

Selectmen's Meeting
Tuesday, November 21, 1995
2nd Floor Town Hall Meeting Room
Main St., Ayer, MA

7:30P.M. Open Session

The Board met with Chairman Miller, Selectmen Hamel and Selectman Slarsky.

The Minutes of 10-17-95 and 11-7-95 were set back until later in the evening.

The Weekly Warrant was examined and approved in the following amount: \$373,445.46

Chairman Miller requested to amend the Agenda of 11-21-95, due to attendance in room of citizens re: confusion with appointment of new School Committee member which was scheduled later in the evening. Chairman Miller stated that due to only one (1) member of the School Committee being present this evening the Board of Selectmen will not be making the appointment this evening, stating it would be inappropriate. School Committee Member Kathleen Kidder requested the Selectmen go ahead and make the appointment being that there was only one candidate that had submitted a letter of interest and complied with the deadline of November 13, 1995. The Board of Selectmen questioned the deadline date stating it has never been past practice to establish a deadline regarding candidates wishing to fill a seat. School Committee Member Kathleen Kidder argued that the Selectmen were evading the issues, and delayed the appointment by not meeting at the last School Committee Meeting. Ms. Kidder informed the Selectmen that a memo had been posted on the Town Hall Bulletin Board which was read into the record, announcing the deadline and that the memo had been received by the Town clerk-Ann Callahan. Selectman Slarsky stated anyone can post a announcement on the Board but that it doesn't mean it will come to the attention of the Selectmen. School Committee Member Kathleen Kidder stated the Selectmen were changing the rules. Selectman Hamel stated she had received a fax from the Ayer School Dept. re: requesting the Board's attendance at their meeting on Nov. 15, 1995 to discuss Fort Devens Students. Selectmen Miller & Slarsky stated due to the lateness of the request both could not attend due to prior commitments. Selectman Hamel stated her recollection re: the correspondence from the school was that only the Devens Students would be discussed and that later correspondence was received advising her to the appointment criteria being addressed. Residents present stated their displeasure with the news that another person had expressed interest in the seat. That being Charles Jones. Residents feeling that the deadline had passed and no other people should be considered. Chairman Miller stated a majority of School Committee officials and Selectmen must be present to jointly hold a meeting to fill a vacancy, three members of the School Committee were unavailable to meet with the Board this evening two due to illness and one being out of town. After a lengthy discussion the Board moved to meet at the next School Committee Meeting to be held on Wednesday, December 13, 1995 at 7:00p.m. at the Page School or sooner at the School Committee's discretion, Motion made by Selectman Slarsky, 2nd by Selectmen Hamel VOTE: unanimous, so moved.

TOWN CRIER: Chairman Miller made the following announcements:

1. Chairman Miller requested a Moment of Silence in remembrance of Walter Burdick former Supt. of Public works from 1961-1976 who passed away on Thursday, November 16, 1995.
2. Town Hall Offices to be closed on Thursday, Nov. 23, 1995 and Friday, November 24, 1995 in observance of Thanksgiving.
3. Water & Sewer Bills went out on Monday, Nov. 21, 1995 with a 90 day remittance date
4. Chamber of Commerce Xmas Party, Sunday, December 3, 1995, at the Town Hall from 2-4:30p.m.
5. Reminder of Winter Parking Ban being in effect from 11-15-95 to 4-15-96.

PUBLIC INPUT: Chairman Miller rescheduled the FY-96 Appointments to 12-5-95.

The Board met with John Columbus, MSCP Coordinator. Mr. Columbus presented to the Board three (3) copies of the FY-93 Close Agreement for the Board's endorsement. Mr. Columbus stated the grant was responsible for 23 units of Housing Rehabilitation in the Town of Ayer as well as the new water line on Central Ave infrastructure. Selectman Hamel moved the Board approve the Closeout Agreement as presented and reviewed by Town Counsel, 2nd by Chairman Miller, Vote: unanimous..

Mr. Columbus presented to the Board three (3) copies of the FY-95 MSCP Contract approved by Town Counsel, and the Town Accountant. Selectman Hamel moved to approve the FY-95 contract presented by Mr. Columbus and approved by Town Counsel 2nd by Chairman Miller, Vote: unanimous..

