

TOWN OF AYER SELECTMEN'S MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday, February 18, 2014-7:00P.M.
1st Floor Meeting Room, Town Hall, Main Street, Ayer, MA

Chairman Luca called the meeting to order at 7:00p.m. Present: Chairman-Gary J. Luca, Members: Pauline Conley and Jannice Livingston. Mr. Hillman running a few minutes late.

Chairman Luca requested if there were any amendments to the Agenda.

Mr. Pontbriand requested the Board's permission to add a Reserve Fund Transfer (RFT) for the Fire Dept. in the amount of \$12,400.00 re purchase of new Turn- out Gear. Chairman Luca advising to his speaking with the Chief and this item being taken up first on the Agenda.

Mr. Pontbriand requested the Board take up the resignation of Selectman Fay. Chairman Luca advising to his taking this up under Announcements.

Ms. Conley requested to address Old Groton Road snow plowing to be taken up under Supt. Wetzel's report.

Announcements- Chairman Luca advised the Board's to the receipt of a letter of resignation from Selectman James Fay on 2-10-14 announcing his resignation effective immediately due to family medical situation requiring his full attention. Chairman Luca thanked Mr. Fay for his many years of service to the Town of Ayer and on the Board as well as many other committees i.e. Memorial Garden, Capital Plan Fire Station Re-Use, etc. and wished him well.

Public Input-Ed Kelley

Mr. Kelley read a prepared statement into the record re his dismay re snow not removed from in front of businesses along Main Street from the past three storms. Mr. Kelley stated his frustration re customers not being able to access stores due to huge piles of snow blocking their passage especially during one of the biggest consumer days of the year Valentine's Day. Mr. Kelley closed with noting the Ayer Town Hall was cleared and the businesses who pay twice the amount in taxes in Town were not. Ms. Conley concurred with Mr. Kelley stating she observed 3' of snow in Depot Sq. area forcing her to walk into street, south side of Main Street completely snow blocked and north side clear of snow, stating we expect property owners to clear snow we should too by setting example. Ms. Conley thanked Mr. Kelley for coming forward. Supt. Wetzel stated the DPW does clear Town Hall but at the end of storm. Supt. Wetzel advising to Police Chief not allowing snow removal operations during the day and he has been trying to schedule removal but unable to get Police detail and getting one storm right after another, and crews exhausted. Supt. Wetzel stating men working around the clock to keep roads open, still out working this evening-men are exhausted, not safe to work. Supt. Wetzel advising to looking to scheduling removal Saturday with required Police Detail. Ms. Livingston also feeling something must be done to clear snow on Main St., stating it should have been taken care of, cant' leave Main St. where no one can park or access stores. Supt. Wetzel advising to looking into other options, using loaders along Main St. and stockpiling near 63 Main St. with problem getting bigger each year with additional new streets being accepted by Town five this year six next year. Supt. Wetzel stated he is looking at contracting out stating there were six plow-able storms this month.

Reserve Fund Transfer-Fire Department-The Board met with Fire Chief-Robert Pedrazzi Chief Pedrazzi advised the Board to turn out gear ten (10) years old and no longer serviceable per National Fire Protection Standard #1851. Gear older than ten years can no longer be used for classes at the State Fire Academy. Chief Pedrazzi stating the purchase of this gear will get the department back on schedule to keep the gear within the ten year limit. Chief Pedrazzi produced a spread sheet depicting age of each members gear with a replacement schedule. Chief Pedrazzi advising to meeting with the Fin-Com on 2-12-14 and receiving their approval of the Reserve Fund Transfer for the turn out gear. Mr. Hillman moved to approve the RFT in the amount not to exceed \$12,400.00, 2nd Ms. Conley, VOTE: unanimous, so moved.

