

**Town of Brookfield  
Selectmen's Meeting  
Town Hall, Banquet Room  
Tuesday, November 27, 2012**

Mr. Comtois called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm and led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance. Other members present: Rudy Heller and Nicholas M. Thomo.

**Camera Operators:** Sharon Mahoney

**Press:** Karen Trainor

**Public:** John David Holdcraft, Barbara Wilson, Michael Seery

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

**APPROVAL OF WARRANTS:**

Mr. Comtois entertained a motion to approve and/or ratify the Warrants as listed in the agenda; Mr. Heller so moved; Mr. Thomo seconded; so voted.

RATIFY EXPENSE WARRANT for 11/20/12: \$152,935.78 & Wire Transfer  
Warrant (same date) for \$628.30

APPROVE PAYROLL WARRANT for 11/27/12: \$176,861.98

**APPROVAL OF SELECTMEN'S MINUTES:**

Mr. Heller moved to approve the minutes of the October 22, 2012 Selectmen's meeting; Mr. Thomo seconded; so voted. The approval of minutes from October 30, November 1 and November 13 were passed over to the next meeting.

**MONTHLY REPORTS & MINUTES OF OTHER DEPARTMENTS:**

Mr. Heller moved to acknowledge receipt of the below listed monthly reports and minutes of other departments; Mr. Thomo seconded; so voted.

Library Trustees: 10/15/12

Police Department: September/October 2012

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

Chairman Comtois read aloud the announcements which included acknowledgement of Certificate of Completion received by Plumbing & Gas Inspector, Robert Wall for successful completion of a 12-hour course called Continuing Education for Plumbing and Gas Inspectors; reminder of the Winter Parking Ban, need for food at the Ecumenical Food Pantry, reminder of how to help the victims of the Superstorm Sandy, Congregational Church Winter Bazaar; winter events planned by the Cultural Council and notice of a public hearing to be held in Boston relative to National Grid.

Mr. Heller added that in the Trustee's report was information about Elm Trees (\$150 each) and asked that this be passed along to the Tree Warden and the Banister Common & Mall Committee with the hopes that these new disease-resistant Elm trees can be reintroduced in Brookfield.

Mr. Heller also noted that the public hearing was a result of the Green Communities Act and the adoption of a stretch code. He asked the Board of Selectmen to read the research study and adopt it as part of the Town's by-laws. He said that this will all be state law before long and that he felt Brookfield should be "ahead of the game". Mr. Comtois was not in favor of this because he felt it would put additional costs on the contractors. Mr. Heller will do further research and bring the matter back to the Board.

Those viewing this meeting were asked to send letters of support to the Highway for their grant applications for Mill Street and Long Hill Road.

Mr. Heller noted that the new cellar door is in place and thanked William Thompson, Municipal Custodian for his hard work and Bruce Clarke for his assistance in the actual installation. The door which replaced an old grey, rusty door is painted a nice, dark green and looks very nice and is secure.

Mr. Heller also commended the Police Chief on his "very complete and detailed report". He commented that Brookfield has minimal violent crime and felt this was due to the good police work.

**Public Access Period:**

John David Holdcraft: Mr. Holdcraft expressed his opinion that the Selectmen should now allow boxes to be "dumped" on the second floor in the theatre; dismay that an issue regarding the theatre wasn't on this agenda (already scheduled for 12/11/12) and that the Town Hall should have a Christmas Tree.

**Agenda:**

- 1. 7:00 PM REPORT FROM TOWN CLERK REGARDING "MYTOWNGOVERNMENT.COM AND ON-LINE MEETING POSTING" – M. SEERY**

Mr. Seery, Town Clerk, presented a computer program to the Selectmen that was privately invented by a resident of Barre, MA and has been authorized by the Secretary of State's office as an official method of posting meetings and their agendas. He explained that each department head would be responsible for posting their own meetings on line, a copy would automatically go to the Town Clerk, a copy could go automatically to whoever subscribed, the schedule of posted meetings could be put on cable access and anyone can call a specific number at any time to find out what meetings are posted and hear the agendas for said meetings. He explained that this is "fool proof", a meeting cannot be posted within 48 hours of the meeting start time and asked the Selectmen's support.

The Selectmen asked the cost and learned that, at this time, there is no cost. Mr. Seery said that the cost could increase to \$99 for a year. He will hold classes so that all who are responsible for posting would know how to do it.

Mr. Comtois entertained a motion to support the program for a two month trial period and review the results at that time; Mr. Heller so moved; Mr. Thomo seconded; so voted.

