

**Town of Brookfield
Selectmen's Meeting - Special
Town Hall, Selectmen's Office
Tuesday, April 10, 2012**

Chairman O'Connell called the meeting to order at 8:00 am in the Selectmen's office of the Town Hall led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance. Other members present: Rudy Heller and Stephen J. Comtois II.

Camera Operator: None
Press: None
Public: Ron Couture, Betty Benoit

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

Agenda:

1. SIGN WARRANT FOR ANNUAL TOWN ELECTION

Mr. O'Connell entertained a motion to sign the Warrant for the May 7, 2012 Annual Town Election, as prepared by the Town Clerk; Mr. Heller so moved; Mr. Comtois seconded; so voted.

2. RATIFICATION AND SIGNING OF NEPBA CONTRACT

Chairman O'Connell entertained a motion to sign the newly ratified contract for the Police Union; Mr. Heller so moved; Mr. Comtois seconded; so voted.

3. CONTINUE WITH FY12 AND FY13 BUDGET REVIEWS

Unless otherwise stated, all motions were made by Mr. Heller and seconded by Mr. Comtois and so voted.

Mr. Couture, Chairman of the Historical Commission, came by the meeting shortly after the Historical Commission's revised requested budget was voted; the Selectmen explained their vote with him and he was satisfied.

DEPARTMENT	REQUESTED	VOTED
Cultural Council	\$12,230	\$8,650
Memorial Day	\$3,200	\$3,200
Historical Commission	Revised request for \$1,390	\$1,125
Grant writer/Consultant	See below	\$10,000
Town Accountant/Audits	\$12,500	\$14,000
Treasurer Salary	\$25,000	\$25,000
Legal Services	\$50,000	\$55,000

Police Wages Full-time		\$135,075
Police Wages Over-time	\$135,075	See below
EMS Wages	\$111,181	See below
Inspector's:		
Building Inspector Expenses	\$100	See below
Gas & Plumbing Inspector Expenses	\$297	See below
Electrical (Wiring) Expenses	\$400	See below
Unemployment Insurance		See below
Group Health & Life Insurance		See below

Change Line Item: The words “print and mail” will be removed from the Advisory Committee Warrant Books line item.

Treasurer/Collector Tax Title: To be funded from the Recap. Sheet.

Grant writer: To be a line item for \$10,000 instead of an article.

Audit: Quotes for audits for fiscal years of 2012, 2013 and 2014 were received from Thomas Scanlon Associates. The quote for the first year was \$14,000 plus \$2,000 for a “single audit” if required because of Brookfield’s federal grants exceeding \$500,00. Ms. Benoit, Town Accountant, indicated to the Selectmen that this amount was more than she had been verbally quoted. She will contact the auditor about the difference and attempt to secure the lower, verbally quoted price.

Mr. Heller moved to agree to the budget line item of \$16,000 which was quoted as a two year contract with Scanlan Associates; Mr. Comtois seconded; so voted.

Treasurer’s Salary: Mr. Comtois moved to make no change to the salary and leave the same as last year; Mr. Heller seconded; so voted. It is possible that this could change at the fall Special Town Meeting after the Personnel Board completes their review of personnel policies, job descriptions and pay scales of all municipal employees.

Legal Services: The Selectmen discussed whether or not to include in the budget the funding for the Route 148 Rights-of-Way, Inter-municipal Personnel Contract fees, and Charter Communications contract renewal or if they should be separate articles. Mr. Heller moved to submit a \$55,000 line item for Legal Services which would include \$6,000 for the inter-municipal personnel agreement and about \$7,500 for the Charter Communications contract renewal and to fund the Right-of-Way project as a separate article; Mr. Comtois seconded; so voted.

Police and EMS Wages (full- & over-time): Mr. Comtois moved to authorize the Chairman to make the necessary changes to these line items after consultation with the Police Chief; Mr. Heller seconded; so voted.

Inspector's Expense Budgets: A request was made of the inspectors as to how much it costs them for their annual licenses and whether or not they pay this expense from their own pockets or their expense accounts. No responses were received as of this meeting so no decisions were made.

Unemployment Insurance: This matter is still in the process of being resolved by the Treasurer with the Unemployment office. Since the Selectmen wrote their letter of complaint, the Treasurer has been contacted and it appears that the Unemployment Office is attempting to resolve the matter.

Group Health & Life Insurance: A recommendation is expected from the Insurance Advisory Committee by the end of today as they are posted for a meeting today.

