

**Town of Brookfield
Selectmen's Meeting
Town Hall, Banquet Room and Selectmen's Office
Tuesday, January 17, 2012**

Mr. O'Connell called the meeting to order at 6:32 pm and led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance. Other members present: Stephen J. Comtois II. Rudy Heller was on vacation.

Camera Operator: Sharon Mahoney
Press: Karen Trainor, David Dore
Public: Barbara Wilson, John David Holdcraft

Note: The minutes of this meeting reflect the order of the printed agenda NOT the order of the actual meeting.

APPROVAL OF WARRANTS:

Mr. O'Connell entertained a motion to ratify the below listed warrants; Mr. Comtois so moved; Mr. O'Connell seconded; so voted.

Expense Warrant for 1/17/12: \$169,907.91 and
Wire Transfer for 1/17/12: \$47.71

APPROVAL OF SELECTMEN'S MINUTES:

Mr. Comtois moved to approve the minutes of December 6, 2012; Mr. O'Connell seconded; so voted.

MONTHLY REPORTS & MINUTES OF OTHER DEPARTMENTS:

Mr. Comtois moved to acknowledge receipt of the below-listed monthly reports and minutes; Mr. O'Connell seconded; so voted.

Town Hall Custodian: December 2011
Municipal Facilities Planning Committee: 12/5/11; 12/19/11
Tax Collector: 1/17/12

The report from the Tax Collector included a listing of all unpaid and back taxes, interest and fees owed to the Town (totaling about \$430,000), but does not include back taxes moved to the Treasurer's control. The Administrative Assistant will let the Tax Collector know that the Board appreciates receiving this information.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Several announcements were read by Chairman O'Connell including the schedule for the 2012 Annual Town Elections and recognition of Skip Nielsen and Bill Thompson for getting all four of the clock faces in the Town Hall working again and Tim Simon for successful completion of the Massachusetts Assoc. of Conservation Commissions training course on *Fundamentals for Conservation Commissioners*.

Public Access Period:

Barbara Wilson: Due to the recent flurry of activity in the news relative to casinos in Massachusetts, Mrs. Wilson asked the Board how much information they were getting. Mr. O'Connell said that the Town was receiving information and that Mr. Heller had attended several meetings on this subject. He then asked Mrs. Wilson, who is a member of the Elementary School Committee, to gather information and report back on how the proposed casinos would affect Brookfield's schools.

John David Holdcraft: Mr. Holdcraft commented that he felt that the changes to South Pond Beach were horrendous, that the curbs and guardrails were dangerous and that there were signs everywhere. He also claimed that what was actually built was not what they proposed initially. He said that he had written a letter of complaint and asked the Board to do the same. He asked that the board find out what happened to the \$115,000 spent that he feels was totally wasted.

Mr. O'Connell replied that the Town (Selectmen and Conservation Commission) were represented in the planning process of this project and that he himself had attended the dedication ceremony. Several fishing groups and individuals were represented at the ceremony; all seemed pleased with the changes. He also explained Phase II of the project which will add additional parking across the street from the boat ramp area. He added that the Board would ask Mr. Heller to research the guardrail safety issue with the Recreation Committee and the Police Chief.

Agenda:

1. **INSURANCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT**

Mr. O'Connell reported that this committee is not yet ready to report; they are waiting for the Teacher's Union to make their decision. This item will be moved to the January 31st agenda.

2. **APPOINTMENTS: (HISTORIC RECORDS PRESERVATION COMMITTEE, ETC.)**

Mr. Comtois moved to appoint Tracy Comtois to represent the Historical Commission and Donna Neylon to represent the Board of Selectmen on this committee, there was no term expiration given; Mr. O'Connell seconded; so voted.

The Library Trustees had given two names for their representative and it was agreed that they should choose only one (for voting purposes) and that this appointment would be made after their choice is learned.