2. **HEAR RECOMMENDATION FROM CEMETERY COMMISSIONERS (ARCHWAY PROJECT) AND AWARD BID & SIGN CONTRACT**

The Cemetery Commissioners and their consultant, Martha Lyon, submitted their recommendation that the Selectmen award the archway project to Stone & Lime Imports, Inc. of Allen Road, Brookfield and that the Selectmen proceed to sign the contract. Ms. Lyons very highly recommends the work of Stone & Lime Imports.

Mr. Comtois entertained a motion to award the cemetery archway project to Stone & Lime Imports, Inc. of Allen Road, Brookfield at their bid price of \$49,900 and to approve and sign the contract; Mr. Heller so moved; Mr. Thomo seconded; so voted.

\$25,000 of the funding will come from a grant from Mass. Historical Commission and the balance will be funded by the Town. Mr. Heller took this opportunity to explain that the Town's portion could have been paid for by Community Preservation funds if the Town had adopted this Act.

3. **SIGN RHE COOP GRANT APPLICATION**

The Community Innovation Challenge Grant (RHE COOP) application developed and submitted by the Highway Department staff was submitted again to the Selectmen for signing. If granted, this would be the second year of this grant where the Highway Superintendents of various nearby communities, led by Brookfield and a Board of Directors will purchase and share various equipment.

Mr. Comtois entertained a motion to sign the grant application; Mr. Heller so moved; Mr. Thomo seconded; so voted.

4. **APPROVE & SIGN LETTERS OF SUPPORT FOR HIGHWAY GRANT APPLICATIONS**

The Administrative Assistant had drafted two letters of support to be used by the Highway Department in grant applications. One would support their request for funding to improve drainage on Mill Street and the other is for Long Hill Road.

Mr. Comtois entertained a motion to authorize the Chairman to sign the two letters of support; Mr. Heller so moved; Mr. Thomo seconded; so voted.

**5. REVIEW/APPROVE/RELEASE EXECUTIVE SESSION MINUTES FROM 2007 - 2012**

Mr. Heller moved to release all of the Executive Session Minutes from the years 2007 and 2008 as listed below; Mr. Thomo seconded; so voted.

2007: Feb. 8 & 28; May 1 & 15; Aug. 7, 21 & 22; Oct. 3 & 25; Dec. 18  
2008: Jan. 2, 15 & 22; Feb. 25; April 7, Nov. 13; and Dec. 23

Mr. Heller moved to release all of the Executive Session minutes of 2009 (Jan 27, & 27; Mar. 3, 6, 10, 12 & 17; Apr. 1, 21 & 28; May 12, 19, & 20; June 30; Aug. 11; Sept. 3; Oct. 7 & 19; Nov. 23; Dec. 1, 7 & 17) except for the minutes of February 19 which should never be released as health issues of an employee are mentioned; Mr. Thomo seconded; so voted.

It was agreed that the Board would review Executive Session Minutes for 2010, 2011 and 2012 for the December 11<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Ms. Neylon took this opportunity to tell the Board that the cost of binding the minutes of the regular Selectmen's meeting has risen to between \$300 and \$400 per year and to ask the Board if they wanted to continue with this practice when the minutes are released to the public and are on the town's website. It was agreed to ask the Record Preservation Committee for its recommendation.

**6. UPDATE: SAW MILL POND DAM/DISCUSS ENGINEER'S REPORT/TAKE ACTIONS**

The report from Lenard Engineering was received earlier today. A copy will be given to the Highway Superintendent and the Conservation Commission. They will be invited to attend the January 8<sup>th</sup> Selectmen's meeting where the report will be discussed and appropriate action taken.

**7. MORE DISCUSSION: NEW VETERANS TAX WORK OFF PROGRAM**

This new veteran's tax work off program is only for veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan with a maximum of \$1,000 per veteran. If the Selectmen vote to adopt this, it will still have to be adopted by the voters at Town meeting. The Board agreed that more research was needed on how to administer the program, who determines the eligibility, who oversees the program, and needed policies and procedures, etc. but there were unanimously in favor of the program at this time.