Mr. O'Connell gave the members a sheet listing capital requests that he had organized by departments and indicated that the CIPC (Capital Improvement Planning Committee) has organized the same list by funding sources. He discussed \$13,000 needed for the sidewalk plow payment and \$50,000 as the Town's share of the Dunn Brook Bridge repairs which will be paid for from the Chapter 90 funds. The Town expects to receive \$170,021 in Chapter 90 funding for Fiscal Year 2013.

He said that he believes the Town needed to reduce the amounts being used from Chapter 90 money for equipment and use it for road repairs and find other means of purchasing equipment (Stabilization, raise and appropriate, or borrow). This year's budget will have the additional impact of the new highway loader and the Saw Mill Pond Dam project.

Mr. O'Connell suggested asking the Elementary School to help with or fund the cost of the road/parking lot repairs at Lewis Field. There is a possibility that the School Committee would be willing to use School Choice money for this.

4. DISCUSSION AND VOTES ON STM AND ATM ARTICLES

Note: The numbers given to these articles may be changed before the actual Warrant is posted. The Board voted to include, support and fund the following articles and, unless otherwise noted, motions were by Mr. Heller and seconded by Mr. Comtois.

Articles 1 – 10 (accept annual report; vote budget, and 8 "boxed" articles authorizing various actions of the Selectmen, the Treasurer, etc.)

Article 11: to transfer from General Fund to Cemetery Preservation Fund.

Article 12: to raise & appropriate, transfer or borrow \$7,500 from free cash for Cemetery matching fund.

Article 13: transfer from Ambulance Billing Receipts to Ambulance Expense (\$32,380)

Article 14: transfer from Ambulance Billing Receipts to Ambulance Wages Account (\$116,159)

Article 15: to transfer from Water Surplus to Water-pump Station.

Article 16: to transfer from Water Surplus to Water System Maintenance & Improvement

Article 17: to raise & appropriate, transfer or borrow \$5,500 for air bottle replacement for the Fire Department (transfer from Free Cash)

Article 18: to raise & appropriate, transfer or borrow \$14,500 for repairs to Engine #3 for Fire Department (Transfer from Free Cash)

Article 19: to raise & appropriate, transfer or borrow \$1,937.55 for Workers' Compensation Carrier FY 11 (Transfer from Free Cash)

Article 20: to see if Town will accept & expend Chapter 90 money (\$170,021)

Article 21: to raise & appropriate, transfer or borrow for Highway Construction, Reconstruction & Improvement (\$32,000).

Article 22: to raise & appropriate, transfer or borrow for Phase II assessment (Saw Mill Pond Dam) (raise & appropriate) (estimated \$40,000)

Article 23: to raise & appropriate, transfer or borrow for road repairs to Lewis Field (\$30,000)

Article 24: to raise & appropriate, transfer or borrow for building maintenance at Merrick Public Library (\$20,000)

Article 25: to raise & appropriate, transfer or borrow for Historic Landscape Design & Preservation for Town Common & Mall (Transfer \$5,000 from Free Cash)

Article 26: to raise & appropriate, transfer or borrow to purchase new loader for the Highway (borrow approx \$160,000).

Article 27: authorize the Selectmen to acquire certain parcels for Quaboag Bridge Right-of-Way project (probably borrow but no amount at this time). The vote to include, support, and fund this articles was Heller, O'Connell aye and Comtois nay.

Article 28: to raise & appropriate, transfer or borrow for Computer Acquisition and Security Account (raise and appropriate \$10,000)

Article 29: to raise & appropriate, transfer or borrow to create a revolving account for the board of Health for permit fees. The Selectmen unanimously voted to support ESTABLISHING but not FUNDING this account.

Article 30: to create a by-law in Chapter II that would incorporate a state law regarding the number of signatures a citizen would need to place an article on a town meeting warrant. This motion (to include and support) was made by Mr. Comtois, seconded by Mr. Heller.

Article 31: to raise & appropriate, transfer or borrow to be used for contracting an actuarial computation service (there is no amount known at this time).

Article 32: to transfer available free cash to Stabilization.

The following articles were not voted to be included and were excluded from the warrant:

Add to June 8, 2012 Special Town Meeting Warrant (STM):

- An article to make first payment to Workers' Compensation Carrier;

- Articles to transfer money to other accounts to close out accounts;

Defer to 2012 Fall Special Town Meeting:

- To fund highway line painting (\$7,500);
- To add to the Town Hall Improvement Account;
- Historical Archeology Survey (\$2,500);
- Consultant (\$5,000).