Nashoba Valley Technical School District Fy-15 Budget-The Board met with Supt. Judith Klimkiewicz, Jeannie Savoie, Business Manager, and Ted Januskiewicz, Town of Ayer's Representative to District. Dr. Klimkiewicz ran through the Regions Fy-15 Budget, School program/s offered and proposed assessment for 2014-2015 school year-Ayer \$586,955.00 (49 students) voted on 2-4-14 by NVTSD School Committee. Dr. Klimkiewicz also reviewed proposed warrant article being approved by the MSBA re Nashoba's Accelerated Roof Repair Project to each of the member's Towns advising to the increase projected at approximately \$400-425K. The Board thanked Dr. Klimkiewicz for coming in to meet with the Board. Supt. Klimkiewicz closed with reminder to Board to submit podium design requested by Board from Carpentry/Woodworking Program and advising to Council on Aging catering services also available from Culinary Arts Program for Ayer seniors. (see NVTSD FY-15 Budget-Programs presentation attached).

Ayer Shirley Regional School District-The Board met with Supt. Carl Mock, Pat Kelly, Chairman-Ayer Shirley School Committee and Evan Katz, Business Manager re the preliminary Fy-15 ASRSD Fy-15 Budget. Supt. Mock opened with dilemma re Town of Shirley struggling to pay its share of the regional school budget projected at \$6,290,823.00 and how it will play out re funding, adding Ayer is in a favorable position having the ability to support its assessment for Fy-15 projected at \$10,615,234.00. Supt. Mock advised to \$1.2 million that was not factored into the draft budget and for district to continue as is, the district will need an additional \$700-800K from the two towns. Supt. Mock stated the problem being the assessment formula is wrong which is based upon the number of students instead of the Town/s ability to pay. Mr. Kelly stated the District has been treading water instead of improving the program and need to begin thinking long term. (see ASRSD FY-15 proposed Budget attached). The Board thanked Supt Mock, Mr. Kelly and Mr. Januskiewicz for coming in to meet with the Board.

Supt. Mark Wetzel-Dept. of Public Works-

Deficit Spending-Snow Removal-Supt. Wentzel updated the Board to Fy-14 Snow Removal Budget having a balance of \$596.00 of \$195,987.00 appropriated which does not include all of the snow and ice removal related to last week's storm, and need for additional salt to be able to continue with upcoming storms. Supt. Wetzel reported the Department had 13 plowing and 22 salting events this season. Supt. Wetzel requested the Board's permission to Deficit Spend this account. Ms. Conley moved the Board approve Deficit Spending for the Snow Removal Fy-14 Budget, 2nd by Mr. Hillman VOTE: unanimous, so moved.

Old Groton Road-Ms. Conley reported that as of 4:30p.m. today road was plowed twice, thank you extended to DPW. Mr. Wetzel advising to residents clearing cars from road helped greatly, and private pick-up truck plowed earlier, only one end of road not plowed and DPW went right up and cleared. Supt. Wetzel advising to policy to be developed re plowing of all private roads for Town Meeting. Supt. Wetzel stating DPW very responsive to citizens.

Alicia Hersey, EOCD Financial Manager-Collaborating and Supporting new grant submission for Advocates-the Board met with Ms. Hersey and Hilary Curtis, Program Director Advocates, Inc. Ms. Hersey advised to the Town being approached to again act as host for a \$300K grant to administer a Drug Court Enhancement Grant through the Bureau of Justice Assistance and would complement the current SAMSHA Grant the Town & Advocates is currently running. Ms. Curtis advising to services to be provided would be substance abuse treatment, recovery and sustainability. Ms. Hersey advising to only needing approval to administer grant at this time she will be back later with documentation. Ms. Livingston moved the Board vote to approve the Drug Court's new \$400K Grant submission for Drug Enhancement, 2nd by Mr. Hillman VOTE: unanimous, so moved.

Town-wide Life Insurance Update-Mr. Pontbriand updated the Board to Fin-Com approving increase of Town-wide Life Insurance from \$2K to \$5K. Mr. Pontbriand advising to contract being readied for the Board's 3-4-14 meeting with increase going into effect on 6-1-14. Ms. Conley advised the Board to her

review reflecting upgrade in premium and last bullet on new policy reflecting a significant impact to retirees premium rate/being age factored. Mr. Pontbriand advising the Board to their not voting split rate/percentage share of new policy i.e. employees and retirees. After a short discussion the Board requested Mr. Pontbriand place both of these items: the new contract and percentage share to be borne by the employee/retiree before the Board for their March 4, 2014 meeting.

