

Board of Selectmen's Meeting
Monday, March 24, 1997
Ayer Public Library-lower level conference room
East Main Street, Ayer, MA 01432

7:00P.M. Open Session with the possibility of entering Executive Session, pursuant to MGL, Chapter 39, Section 23b, Exemption #3, re: pending litigation. Selectman Hamel moved the Board enter into Executive Session 2nd by Selectman Norstrom, VOTE: unanimous, so moved.

7:30p.m. Selectman Hamel moved the Board adjourn from Executive Session and enter into Open Session, 2nd by Selectman Norstrom, VOTE: unanimous, so moved.

7:30p.m. Open Session

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

The Executive Session Minutes of 2-24-97 were read and accepted. The Open Session Minutes of 2-24-97 were read and accepted. Selectman Hamel moved the Board approve the minutes as recorded, 2nd by Selectman Norstrom, VOTE: unanimous, so moved.

Town Crier Announcements.

Chairman Miller requested if there was anyone present who wished to speak under public interest other than those already included on the Agenda of 3-24-97. Mrs. Stutler of Oakridge Dr. requested to speak re: damage to her shed by a town owned tree and Selectman Hamel re: Council on Aging Appointments.

PUBLIC INPUT:

The Board requested the Police Design Committee step forward. Chairman Miller presented each of the following people a Certificate of Appreciation and a "Hard Hat" engraved with the Groundbreaking date for the new Police Station. Robert Donell, Donald Wallace, Wellman Parker, Arthur Boisseau, William Adamson, Robert Gardner, Donald Haapakoski, James Kreidler, and Lori Brennan.

The Board met with Janet Lewis, Administrative Asst. Mrs. Lewis informed the Board to the 1996 Town Report not being made available to Town residents for April 28, 1997, the Town Election, due to the 1996 Town Report encompassing the 125th Anniversary Supplement. Mrs. Lewis also informed the Board to problems with Town Dept. reports being late due the Town's computer system crash earlier this year and for data having to be re-keyed.

The Board approved a Seasonal Beer & Wine License for James Freitas of the Player's Club Grille at the Shaker Hills Golf Course from April 1997 to October 1997.

The Board met with Fire Chief Paul Fillebrown re: Bid Award for Phase II of the Fire Station Addition.(new bunk house)The Chief stated he has received two (2) bids for this project and recommended the Board award the Bid to the low bidder Dayco in the amount of \$27,950.00. Selectman Hamel moved to award the Bid for Phase II of the Fire Station Addition to Dayco in the amount of \$27,950.00, 2nd by Selectman Norstrom, VOTE: unanimous, so moved.

Selectman Hamel stated she had received a request from Julia McKinney, Chairman of the Council on Aging requesting the following people be appointed to the Council: Susan Sullivan of Groton School Rd., Congetta Lind of Taft Street and Micheal Hoffman of Washington St. Selectman Norstrom moved the Board appoint the above people per the recommendation of Julia McKinney, 2nd by Selectman Hamel, VOTE: unanimous, so moved.

The Board met with Mrs. Stutler of Oakridge Dr. Ayer, MA re: a Town owned tree which fell on her shed back in December 1996. Mrs. Stutler stated she had been in to see Mr. Kreidler on several occasions and filed the proper forms re: the damage to her shed with the Selectmen's Office. Mrs. Stutler stated her frustrations to the Board due to her claim being made back in December of 96 and of her neighbor having the same problem with a fallen tree, filed later, and of the Town's insurance settling with them. The Board requested Mr. Kreidler schedule a meeting with Mrs. Stutler, the Town's carrier and himself as soon as possible to investigate problem with Mrs. Stutler's claim.

8:00P.M. **Public Hearing: Fy-97 Tax Classification**

The Board met with the Board of Assessors: Chairman Edward Cornellier, Denis Callahan and Sandra Jones. The Board of Assessors introduced to the Selectmen their new full-time Assessor's Clerk, Thomas Hogan. Mr. Hogan presented to the Board Classification Options for 1997 which included: Open Space Discount, Residential Exemption, Small Commercial Exemption, and the residential factor. Mr. Hogan presented to the Board a Valuation Summary, Tax Levy Summary, and former year's tax levy allocation, Tax rate classification table and a survey of surrounding town's tax rate listing for Fy-96 & Fy-97. Present for the discussion was the Ayer Industrial Association and School Committee Member Charles Jones. David Allen representing the Ayer Industrial Assoc. (AIA) stated the Town of Ayer has a bid disparity with the percentage of taxes paid by commercial business and residential home owners. Mr. Allen requested the Board look at this disparity and assist business. Mr. Jones stated he empathize with the AIA but the Town will be loosing \$1.4 million dollars in PL-874 Funding next year and cautioned the Board to shifting the tax burden at this juncture. Murray Clark suggested the Board look into a long range plan to address percentage of tax burden to be borne by each class of property. Chairman Miller stated the Comp. Plan would address long range impacts to school/services and suggested a committee be put together to from the following Boards, School, Advisory Board, Selectmen, Board of Assessors, AIA, and residents to present a five year projection. Selectman Hamel moved the Board maintain the traditional allocation and accept the 1.26 Percentage Shift setting the taxes for residential at \$9.86 and Commercial/Industrial at \$18.63 and for the Assessors to present a one year plan prior to the Fy-98 tax rate hearing, 2nd by Selectman Norstrom. VOTE: Selectman Hamel- yea, Selectman Norstrom -aye, Chairman Miller no stating he wished to wait to hear from the community prior to voting. VOTE: 2-1 Motion carries.

The Board met with David Allen, President of the Ayer Industrial Assoc. and Mr. Joseph Sampson representing Cains and Nancy Gray, Sec. for the AIA.

