

**Town of Brookfield  
Selectmen's Meeting  
Town Hall, Selectmen's Office  
Monday, Sept. 16, 2013**

Mr. Comtois called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Selectmen Present:** Stephen J. Comtois II, Nicholas M. Thomo, Linda M. Lincoln

**Camera Operators:** None

**Press:** None

**Public:** Bruce Clarke, Ed Williams, Donald Herbert, Donna Wentzell, Holly Chisholm, Beth Conant, Herb Chaffee, Peter Martell, Cindy Thompson, Beth Coughlin, Mary Lou Knight, John David Holdcraft, Kevin Erkkila

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

**1. Employee Meeting**

Mr. Herbert had some questions about the driver histories: He wanted to know who they had been run on, how running them came about, who is in charge of them, who are storing them, and if they were kept confidential while they were being reviewed. Mr. Thomo said histories had been run on the highway and fire/EMS departments and that the cemetery will be done next; that the Selectmen reviewed the histories without mentioning any names; and the histories are kept in each employee's personnel file in the Treasurer's office. Mr. Chaffee asked when the driver histories checks would be complete and Mr. Thomo answered they would be done in a couple of weeks. Ms. Grybowski was asked to contact Department Heads to obtain the appropriate information for anyone who drives a Town vehicle who has not had a driver history run yet.

Ms. Conant and Ms. Wentzell said they drive their own vehicles for Town purposes and wondered if driver histories would be run on them since they are covered by the Town's insurance policy. No answer was given.

Employees wanted to talk about CORI checks next. Mr. Thomo explained that the intention is to have the Treasurer do the checks as part of her Human Resource responsibilities, but because she is overwhelmed in that office, he would be doing the initial checks. Mr. Comtois explained the Treasurer will be certified to store the checks in her office and that the CORI policy needed to be amended before the checks are performed.

Several employees had questions about CORI checks including: Are CORIs going to be run on everyone; why haven't they been run on new employees all these years; will the Selectmen be having CORIs run on themselves; do employees have to sign a waiver to have the checks done, and what happens if they don't sign; will the CORI reports be available for individual employees

to review; is everyone serving on a committee going to be checked because they are doing work for Brookfield; and where will they be stored.

All three Selectmen said they would be willing to have CORIs run on themselves. Mr. Comtois said only people who work for the Town, not appointed people on committees, will be checked. Ms. Coughlin suggested looking at the State documentation policy and gave some options about hard copy and electronic copy storage.

Some employees were concerned about the security of records, since sensitive information has been in plain view upstairs in the Town Hall for several years. Mr. Comtois asked Ms. Grybowski to ask departments to go through the boxes of files.

The issue of a 1% wage increase for Town employee was discussed next. Mr. Comtois explained Town employees received a 2% raise at Town Meeting and that the school employees also received 2% this year. Mr. Herbert said the police officers received 3%. Mr. Clarke said employees were looking for an equal playing field. All three Selectmen agreed.

Mr. Clarke pointed out that school employees receive step and grade increases on top of annual percentage increases, but Town employees do not. Ms. Thompson also pointed out that under the current system, part time employees lose their sick days at the end of the fiscal year and only move a step every other year. Mr. Clarke asked the Selectmen to support a 1% COLA raise, retroactive, for the Special Town Meeting coming up and also to promise to revisit the wage/step issue before the Annual Town Meeting. He said he thought getting into contracts would just cost everyone more in the long run.

Mr. Martell said the whole system is not apples to apples. He said the Town department heads are asked to level-fund each year, including salaries, and wage increases are based on if any money is left over. He said the school budget comes several weeks later and is never level-funded. He said that if 70 percent of the budget doesn't follow the rules, that is an inequity.

Mr. Comtois proposed a ½% increase retroactive; Mr. Thomo said an increase like that is a moot point and he supported 1% retroactive. Ms. Lincoln said she also supported 1% and that the raises haven't been fair for years. There was a question about whether elected officials are legally eligible for retroactive raises, according to the Town Accountant. Ms. Coughlin said until the tax rate is set, elected employees are eligible.

Mr. Williams pointed out the Highway Department staff holds hydraulic licenses, DOT medical cards and other special licenses to operate equipment, all which is paid for out of their own pockets. Ms. Lincoln said the employees should get reimbursed for these things and that should be worked into the budget.

Mr. Comtois entertained a motion to move the Special Town Meeting to Friday, Nov. 22 at 7 p.m.; Mr. Thomo so moved; Ms. Lincoln seconded; so voted.

Mr. Comtois asked Mr. Clarke, Mr. Chaffee and Ms. Thompson to consider rejoining the CDBG Advisory Committee if he supports a 1% raise. Mr. Chaffee and Ms. Thompson said they would consider it and Mr. Clarke said he would re-join.

Mr. Comtois entertained a motion to appoint Bruce Clarke to the CDBG Advisory Committee: Mr. Thomo so moved; Ms. Lincoln seconded; so voted.

Ms. Thompson requested a key to the Town Hall as the Board of Health secretary;

Mr. Comtois entertained a motion to give a key to the Board of Health secretary and change the policy to reflect the change; Mr. Thomo so moved; Ms. Lincoln seconded; so voted.

Mr. Herbert and Mr. Clarke said they found the meeting productive and would like to have more; Mr. Comtois said they should let the Board know when they would like to have another meeting.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Mr. Comtois entertained a motion to adjourn at 7:37 p.m.; Mr. Thomo so moved; Ms. Lincoln seconded; so voted.

Respectfully submitted

Jennifer Grybowski, Administrative Assistant

Approved: 10/8/13