There was then discussion as to whether or not the Town Clerk should be an ex officio member with or without voting privileges. There was also a question as to whether or not the original vote forming this committee limited who can be added. Ms. Neylon will research this for the next meeting.

3. **AWARD CONTRACT FOR BANISTER COMMON/MALL COMMITTEE**

The Banister Common & Mall Committee had reviewed bids received for a topographical survey of the Common and Mall. They recommended that the Selectmen award the contract to the low bidder Guerriere & Halnon, Inc. of Whitinsville, MA with a bid of \$3,950.

Other bidders were:

CME Associates, Inc.	\$7,000
Sherman & Frydryk	\$6,800
Para Land Surveying, Inc.	\$6,500

Mr. O'Connell entertained a motion to award the contract to G & H and to authorize the Chairman or Vice Chairman to sign the contract when it is ready; Mr. Comtois so moved; Mr. O'Connell seconded; so voted.

4. **REPRESENTATION AT THE VOLUNTEER FIRE ASSISTANCE GRANT PROGRAM**

Chairman O'Connell announced that there will be an award ceremony in West Brookfield on January 31st at 10:00 am. This is the first time that the public will be invited to this ceremony and it is hoped that there will be a good representation of the public at this worthy event.

5. **DRAFT: CHARGE FOR THE TOWN ADMINISTRATOR NEEDS ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE**

A draft charge, created by Mr. O'Connell, was presented to the Board for their review and for discussion at the Board's January 31st meeting. There was no discussion at this time.

6. **GASBE PROPOSES 5-YEAR FINANCIAL PROJECTIONS FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENTS**

Mr. O'Connell reported that he had asked the Town Accountant's opinion of this proposal and she indicated that she was not in favor of it. He said that she felt it was okay to make a 5-year financial projection but that it was ridiculous to look at the numbers in such a formal way.

Mr. O'Connell entertained a motion to send feed back opposing this change; Mr. Comtois so moved; Mr. O'Connell seconded; so voted.

7. **FORM 43 FOR LICENSES**

According to recent communication from the Alcoholic Beverages Control Commission, a new Form 43 is needed for the change to the alcohol pouring license requested by James Correia d/b/a Whites Landing. Since the new form was not yet ready for the Board's signatures, this was passed over until the January 31st meeting.

8. SAW MILL POND DAM

In Mr. Heller's absence, Mr. O'Connell attended a meeting at the Saw Mill Pond Dam site with Mr. Herbert Chaffee, Highway Superintendent, and Mr. Chris Cullen, Dam Inspector for Fuss & O'Neill. He reported that the Town was encouraged to do the RFP for the Phase II inspection as quickly as possible so that we would meet the March 1st deadline. The Phase II inspection is for a major mapping of the wetland area to see if the current dam could withstand a 100 year flood. The contractor would give the Town three options with associated costs to either repair or breach the dam.

Mr. O'Connell said that Ms. Neylon had the RFP drafted and since time was short, he asked that the Board review the draft RFP and make comments or suggested changes or additions as quickly as possible so that the RFP may be approved at the January 31st meeting and the advertisement sent out immediately.

Ms. Neylon will also draft an article for the Annual Town Meeting to pay for the Phase II study. She explained the bidding process and asked the Board to choose between the two envelope process and low bidder; the Board chose the two-envelope process.

9. FY 2013 BUDGET

There are still a very few budgets that have not yet been turned in but those departments will again be reminded and if they do not have their budget and/or articles in by January 31st, they will be level-funded.

The Board began to make a list of articles for the Annual Town Meeting Warrant and the Administrative Assistant was asked to continue the list for presentation at the January 31st meeting:

- New Police Station
- Town Hall renovations
- Wagon Wheel's USDA loan
- Funding for the Agricultural Commission
- CDBG-R balance

It was agreed that the Board would not call a meeting with Wagon Wheel and the Board of Health regarding their request for the Town to sign a loan for them with the USDA but to wait for Wagon Wheel's initiative. It was noted that a letter came from Bill Scanlan on behalf of Wagon Wheel requesting a meeting of the Community Development Block Grant Advisory Committee (CDBG AC) requesting a meeting to discuss the possibility of a grant application to be filed in December 2012 that would benefit Wagon Wheel.