**8. PLAN FOR REPLACEMENT OF ADMIN. ASST.**

Mr. Heller gave each of the other board members a hand out that he had developed noting duties above the responsibility of Administrative Assistant that are being conducted by the current position holder. He said the Board has an opportunity “at a critical moment” to bring in someone who is qualified to move the Town forward and encouraged a change to Town Administrator or an equal title. Both Mr. Comtois and Mr. Thomo objected because of the cost to the Town. Mr. Heller believed that a qualified person in this position would more than pay for himself/herself and suggested the matter be brought before the voters. In the end, Mr. Como agreed to take the current job description and the template job description from Kopelman & Paige and attempt to merge them into a position acceptable for Brookfield. This will be done for the December 11<sup>th</sup> meeting so that Ms. Neylon can write the job advertisement if it is to be advertised for January 1<sup>st</sup> as previously agreed upon.

**9. FY 2014 BUDGET DISCUSSION (INCLUDING SELECTMEN’S BUDGETS, IF READY) (PACKET FROM TANTASQUA RE: FY14 SCHOOL BUDGET LIAISONS – CHOOSE LIAISON)**

A budget packet was received from Ms. Deb Boyd, Associate Superintendent of Business/Finance for Tantasqua Regional School District & Union 61 (TRSD) requesting the Boards of Selectmen choose their liaisons to the FY 2014 budget process. Mr. Comtois agreed to be the liaison for the Brookfield Elementary School and Mr. Thomo agreed to liaison to the TRSD budget process.

The Selectmen agreed to use the cover memo developed by Selectmen Peter O’Connell for FY 13 but to remove reference to a 2% COLA at this time.

Because there had been a question at a previous meeting as to which department was responsible for the development of the annual budget, Mr. Heller read from the Advisory Committee official handbook that indicated the budget is developed by the Board of Selectmen and that the role of the Advisory Committee is to analyze and make recommendations.

Mr. Heller suggested that the Board ask for a department head to do both a zero-based budget with performance management and goals and the traditional budget; if this worked out then next year the Board could ask everyone to try zero-based budgeting and performance management.

**10. WAGE AUTHORIZATION FORMS (PASS OVER TO 12/11/12)**

Due to illness affecting a quorum, the Personnel Board did not meet to finalize the Wage Authorization Forms so this was passed over to the December 11<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**11. DECIDE IF WILL PARTICIPATE IN CIC GRANT APPLICATION RE: REGIONAL E-PERMITTING**

It was noted that both the Building Inspector and the Plumbing & Gas Inspector were strongly against e-permitting. Mr. Heller pointed out that the CIC grant application for regional e-permitting is only a study at this time and that the Board should support the study. Mr. Thomo was not in favor or proceeding at this time. After further discussion, Mr. Comtois entertained a motion to support the e-permitting process by sending a letter of support; Mr. Heller so moved; Mr. Thomo seconded; so voted. Mr. Heller will write the letter.

**12. DISCUSSION: LAKESIDE CAMPGROUNDS UPDATE & INFO ON PRIORITY DEVELOPMENT GRANT**

A letter had been sent to the Sheriff's office asking if they would have a team of workers available to assist in the clean up of metal and construction materials at the former Lakeside Campgrounds should the town come up with the necessary funds. At this time, we haven't heard if we are allowed to use funds from the Program Income Account. It is believed that the Board of Health can help with the costs of the dumpsters and if this is true, their offer will be accepted. Ms. Neylon will ask Town Counsel if the Town has the authority to remove the old mobile units on the property. It was determined that we cannot apply for Priority Development grant at this time at no future use has been agreed upon and it is understood that construction must begin within three years of the grant. Mr. Heller agreed to look further into the Priority Development Grant and the matter will be on the December 11<sup>th</sup> agenda.

**13. FOLLOW UP: COMMONWEALTH CITIZENS CONNECT – N. THOMO**

Mr. Comtois told the Board that Mr. Thomo had completed the survey, it was submitted and receipt was acknowledged. There is nothing further to report at this time.

**14. 2012 ANNUAL TOWN REPORT – DUE 2/1/13 – WHO WILL DRAFT IT?**

Ms. Neylon reminded the Board that it was time to begin drafting their report for the 2012 Annual Town Report and consider who they will dedicate the report to. Mr. Heller and Mr. Thomo agreed to work together on the Selectmen's report and submit it to Ms. Neylon who is putting the Annual Report together.

**15. PLOW PRIVATE WAYS – REQUEST TO ADD LETENDRE DRIVE FOR APPROVED PLOWING**

Upon learning that the condition of Letendre Drive was now approved by the Highway Superintendent, Mr. Heller moved to add Letendre Drive to the list of

approved private ways to plow and to so notify the Highway Department; Mr. Thomo seconded; so voted.