Remove/Omit altogether:

- A by-law addition to mandate Selectmen mail warrants for town meetings to each household and to provide a detailed explanation for each article on the warrant;
- A by-law change to mandate the dates of the Annual Town Election and Annual Town Meeting.
- A by-law change to give unlimited amendments to motions on town meeting floor;
- A by-law addition to mandate no article with a value exceeding \$25,000 may be brought before the voters except at the Annual Town Meeting;
- An article to fund legal services specifically for the Charter contract renewal;
- To fund the Dunn Brook Bridge project;
- To establish a betterment reserve fund (for Wagon Wheel, at the request of Wagon Wheel Board of Directors);
- To transfer from Stabilization to Maturing Principal for the Elementary School;
- To fund the Consultant Account;
- To pay legal costs for the Quaboag River Bridge Right-of-Way project;
- “Planning Board by-laws” – Note that no by-laws were received from the Planning Board but this had been a place holder as some were expected.

5. STUMP GRINDING PROPOSAL & REPORT ON DRAPER STREET TREE STUMP ISSUE – S. COMTOIS

Mr. Comtois reported that he had spoken with both the complainant, Mr. John David Holdcraft, and the Highway Superintendent, Mr. Herbert Chaffee II and that the matter seems to be resolved. Mr. Chaffee is planning on renting a stump grinder for sometime within the next four weeks and Mr. Holdcraft is willing to wait.

6. EVALUATE COST OF RETURNING TO TOWN HALL FOR SELECTMEN’S MEETINGS DURING THE WINTER

From the figures given to the Selectmen, it did not appear that returning to the Town Hall for Selectmen’s meeting and thus re-opening the Town Hall on two

Tuesday evenings per month had a negative impact on the costs of heat or lights for the building. No action was necessary at this time.

7. STATUS: PERFORMANCE REVIEWS

The Selectmen are each working on the Performance Reviews and expect to have them completed for the Board's next meeting which is April 24, 2012.

8. PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

The Personnel Committee has a meeting scheduled for May and they will begin reviewing job descriptions, steps & grades, and personnel policies.

9. DISCUSSION: PROPOSED ROAD NAME CHANGES – R. HELLER

There was nothing to report.

Correspondence:

No correspondence was received.

Other:

10. SOLAR FEES - CORRECTION

Building Inspector, Jeffrey Taylor, responded to the new Solar Fees with a request that the \$150 for Residential Inspection and Insulation be divided to \$75 each. Mr. Comtois moved to revise the Solar Fees for the Building Inspector to reflect Residential fees of \$75 for Inspection and \$75 for Insulation; Mr. Heller seconded; so voted.

11. GRANT APPLICATION BY AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION

The Board had received an e-mail request from Mr. Clarence Snyder, Chair of the Agricultural Commission requesting the Board's approval and support of a grant that the Agricultural Commission planned to submit. At this time, it doesn't appear that the Commission will need the Selectmen's approval to apply for the grant but that the Board would be pleased to help in any way and submit a letter of support of it would help.

Other:

12. E-MAIL BACK UP

Mr. Heller indicated that for the past several years, he and his wife have provided free e-mail back up to the town's computers but it is "tying up" a computer that they really need and causing an impact on their business. He asked that the Board authorize the purchase of a computer and necessary software to be located in the

Town Hall to be used for this purpose and that this would be accomplished as soon as possible.

Mr. O'Connell entertained a motion to use the balance of the Computer Acquisition Account and to apply for \$300 from the Reserve Fund for the purpose of purchasing a computer and software for document retention and to authorize the Chair to sign the Reserve Fund form; Mr. Heller so moved; Mr. Comtois seconded; so voted.

13. SIGN DISPUTE ON ROUTE 9

No action can be taken on this until further information is received from the Zoning Enforcement Officer, Mr. Gary Simeone. Court date is April 19th.

14. REQUEST TO CARRY OVER VACATION

An e-mail request was received from Mr. Herbert Chaffee and Mr. Donald Herbert requesting the Selectmen would vote to authorize them to carry over any unused vacation time from Fiscal Year 2012 to September 30, 2012; Mr. Heller so moved; Mr. Comtois seconded; so voted.

The Board agreed to leave the option up to the Chairman as to whether or not a meeting would be called for Tuesday, April 17th; a meeting is posted for the Board for 7:00 pm on Thursday, April 19th and is to be held jointly with the Advisory Committee for the purpose of budget and article review.

ADJOURNMENT:

At 10:25 am, Mr. Heller moved to adjourn the meeting; Mr. Comtois seconded; so voted.

Respectfully submitted

Donna L. Neylon, Administrative Assistant

Approved: _____