10. CABLE ACCESS COMMITTEE – SPENDING REQUEST

This was passed over as none of the invoices received for the current Expense Warrant were \$5,000 or more and it was understood that a previous vote of this Board would cover the authorization of these purchases.

11. CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION – CDBG-R PROJECT/GRANT

Mr. William Scanlan, Grant Administrator for this grant, sent a Certificate of Completion to the Board for signature. The Certificate indicates that the total cost of this project was \$639,768.43.

Mr. O’Connell entertained a motion to authorize the Chair to sign the Certificate of Completion for the CDBG-R grant (Common & Lincoln Streets); Mr. Comtois so moved; Mr. O’Connell seconded; so voted.

There are still some obligations to complete, including financial obligations, before the project is completed. The Town may have to come up with between \$16,000 and \$20,000 but the Highway Superintendent is trying to get this additional funding from Chapter 90 funds. If this does not happen, there will need to be an article on the Annual Town Meeting Warrant requesting these funds.

Correspondence:

12. CASINO WEBINAR 1/18/ @ 2:00 PM

Kopelman & Paige, Town Counsel, is sponsoring a webinar at 2:00 pm tomorrow to discuss various new state laws relative to casinos in Massachusetts. Only one town official per town is allowed to sign up. It was announced that if anyone wanted to sit in on the webinar, they were welcome to go to the Selectmen’s office for 2:00 pm tomorrow.

13. APPROVAL FROM DOR FOR ADDITIONAL DEFICIT SPENDING

Chairman O’Connell announced that approval had been received from the Department of Revenue to raise the previously requested \$50,000 to \$75,000 to be deficit spent by Brookfield for brush clearance as a result of recent storms. It is anticipated that at least 75% of the \$75,000 will be reimbursed to the Town.

Other:

14. AWARD PRINTING JOB FOR ANNUAL TOWN REPORT

This was passed over and will be ready for the January 31st meeting.

15. HOUSE BILL 00537

This House Bill, if passed, would extend certain job protections to volunteer fire fighters and EMT’s. Mr. O’Connell asked if the Board wanted to send a letter to Senator Brewer and Representative Gobi expressing support of the Bill but, at Mr. Comtois’ suggestion, we will first find out the Senator and Representatives opinion of the bill.

16. COMMUNITY INNOVATION CHALLENGE GRANT (CIC)

Mr. O'Connell reported that much work had been done on this grant application by the Highway Department and their clerk, Lucinda (Cindy) Thompson. The grant application must be filed before midnight tonight and the application will include the towns of Brookfield, East Brookfield, West Brookfield and Warren. It is uncertain as of this time during the meeting whether or not the Town of Brimfield will take part but the grant has been written to include them and the actual filing of the application will be held up until communication has been received from Brimfield. This communication is expected by 9:00 pm tonight.

The grant application (\$58,000) will formalize past practices and will create inter-municipal agreements for the use of equipment, purchase some equipment and reduce some redundancy of equipment among these communities.

17. MAILBOX DAMAGE

Some allegations of excessive speed by snow plow driver(s) were received following the last storm. Mr. Heller will investigate.

18. EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 7:25 pm, Mr. O'Connell entertained a motion to go into executive session under exemption seven "to comply with, or act under the authority of, any general or special law or federal grant-in-aid requirements" and return to open session with the sole intent to adjourn; Mr. Comtois so moved; Mr. O'Connell seconded; so voted with Mr. Comtois and Mr. O'Connell each voting "Aye."

ADJOURNMENT:

At 7:50 pm, Mr. Comtois moved to adjourn the meeting; Mr. O'Connell seconded; so voted.

Respectfully submitted

Donna L. Neylon, Administrative Assistant

Approved: January 31, 2012