**16. ALCOHOL LICENSE REQUEST FROM WHITES LANDING (J. CORREIA)**

A letter was expected from Mr. Correia owner of Whites' Landing asking special consideration for his alcohol license renewal but was not received so this was passed over to the December 11<sup>th</sup> meeting when all alcohol license renewal requests will be considered.

**17. REPORT FROM ZBA**

This matter will be considered in Executive Session, Exemption #3 (potential litigation).

**18. REVIEW DRAFT LETTER TO BONDING COMPANY**

This matter will be considered in Executive Session, Exemption #3 (potential litigation).

**19. WHO WILL ATTEND REGIONAL SELECTMEN'S MEETING ON 12/6/12**

Since neither Mr. Thomo nor Mr. Comtois will be available, Mr. Heller agreed to attend the December 6, 2012 Regional Selectmen's meeting which is expected to be in West Brookfield.

**20. STATUS ON QUABOAG RIVER BRIDGE**

Mr. Comtois announced that revised plans are due within a month. Mr. Heller reported having sent the letter to the MassDOT representative asking for cantilevered sidewalks on both sides of the bridge and to Fisheries and Wildlife agreeing to their land trade which would involve the rest area at the Brookfield & West Brookfield town line along route 9..

**21. REQUEST FOR LETTER OR SUPPORT AND/OR JOIN CIC APPLICATION – COMMUNITY SOFTWARE CONSORTIUM W/ROYALSTON**

The grant application regarding a community software program is due on November 30<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Heller volunteered to write the letter of support.

**22. DETERMINE POINT PERSON: POLICE CHIEF CONTRACT EXPIRES 6/30/13 AND POLICE LEASE EXPIRES 8/30/13**

Mr. Thomo volunteered to be the point person to initiate both the renewal contract with the Police Chief and the police station lease. Mr. Heller suggested that Mr. Thomo ask the Chief for 6 to 10 goals that he would like to achieve in the next three years and include those goals in the contract. He also suggested that the contract with the Chief be completed early (i.e. April or May) as a sign of confidence in the Chief's work.

It was agreed that the Chief should be given a copy of both his current job description and the template drawn up by Kopelman & Paige to see if they could be merged.

Mr. Heller moved to appoint Mr. Thomo as the point person for both contracts; Mr. Thomo seconded; so voted.

*Correspondence:*

**23. DEP: NOTICE OF \$500 GRANT FOR BROOKFIELD**

Correspondence was received of this grant from the State Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). Mr. Heller said that we will need a program for spending this \$500 and he felt that the Elementary School or/with the Board of Health would be best to administer this grant which is to be used for education regarding recycling. A copy of the notice will be sent to the school and the Board of Health.

*Other:*

**24. CIC GRANT FOR REGIONAL IT PERSON WITH TOWN OF BARRE**

Further information was received regarding this grant which Brookfield has already expressed an interest in being part of. No further action is required at this time.

**25. NOTICE OF RECEIPT OF FEMA FUNDS**

Chairman Comtois announced that a deposit notice was received indicating that the Town had received the balance of the promised FEMA money due from the June 2012 storm.

**26. POLICY REGARDING VOLUNTEERS DRIVING TOWN EQUIPMENT**

Ms. Neylon asked the Board to review and make more clear the policy that was discussed at the October 30<sup>th</sup> meeting. Mr. Comtois entertained a motion to issue a directive to the Highway Department that no volunteers will be allowed to drive Class D vehicles; Mr. Thomo so moved; Mr. Heller refused to second so Mr.

Comtois seconded for discussion purposes. Mr. Heller felt there was “no need to micromanage the Highway Department” and that he’d “never seen or heard of irresponsible use of town equipment”. The motion was so voted with Mr. Comtois and Mr. Thomo voting aye and Mr. Heller voting nay.

**27. DRIVING HISTORY**

Mr. Thomo moved to have the Police Chief complete a driving history of “any operators driving a Town of Brookfield Vehicle”. Following some discussion, Mr. Thomo withdrew his motion. He will talk with the Police Chief about his idea and report back at the next meeting.

At 8:58 pm Chairman Comtois entertained a motion to enter Executive Session for two matters, both under Exemption #3 (listed below) and to return to Open Session solely for the purpose of adjournment; Mr. Heller so moved; Mr. Thomo seconded.

**Exemption #3 “to conduct strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the chair so declares.”**

**ADJOURNMENT:**

At 9:17 pm, Mr. Heller moved to adjourn the meeting; Mr. Thomo seconded; so voted.

Respectfully submitted

Donna L. Neylon, Administrative Assistant

Approved: December 11, 2012