

TOWN OF BROOKFIELD
SELECTMEN'S MEETING
TOWN HALL, BANQUET ROOM

MINUTES OF MAY 4, 2010

EXECUTIVE SESSION #4 OF 4

At about 9:21 pm, Mr. Heller called the third Executive Session to order giving reason #2 below:

(2) To consider the discipline or dismissal of, or to hear complaints or charges brought against, a public officer, employee, staff member, or individual.

William Thompson, Town Hall Custodian:

The Board reviewed the incident between out-going Town Clerk, Linda Lincoln, and William (Bill) Thompson, Town Hall Custodian. The incident happened on Thursday morning; April 29th after Mr. Thompson told the Clerk that he thought she should resign her position. He was concerned about certain actions of hers relative to the Annual Town Election to be held on Monday, May 3rd that he thought were unethical. Unfortunately, the matter escalated into a shouting match and Mrs. Lincoln called the police and filed assault charges against Mr. Thompson.

Mr. Heller reported having had a conversation with Mr. Thompson who offered to stay from the Town Hall until May 11th when Mrs. Lincoln would no longer work there; he also offered to make a public apology to her.

The Telegram and Gazette article about this incident indicated that Mr. Thompson was charged with "simple assault" and would go before the Court Magistrate. If the Magistrate should find evidence of a crime then the matter will go to court, otherwise, it will be dropped.

The Board reviewed the "Employee Progressive Discipline Policy" which was effective on December 1, 2002 and found that the following two "behaviors that may result in disciplinary action" could apply to Mr. Thompson.

- Displaying a disrespectful or inappropriate behaviors toward a resident, fellow employee or supervisor;
- Conducting oneself in any manner that is offensive, abusive or contrary to common decency or morality; carrying out any form of harassment including sexual harassment and disgraceful personal conduct or language toward the public, fellow employees or supervisors.

The Selectmen believe, even though the Town Clerk should take equal responsibility for the incident, they have no authority over the Town Clerk her because she is an elected official.

Mr. Heller reported having discussed the incident with Town Counsel who said that the Board could either do their own investigation or allow the police to do it and not interfere. The Board could put Mr. Thompson on leave until the Town Clerk leaves and let the Police and Courts do their work.

The Board agreed they needed more guidance from Town Counsel and Mr. Heller should have this authority, i.e. should there be a suspension or leave of absence; should the leave be paid or unpaid; what is the length of time; would re-assignment be an option; and can suspension or leave of absence be retroactive to Monday?

Mr. Allen moved to place Mr. Thompson on a paid leave of action from his Town Hall duties until the Board's next meeting when it would have more information from the Town Counsel or the Police Department. There was no second.

Mr. O'Connell moved that Mr. Thompson be suspended until the Police Department has concluded their investigation and found enough information to file charges. There was no second.

Mr. O'Connell moved to suspend Mr. Thompson for three days without pay beginning Monday, May 3rd and that he be re-assigned for two days or until Tuesday, May 11th, whichever is the later; Mr. Allen seconded; so voted.

At about 10:15 pm, Mr. O'Connell moved to adjourn this Executive Session and proceed to Open Session to adjourn; Mr. Allen voted aye; Mr. O'Connell voted aye; Mr. Heller voted aye; so voted.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna L. Neylon, Administrative Assistant

Date approved by Board: _____

Date Released: December 11, 2012