The Board met with David Allen of the AIA, Joseph Sampson of Cains Corp. and Nancy Gray. Mr. Allen opened the discussion by stating the Commissions concerns re: future wastewater treatment in the Town of Ayer. Mr. Allen urged the Selectmen to actively participate in discussions re: wastewater treatment with Devens, Shirley, MCI Shirley, now going on in the region. Mr. Allen stated the Association would work with the Selectmen to bring Ayer into these discussions. Mr. Allen presented to the Board three (3) options the Town currently has re: wastewater:

1. Joint venture with Devens Shirley or other neighboring Towns.
2. participate in a regional system
3. own & operate its own system

Mrs. Gray presented to the Board statistics which indicated 4.5 million gallons of wastewater annually is disposed of through private services.

Selectman Hamel argued back that the town has been involved with the movement being slowed down by the assessment of the plant. Other participants appear to present the view the Town's system is worth nothing which Ayer officials will not accept. Chairman Miller also advised the AIA to a new superintendent is due to come on board mid April. Town Administrator James Kreidler also advised that HTA has prepared a very preliminary study of the plant and a full facilities plan needing to be done. Mr. Kriedler advised the Board to a possible grant application being prepared for \$74,000.00 to fund the complete study with the Dept. of Environment Affairs.

The Board thanked the Industrial Assoc. for taking the time to come in to discuss this issue.

Chief Haapakoski re: his participation with in-service training at the Mass. Police Institute which deals with firearms licensing, civil liability and injured on duty statute.

The Chief advised the Board to Park St. site having found an old tanker buried which was removed

Chief stated he would like to recommend two candidates to the Board under the COPS universal program. The positions were advertised in January 97 with a cutoff date of Feb. 21, 1997. The department received 28 applications. The most were full time academy trained. The list was narrowed down to five (5). Chief Haapakoski stated the top two candidates are: Laura Hohman and Austin Cote. The Chief stated both candidates were present this evening if the Board wished to meet with them. The Board stated they were not prepared to meet with the candidates but since both were present they would not inconvenience them and agreed to interview.

The Board met with Laura Hohman who stated she is currently a Reserve Officer in Ayer since May 95. Ms. Hohman stated she is academy trained and holds a B. S. in Criminal Justice, and comes highly recommended by Chief Welch in Westford as well as with the supervisors in Ayer PD.

The Board met with Austin Cote also full time academy trained with 8 years of experience with the Townsend Police Dept.. Mr. Cote initiated the Bike Patrol in Fitchburg, and is an advisor to the Townsend Explorer Program. Mr. Cote stated he is well versed with the community policing philosophy. Mr. Cote the chief notes comes highly recommended by his present department, many of his fellow officers who work with Austin have nothing but praise and respect for him. The Board thanked both candidates for coming in.

The Chief also introduced Mr. Edward Denmark re: interviewing with the Board re: the Lieutenant position. Chief Haapakoski stated Mr. Denmark had scored the highest in the Lt. Exam. The Chief advised the board to John Dristilaris removing his name from the Lt. List as of 3-24-97. The Board again stated they were not advised to meeting with candidates re: the Lt. position but since Mr. Denmark was present they would not inconvenience him. Mr. Denmark reviewed his career with the Board: Reserve Officer 1990, Full-time patrol officer 91-95, promoted to Sergeant in 1995. Mr. Denmark reviewed with the Board his background, goals and achievements. The Board stated they were requested by Atty. Gants to hold off on the Lieutenant's appointment until the investigation is completed. Selectmen Hamel moved to hold off on the Lt. appointment until the investigation is completed by Atty. Gants, 2nd by Selectmen Norstrom, VOTE unanimous, so moved. The Board thanked Mr. Denmark for coming in.

Town Administrator's Report:

Mr. Kreidler reported that Ross Assoc. would be completing their review within the next couple of days re: Oakridge Dr. Sewer.

The Board was advised to all budgets due in by 3-21-97 with the School requesting additional time, the Schools FY-98 Budget Hearing scheduled for 4-2-97. Net School Spending numbers expected at the end of March.

The Board endorsed the final DeForge Release. Motion moved by Selectmen Hamel, 2nd by Selectmen Norstrom. Vote: unanimous, so moved.

The Board agreed to order one fixture from Mass. Bay Elec. to check out quality of lamp and voltage.

Mr. Kreidler advised the Board to Ms. Sullivan and Mr. Henzy effort writing the Town's Planning Grant and hand delivering it into Boston. The grant would give the Town \$74,000.00 towards additional matching funds.

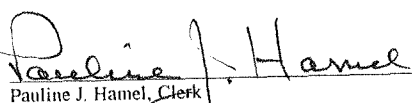
The Board was advised to earth removal at new police station site being stockpiled at the DPW to be utilized later on the site. Earth products inadvertently taken out of Town will cease.

The Board was advised to \$1.4 million not being received to date by the Town in PL-874 funds and of letters being sent to Washington re: delay.

The Board endorsed the fy-97 Arts Picnic request by Laura Bridges and approved of \$2,500.00 in UDAG funds be contributed by the Town towards this years program. The Board also approved of a \$5,000.00 loan contingent upon Boston Gas financing the program, contingent that the \$5,000.00 be paid back to the town once Boston Gas funds are received. Mr. Kreidler stated the Ayer Coalition for Community Wellness is the facilitator for this years program.

10:10p.m. Selectman Norstrom moved the Board adjourn the meeting, 2nd by Selectmen Hamel, VOTE: unanimous, so moved.

10:10p.m. Meeting adjourned.

 DATE: 4-22-97
Pauline J. Hamel, Clerk