zones. The complaints ranged from noise, speeding and air pollution from Baxter Transportation Co. Mr. Kreidler advised the group to look into an amendment to the noise by-law which could make provisions to idling diesel trucks. The group also requested a slow children sign and speed sign be put up Chief Haapakoski to look into the requests and initiate a state speed limit for Brook St.

The Board moved to approve this speed study be conducted for Brook St. Selectman Nostrum moved the Board approve the study be conducted, 2nd by Selectman Hamel, VOTE: unanimous, so moved.

The Board met with the Library Trustees regarding the Wage and Classification Study. Present for the discussion was trustees: Paul McGuane, Penny Kelly, and Stephen Salka. Mr. Kreidler advised the Board to the 2nd legal opinion coming in from Special Town Counsel Judy Pickett which Atty. Pickett agrees with decision of the Library Trustees lawyer, Kopleman and Paige, that under Chapter 34 the Library Trustees do have the authority to enter into contracts with their employees. The language is very specific re: this contratural obligation and to keep clarity Mr. Kreidler requested the Trustees review and implement the Personnel Policy documentation into their contracts. The Board voted to accept the recommendation of Atty. Pickett and Selectman Norstrom moved the Board allow the Ayer Library Trustees to establish pay and benefits for the Ayer Library employees by entering into compulsory contracts with all library employees, 2nd by Selectman Hamel, Vote: unanimous, so moved. Mr. Kreidler stated he would provide the trustees boilerplate contracts to help them prepare the necessary contracts.

On a related item the Trustees' advised the Board to the Ayer Library re-opening on 12-16-96. The Board expressed their pleasure with the new addition and stated they were anxious to tour the building.

The Board reviewed the 1997 License Renewals: The Board approved the following licenses be renewed for 1997: Common Victuallers, Alcohol, Class I, II, III, Amusement and Sunday Entertainment (see attached).

Selectman Hamel took this opportunity to welcome Representative Hargraves to the meeting and announced Representative Hargraves Office Hours for January being scheduled for 1-6-97 from 7:00-8:00pm at the Page School-Washington St., Ayer, MA

The Board set back the appointment of a Town Counsel until a full Board can vote and rescheduled the appointment for the January 6, 1997 Selectmen's Meeting.

Town Administrator's Report:

1. Mr. Kreidler advised the Board to the Supt. of Public Work's position being advertised the weeks of 12-8 & 12-15-96 in the Boston Globe and of the job Closing set for 1-20-97.
2. The Board was advised to the next meeting re: the Regional Waste Water Treatment Plant being scheduled for 12-11-96 at 3:00p.m. at the Commerce Ctr. The main focus being the valuation of the Ayer WWTP and the possibility of hiring a consultant to determine what that value is. The Public Hearing for Ayer residents to be finalized and held within the next few weeks.
3. The Board held off on signing the Department Head Contracts until a full board can convene.
4. Mr. Kreidler advised the Board to the Mass. Historic Grant applicants being approved for a 50-50 match award for a Feasibility Study to restore the Pleasant St. School and the Ayer Town Hall. The awards came in at \$20,000 for the Town Hall and \$12,500 for the Pleasant Street School. Selectman Norstrom moved the Board approve the transfer from UDAG to match the Mass. Historical Grants so stated above, 2nd by Selectman Hamel, VOTE: unanimous, so moved.

The Board approved of a letter of support be written by the Board endorsing the Mass. Family Network Grant Application requested by Karen Swanfeldt of the Ayer School Dept. with the possibility of the Town receiving \$150,000 funding for Ayer and Shirley children from the ages 3mo to 6 years of age.

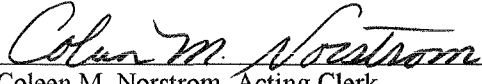
Mr. Kreidler announced the cancellation of the Park Dept from the agenda. Selectman Norstrom stated Mr. Norstrom had contacted her earlier re: his unavailability to attend tonight's meeting.

Mass.
Selectman Hamel advised the Board to the ~~Harvard~~ League of Women Voters sponsoring an amendment to the Education Reform Act and of their lobbying for a statewide amendment. Selectman Hamel suggested the Town of Ayer look into this re: supporting this amendment to help the Town of Ayer.

Mr. Kreidler advised the Board to the new seasonal lighting in front of the Town Hall being made possible through the efforts of Selectmen Norstrom's efforts. Selectman Norstrom stated the work was done entirely by Jim and thanked the Town Hall staff for their thoughts on the decorating effort.

8:35p.m. Selectman Norstrom moved to adjourn the meeting, 2nd by Selectman Hamel, VOTE: unanimous, so moved.

8:35p.m. Open Session adjourned.

 -DATE: 1/6/97
Coleen M. Norstrom, Acting Clerk