Mr. Columbus presented to the Board a EOCD extension request for the FY-94 MSCP Contract stating the Devenscrest water project is still in process and the contract ends of 12/31/95. The extension would be for six months which would allow time for the completion of the project. Selectman Hamel moved the Board endorse the FY-94 EOCD extension as presented, 2nd by Chairman Miller, Vote: unanimous...

On another matter Mr. Columbus requested the Board's endorsement of a Town Housing Partnership and also addressed the time commitment by him should the program be approved. Mr. Columbus stated he would spend approximately 10-15- hours a month including meeting time on the project over an above his present position as Administrator for the MSCP Program. Mr. Columbus stated the Town of Ayer recognized the need of its citizens for safe affordable and decent housing as well as the need to revitalize older distressed areas. The Housing Partnership would provide the tools, resources and support necessary to meet those needs. Mr. Columbus also advised the Board to establish a committee of up to 15 members to be appointed by the Selectmen consisting of local Boards and Officials who share concern with housing related issues, a member of the Selectmen and also a member or members of the Ayer Housing Authority. Planning Board, Board of Health, Building Inspector, advocates of affordable housing, local non-profit social service organizations, Real Estate professional, and a local bank official. This committee could develop a town wide strategy to revitalize neighborhoods/properties to provide affordable housing for Ayer citizens, Identify financing opportunities to home owners/multi-family housing, assist first time home buyers, again working with financial institutions. Staffing would be provided by the Ayer Small Cities Program Coordinator and duties would be: to act as a liaison with other Town Boards, officials, state agencies and financial institutions. Coordinate Hous. Partnership meetings, and advise Partnership on issues relating to affordable housing. The Board requested Mr. Columbus prepare a list of members/team to be presented to the Board at their December 5, 1995, meeting for the Board's review and approval, motion made by Chairman Miller, 2nd by Selectman Hamel, VOTE: unanimous, so moved.

The Board met with Mark Morse and Edward Ryan of the Mass. Municipal Association re: a Personnel Classification Study. Mr. Kreidler, Town Administrator, opened the discussion by stating the Board had placed a Personnel Policy/Study and Pay Classification study high on their goals & objectives and towards that end he had requested proposals from the MMA and Bennetts Assoc. Mr. Morse stated the MMA has had extensive specialized experience in Municipal Government completing over 500 municipal consulting projects. Mr. Morse stated the consulting Group has completed over 100 classification studies and over 200 personnel management projects. In New England the MMA has been retained to perform various personnel related functions, such as, design personnel systems, personnel record keeping, performance appraisal, examination processes, conduct assessments, analyze benefit and work studies, conduct executive recruitment assignments, draft and codify personnel policies and develop affirmative action employment plans. To complete the type of assignment the MMA uses a process designed to develop a sound classification plan. This process assures both management and employees that they are fair and precise in the approach. The MMA proposal uses cost effective recommendations stating they are hands on managers with an extensive track record in making tough fiscal decisions which address the Town's long & short term interests. Mr. Morse stated MMA will assign experienced senior consultants to

work on the project. Selectman Slarsky requested when they could begin and duration of study. Mr. Morse stated they could begin as soon as requested the study would take about 2-3 months to meet with employees/department heads and to write job descriptions and within 60-80 days a draft would be presented to the Board. Selectman Slarsky requested consideration be given to the Town re: size and population and for the MMA to submit references from other communities which they have worked for of a comparable status. Chairman Miller thanked Mr. Morse & Mr. Ryan for coming in.

The Board met with Richard Bennett of Bennetts Assoc. regarding the Job Classification, Pay and Benefits Program. Mr. Bennett stated Bennetts Assoc. have serve over 250 municipalities. Bennetts Assoc. have a reputation of working with elected and appointed government officials. Bennetts Assoc. is characterized by high visibility and thorough discussions of duties and responsibilities. Bennetts Assoc. takes the time to reassure employees that their positions will be carefully analyzed for compensation and classification recommendations, thereby increasing the accuracy and acceptability of the final product. Mr. Bennett presented copies of sample position questionnaires to the Board as well as point analysis system used to measure the education and training necessary., experience, planning , and supervision of others. Mr. Bennett also presented a sample salary survey/questionnaire for the Board's review. Mr. Bennett reviewed with the Board his understanding of the project which is to cover approximately 20 non-union employees in seventeen titles. Mr. Bennetts understanding would be to reexamine the Town's present wage and classification system and make appropriate revisions and updates consistent with new developments and emerging trends in personnel and human resource management, such as FLSA, ADA minimum wage provisions, EEOC guidelines and other pertinent regulations. Mr. Bennett stated Bennett Assoc. will address the following objectives during his study:

1. review and classification of all positions with a careful evaluation.
 2. recommend a compensation system that is objective, competitive and equitable which would be easily administered by staff.
 3. review existing fringe benefits
 4. establish a recommended set of procedures and policies for updating the system for continued reliability
- Mr. Bennett stated the Town would receive a final, bound report containing the following:

1. narrative summarizing the project.
2. narrative analyzing the data gathered.
3. recommendation of a wage & classification plan as well as benefit program.
4. up to date accurate position descriptions.
5. tables summarizing the wage data gathered.
6. narrative regarding maintenance of system
7. copies of forms used in the study

Mr. Bennett stated in accordance with strategy Bennetts Assoc. will ensure open communications with officials and staff throughout the process. Mr. Bennett stated estimate of time required to perform the study would be twelve weeks and throughout the schedule there would be ample opportunity for input and feedback from the Town regarding preliminary findings and recommendations. Mr. Bennett reviewed with the Board qualifications and relevant experience as well as references and key personnel of the firm. The proposed fee to undertake the proposal would be \$7,000.00 to include out of pocket expenses. The Board thanked Mr. Bennett for coming in and took this mater under advisement.

Selectman Slarsky requested the Advisory Board be invited in to the next Selectmen's Meeting to discuss the feasibility and implementation of such a study.

The Board met with the Police Chief, Arthur Boisseau re: the Selection process for the police station architect.. Chief Boisseau stated toward that end he had visited several new police stations in Hollis and Hudson N.H. and described problems re: size of structures and lot size selected in Ayer for building the new police station. Stations visited did not fit into the scheme for Ayer defined as being to elaborate, but he did find upon the visits new information to help him out with his design. Selectman Slarsky stated his

concern re: being uncomfortable selecting a designer which may create an expensive project to costly for the Town and go beyond the Town's needs. Selectman Slarsky suggested perhaps a Building Committee be put in place to work with the Chief as well as a Project Manager. Town Administrator James Kreidler suggested that at this point the Board would do well to select an architect. Mr. Kreidler stated an architect works for you and carries out the Town's planning to the Town's specifications working with a Building Committee. Selectman Slarsky moved that a Building Committee be assembled. Town Counsel, Mr. Kreidler and the Chief of Police to meet to rank the architects they have already reviewed to work out the terms and services the architect would provide. The Board moved to approve Selectmen's Slarsky's recommendation.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT: (see report dated 11-21-95)

ACTION ITEMS:

1. The Board per the recommendation of the Town Administrator schedule Interviews re: the Economic Development Director's position for the next selectmen's Meeting 12-5-95.
2. Land Bank requests a breakfast press conference at Town of Ayer Town Hall re: presentation of \$16,000.00 Parking Study Funding for downtown Ayer be scheduled the first week in December. The Town Administrator to work with Land Bank to set date.
3. Mr. Kreidler advised the Board to the Town of Harvard requesting to walk the Bounds in December. The Board requested the Conservation Commission or any interested citizen help the Board out with this request.
4. The Board was advised to the Library extension project being awarded to Souliere & Zepka of Adams, MA in the amount of \$1,659,486.00. Project completion date 9/30/96.

The Board met with Rep. Robert Hargraves. Rep. Hargraves advised the Board to a meeting being requested at the Mass. Department of Public Safety with Kevin Sullivan, Secretary of Transportation regarding the West Main Street Bridge per his request. Rep. Hargraves to contact the Selectmen's Office with date and time of meeting when confirmed.

Selectman Slarsky moved the Board adjourn from Open Session to enter into Executive Session re: Superior Officers Grievance to adjourn and enter into another Executive Session re: a IBPO Grievance to adjourn and enter into another Executive Session re: the Town Administrator's contract to adjourn and reenter into Open Session for the sole purpose of adjourning the meeting, 2nd by Selectman Hamel, VOTE: unanimous, so moved.

10:30 p.m. Open Session ended.

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Pauline J Hamel, Clerk
Ayer Board of Selectmen