

TOWN OF BROOKFIELD
SELECTMEN'S MEETING
TOWN HALL, SELECTMEN'S OFFICE

MINUTES OF JANUARY 11, 2011

SPECIAL SESSION

Chairman Rudy Heller called the meeting to order at 1:00 pm. Other members present: James Allen and Peter O'Connell.

Camera Operator: None
Press: Jennifer Grybowski, Angela L. Zajac
Public: Police Chief Michael Blanchard, Michael and Darlene Dean, Jason Elijah, Nicholas Abair, Sean T. Moreno, William R. Simpson

Agenda Items:

1. APPOINTMENTS

Police Chief Michael Blanchard presented his request to appoint Sean T. Moreno as a full-time police officer and to change the status of Nicholas Abair from part-time police officer to full-time. He reviewed the employment background and hiring procedure for each prospective officer. He explained that Officer Moreno, already Academy trained, is prepared to begin his work for Brookfield immediately and that Officer Abair's hiring would be contingent upon passing the physical for Police Academy, enrollment in same within 270 days, and successful completion of the courses. Officer Abair will earn full-time pay while he is in the Academy; Chief Blanchard will fill several daytime shifts himself while Ofc. Abair is at the Academy.

Mr. Allen and seconded by Mr. O'Connell to appoint Sean T. Moreno as a full-time Police Officer for the Town of Brookfield, effective immediately at the rate of \$18.00 per hour, subject to the successful completion of the probationary period, such appointment to be reviewed one year from today or earlier; so voted.

Mr. Allen moved and Mr. O'Connell seconded to promote/appoint Nicholas C. Abair from part-time to full-time Police Officer subject to (1) his passing the physical exam, (2) entry into the Police Academy within 270 days and (3) successful completion of the Academy, at a rate of \$17.45/hour, the rate to be upon successful completion of the Academy; the appointment is to be reviewed in one year or earlier; so voted.

2. **THANK YOU LETTER FROM TOWN OF STURBRIDGE**

The Selectmen told Chief Blanchard that they had received a letter of appreciation from the Sturbridge Selectmen for assistance given by Officers Christopher DeSantis and Ryan Kelly during a recent incident in Sturbridge where one of their officers was injured. Chief Blanchard presented the Selectmen with a copy of a similar letter that he had received from the Sturbridge Police Chief and he explained a little of the incident. A copy of each letter will be placed in the officers' personnel files.

Other (not on posted agenda)

3. **FACILITIES USE REQUEST**

Mr. William R. Simpson came before the Board to request use of a bay of the Highway Barn for a "Ropes Access Safety Course. The Highway Superintendent has given his permission contingent on Selectmen approval. Mr. Simpson has the necessary insurance. Bill explained that the class could cost as much as \$1300 per person and offered to partially sponsor some Town employees since he wouldn't have to rent facilities. Mr. O'Connell moved to approve the use of the Highway Barn for the Ropes Access Safety Course, sponsored by William R. Simpson of Smokestack Lightening, Inc. of 37 Upper River Street, Brookfield, provided that (1) the Town is covered under "Smokestack's" insurance, (2) up to five Town employees or volunteers receive a course discount, and the course is coordinated with the Highway Superintendent; Mr. Allen seconded; so voted.

4. **DISCUSSION OF 55 MILL STREET PROPERTY**

Mr. and Mrs. Dean (Michael and Darlene) came before the Board to seek input about possible Town uses for the old mill property they acquired at 55 Mill Street on the South Side of Mill Street that abuts the Town's "Brownfield" site and is across the road from the Highway Barn. Mr. Dean noted that the property includes septic easement onto the Town's lot. Following are some points that Mr. Dean brought up:

- He has an easement onto the Town land for maintenance of their leach field which is on Town land.
- There had been one attempted break-in within the past couple of weeks but the building is now secured and the police were watching the property.
- The building is in good shape and trash is cleaned up on the property.
- He was told by the Building Inspector that he would need a CSL (Construction Supervisor License) in order to replace the windows in the building. He was not complaining; the Inspector is just doing his job.
- He has had his property inspected and there is some asbestos on some piping but that is the only hazardous material concern.
- He is checking with CSX to see if they might be interested in using or acquiring the property.

The Board responded by saying that they had no plans for the building as they were reluctant to remove any commercial buildings from the tax rolls. The Board gave

contact information to the Deans for Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission, Pioneer Valley Planning Commission and Quaboag Valley Community Development Corporation so that they can find out about development grants for commercial property. They also explained about a program called Tax Incentive Financing (TIF) and Mr. Dean will research it.

5. **PAY STUBS**

Mr. O'Connell reported that the Treasurer expects to receive the information he has requested from the payroll company soon.

6. **BUDGET FORMS, PROCESSES AND TIMELINE**

Mr. O'Connell said that the Town Accountant Betty Benoit was updating budget forms to reflect requests from the Selectmen to consolidate columns, to eliminate the FY08 data (if the Advisory Committee concurs) and to provide information on unspent funds for each department for the last five years. Mr. O'Connell volunteered to draft a cover memo for Board review at its next meeting so budget forms could go out next week.