Town Administrator's Report-The Board officially welcomed back Mr. Pontbriand from his vacation.

1. Business Certificates- Mr. Pontbriand updated the Board to survey being conducted re fees charged for business certificates by neighboring towns averaging from \$20.00 to \$40.00 for four (4) years. The Town of Ayer currently charges \$15.00 for four (4) years. Ms. Livingston moved the Board vote to approve Town charge \$30.00 for Business Certificates for four (4) years, 2nd by Mr. Hillman VOTE: Ms. Livingston aye, Ms. Conley aye, Mr. Hillman aye, Chairman Luca no 3-1- motion passes.

2. RFP-76 Central Ave., Ayer, MA-Affordable Housing Unit and transfer of property -Mr. Pontbriand advising to only one inquiry and request for RFP from North Central MA Habitat for Humanity. RFP closing date is 2-21-14 this award to be placed before Board on 3-4-14.

3. RFP-Fire Station Re-use- Mr. Pontbriand advising to two proposals taken out -closes 3-7-14.

4. Assistant Treasurer's Management Plan-taken off the Agenda due to Board reviewing in Executive Session on 2-3-14.

5. Public Input- Mr. Pontbriand advised to the Public Input updated and placed on Web.

6. Clerk Appointment for Board of Selectmen-Mr. Pontbriand advising with the resignation of Jim Fay from the Board the Clerk's position needs to be filled. Ms. Livingston volunteered to take the Clerk's position. Mr. Pontbriand also advising to calling a Special Election re filling Mr. Fay's seat not required until next election in April 2014. Regulation requires calling a Special Election if vacancy exists for six months or more.

7. OPEB Irrevocable Fund Trust- requesting clarification from Treasurer if this trust has been set up.

8. Mr. Pontbriand advising to Bi-Board next meeting on 3-4-14 re Fy-15 budget.

Chairman Luca re MMA Meeting Report

Chairman Luca advising to his voting yes to three policy resolutions on three key issues:

- Local Aid
- zoning and land use reform
- post employment benefits

Town Counsel solicitations- Chairman Luca advising to his speaking with Kopelman & Paige re Town Counsel services re providing a list of services and cost to be broken-out. Urging them to provide two annual legal updates as previously provided. Rates competitive. Mr. Pontbriand advising to Town Counsel budget over this year by 6% and meeting with Fin-Com re dedicated line for Fy-15 budget. 10:00p.m. Ms. Livingston moved the Board extend the meeting by five minutes, 2nd by Ms. Conley, VOTE: unanimous, so moved.

New Business/Selectmen's Questions-

Mr. Hillman-Truck Traffic-Sandy Pond Rd.

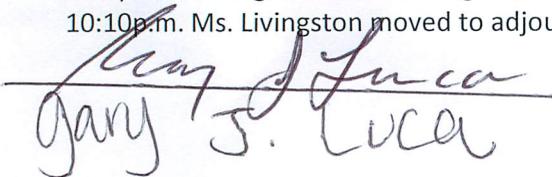
Mr. Hillman requested the Board have the DPW and Police Chief present for the 3-4-14 meeting. Discussion included exploring truck exclusion before beach opens, noting DPW signs up helping and corner Westford Rd. easier for trucks and cars. Mr. Pontbriand advising to Rep. Benson holding office hours on Monday the 25th and good time to speak with her re Chapter 90 funding.

Selectman Hillman took this opportunity to congratulate Town on two events:

Special Needs Basketball Tournament At the Page/Hilltop School having 51 kids participating and thanking Park Dept. especially Jeff Thomas for coordinating such a successful event.

Father/Daughter Dance held at the Town Hall on Friday, Feb. 7, 2014 wonderful use of the Town Hall everyone had a great time hearing nothing but praises/accolades.

10:10p.m. Ms. Livingston moved to adjourn the meeting 2nd by Mr. Hillman VOTE: unanimous.


Gary S. Luca

approved by BOS 3/25/14