

**Town of Brookfield
Selectmen's Meeting
Town Hall, Selectmen's Office
Tuesday, Jan. 7, 2014**

Mr. Comtois called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m. and led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance. He asked the group to remain standing for a moment of silence for Jonathan Bemis, who passed away Dec. 28, 2013.

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

Camera Operators: Sharon Mahoney

Press: Karen Trainor

Public: David Holdcraft, Barbara Wilson, Don Taft

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

APPROVAL OF WARRANTS:

Chairman Comtois entertained a motion to ratify the Warrant; Mr. Thomo so moved; Ms. Lincoln seconded; so voted:

RATIFY EXPENSE WARRANT for 12/17/13: \$30.33, wire transfer

RATIFY PAYROLL WARRANT for 12/24/13: \$195,781.91

RATIFY PAYROLL WARRANT for 12/30/13: -\$103.29 adjustment

RATIFY EXPENSE WARRANT for 12/31/13: \$33,272.77

APPROVAL OF SELECTMEN'S MINUTES:

Mr. Comtois entertained a motion to accept the meeting minutes of Dec. 11, 2013 and Dec. 17, 2013, as amended; Mr. Thomo so moved; Ms. Lincoln seconded; so voted.

MONTHLY REPORTS & MINUTES OF OTHER DEPARTMENTS:

Mr. Comtois entertained a motion to acknowledge receipt of the below listed monthly reports and minutes of other departments; Mr. Thomo moved; Ms. Lincoln seconded; so voted:

Cultural Council 11/18/13 ZBA 10/16/13

Fire Dept. Dec 2013 EMS Dec 2013

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Mr. Comtois made announcements regarding a donation fund for the Thompson Family, brush burning, the upcoming debt exclusion vote for the Police Station, the winter parking ban, the Senior and Veteran Tax Work-Off program and an upcoming program by the Brookfield Agricultural Commission. He also said the Police would be doing heavier patrols of the Town Common and Route 148. Ms. Lincoln said she wanted to thank the Town on behalf of herself

and her family for the outpouring of support they received with the passing of her mother. Mr. Thomo encouraged residents to notify the Police immediately of any infractions they see in Town. Mr. Comtois also recognized Terry Anderson for her 20 years of service to the Brookfield Emergency Squad.

Public Access Period:

David Holdcraft: Mr. Holdcraft discussed the increase on the tax bills and said the Town has been unchecked on the way it spends money for the last five or six years. Mr. Comtois said he didn't think the Town was overspending and that appraisals are coming down so that mean the tax rate goes up. Mr. Thomo agreed the budget has remained stable over the last five or six years and said the Town's debt is going down.

1. TOLLING AGREEMENT

Mr. Comtois entertained a motion to ratify that the Brookfield Board of Selectmen grant Stephen J. Comtois II, the Chair of the Board of Selectmen, the authority to sign the Tolling Agreement between the United States Army Corps of Engineers and the Town of Brookfield, Mass.; Mr. Thomo so moved; Ms. Lincoln seconded; so voted.

2. MPPF CONTRACT WITH AUSTIN DESIGN

Mr. Comtois entertained a motion to sign the MPPF contract with Austin Design Inc.; Mr. Thomo so moved; Ms. Lincoln seconded; so voted.

3. INSURANCE PROCUREMENT

Mr. Comtois entertained a motion to have the Administrative Assistant go out to bid for general insurance; Mr. Thomo so voted; Ms. Lincoln seconded; so moved.

4. HOLIDAY HOURS

Ms. Lincoln noted this past holiday season people were working late on Christmas and New Year's Eve and that she felt the Town Hall should close at noon on the day before a major holiday. She said she did a survey of five surrounding towns and four out of the five of them work a half day before the holiday. In the fifth town, Ware, employees get the whole day before the holiday off. Mr. Comtois suggested dealing with it on a yearly basis.

5. CORI POLICY

Mr. Thomo said he called Town Counsel and they are not in favor of the Town running CORI checks on current employees. Mr. Comtois said he'd like to review the policy again and asked this item be put on the next agenda.

6. EMPLOYEE SMOKING POLICY

Mr. Comtois said he'd like to review the policy again and asked this item be put on the next agenda.

7. MASTER PLAN IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE

Mr. Comtois reported that there is a desire to implement a charge for this committee. He suggested the Selectmen review the charges from other towns the Administrative Assistant had gathered and asked this item be put on the next agenda.

8. THERMAL HEATING GRANT

Mr. Comtois explained a grant was available for a feasibility study for a thermal heating project. All three Selectmen agreed to pursue the grant.

9. LAKE RULES

Mr. Comtois noted that in a previous meeting there was a desire to implement some rules for use of the lakes. Mr. Taft, president of the QQLA, said he didn't think such rules were necessary and that if there are issues with fishing derbies, they could be addressed through the permitting process.

10. LICENSE RENEWALS

Mr. Comtois entertained a motion to grant a common victuallers license to the Tip Top Country Store; Mr. Thomo so moved; Ms. Lincoln seconded; so voted.

11. ELECTRICITY SUPPLY CONTRACT

Mr. Comtois entertained a motion to have the Chair sign the electricity supply contract with Hampshire Power; Mr. Thomo so moved; Ms. Lincoln seconded; so voted.

12. ARTICLE 97 PETITION

Mr. Comtois explained this petition has to do with special legislation in regards to the Quaboag River Bridge project, specifically the transfer of a piece of property. An appraisal needs to be done for this transfer and Mr. Comtois had asked the Administrative Assistant to contact the appraiser the Town used for the previous land takings in relation to this project. However, in the event this appraiser cannot do the work, a new appraiser will need to be secured.

Mr. Comtois entertained a motion to allow Kopelman & Paige to seek an appraiser for this property if the previously contacted appraiser cannot do the job; Mr. Thomo so voted; Ms. Lincoln seconded; so moved.

13. BROADBAND

Mr. Comtois explained that through Sharon Mahoney's diligence, the Town currently has all municipal buildings wired for broadband. The next step is to implement it. He said Ms. Mahoney is already spread thin doing several different things in Town so she cannot do the legwork, but is willing to assist.

Mr. Comtois entertained a motion to direct the Administrative Assistant to begin the implementation of broadband; Mr. Thomo so moved; Ms. Lincoln seconded; so voted.

Correspondence:

Mr. Comtois read a portion of an article noting that the firefighters had received a grant of \$1,813.20 to aid in equipment and supply purchases of that department. He also noted there is a copy of a complete brush burning notice at the Selectmen's Office if anyone wishes to view it.

Other:

None

ADJOURNMENT:

At 7:02 p.m., Mr. Comtois entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting; Mr. Thomo so moved; Ms. Lincoln seconded; so voted.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Grybowski, Administrative Assistant

Approved: _____