7. **INTER-MUNICIPAL AGREEMENT ON PURCHASING OF OFFICE AND CLEANING SUPPLIES**

Ms. Neylon reported that bids will be reviewed and the winning bidder chosen at the Regional Selectmen's Meeting scheduled for 6:00 pm on Thursday, January 13th at the West Brookfield Town Hall. Mr. O'Connell moved to authorize the Chairman to cast the Brookfield Selectmen's representative to select the winning bidder with himself as the alternate; Mr. Allen seconded; so voted.

8. **DRAPER STREET TREE ISSUE**

It was reported that Tree Warden Herb Chaffee had no objection to Mr. Holdcraft taking down the tree at his own expense as he had volunteered to do at the Selectmen's January 4th meeting and that Mr. Holdcraft had been so notified by letter. The Selectmen repeated their request to Mr. Holdcraft for a copy of any legal surveys or deed information he might have to settle the question of whether or not the tree is on Town or private property.

Other (not on the posted agenda)

9. **CDBG-R CERTIFICATE OF SUBSTANTIAL COMPLETION**

Mr. Heller entertained a motion to authorize him to sign the Certificate of Substantial Completion for the CDBG-R project (Lincoln Street) after talking with William (Bill) Scanlan; Mr. O'Connell so moved; Mr. Allen seconded; so voted.

10. BOARD PRIORITIES

- A. Making the Town Hall Fully Accessible and Efficient: Mr. Allen agreed to take the lead on this project and will:
- review the ADA report from 1997, estimate costs for making the first floor accessible, and make recommendations about projects;
 - Contact the Building Inspector and Roger Charpentier for help in determining a layout and cost for an ADA-compliant bathroom and whether it can fit in the current space;
 - Propose a fundraising strategy and ask the Cultural Council, Apple Country Fair, and other groups for assistance, and check into possible grant from the Jeppson Fund and other grants and donations.
- B. Financial Planning: Mr. O'Connell has been taking the lead on this priority. In addition to continued emphasis on the collection of back taxes, the Department of Revenue will be conducting a financial review in February and the Capital Improvement Planning Committee will meet on January 20. Selectmen should be prepared to consider additional proposals to improve town finances during the budget process including decision on the sale of town properties and issuing a solar installation RFP (Mr. Heller is taking the lead on this project).
- C. Reorganization of Municipal Services: The Board's priority here is to ensure back-up for key town officials, which will be a focus of the budget development process.
- D. Stabilize the Staffing, Leadership and Location of the Police Department: Mr. O'Connell noted that the department will be back to full staffing in the next month at which time the Town will need to begin negotiations on a new contract with the union membership. The Board is and will continue to seek a long-term location for the Department.
- E. Assess Needs of Senior Citizens and Present a Comprehensive Plan for a Senior Center: Ms. Neylon will send a memo to the Council on Aging to see if they would like to take the lead on this project and to invite other groups in Town to participate including the Library, Historical Commission, and leadership of Wagon Wheel, Nanatomqua and the Meadows.
- F. Adopt the Open Space and Master Plan: It is expected that the Open Space and Master Planning Committee will present its report and recommendations to the Annual Town Meeting.
- G. Revise Town By-Laws, Personnel Management and a Citizens Guide to Permitting: The By-Law Committee, the Town Clerk and the Personnel Committee are or will be pursuing these matters.

- H. Develop a Five Year Highway, Sidewalk Infrastructure, and Safety Plan: The Highway Department and Water Department have made significant strides in repairing streets and highways with grant funds. This will continue in FY12 as the STRAP grant is implemented. These forward steps should make it easier to develop a five-year plan.
- I. Youth and Recreation: Assess the needs of Youth and Recreation and Present Proposals: Ms. Neylon will send a memo to the Recreation Committee and the Elementary School to see if they would take the lead in this area.

ADJOURNMENT:

At about 3:26 pm, Mr. Heller entertained a motion to enter into Executive Session citing (and reading aloud) Exemptions two, three and six and to return to open session only to adjourn; Mr. O'Connell so moved; Mr. Allen seconded; so voted with Mr. Allen voting aye; Mr. O'Connell voting aye; and Mr. Heller voting aye.

Exception Two - "To discuss strategy in preparation for negotiations with non-union personnel or to conduct collective bargaining session or contract negotiations with non-union personnel"

Exception Three - "To discuss strategy relating to collective bargaining or to litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the governmental body, to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel, to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with nonunion personnel."

Exception Six - "To consider the purchase, exchange, lease or value of real property, if such discussions may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the governmental body and a person, firm or corporation."

As there was no further business before the Board, Mr. O'Connell moved to adjourn at about 3:55 pm; Mr. Heller seconded; so voted.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna L. Neylon, Administrative Assistant

Date approved by Board: _____