

**Town of Brookfield
Selectmen's Meeting
Town Hall, Selectmen's Office
Monday, Jan. 27, 2014**

Mr. Comtois called the meeting to order at 3:06 p.m. in the Selectmen's Office and led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

Camera: None

Others Present: Herbert Chaffee, Peter Martell

1. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mr. Comtois informed Mr. Chaffee he could opt to hold the meeting in Executive or Open session; Mr. Chaffee requested the meeting be held in Open Session.

Mr. Thomo gave a summary of a conversation he had with Mr. Chaffee the previous Monday night regarding street lights in which Mr. Chaffee informed Mr. Thomo many street lights were out. Mr. Thomo said he drove around looking for out street lights and didn't see any, so he called Mr. Chaffee at 7:10 a.m. on Jan. 21, 2014 to ask where the out lights were. Mr. Thomo said Mr. Chaffee began yelling at him and twice during the conversation he had to tell Mr. Chaffee to calm down. Mr. Thomo said he then asked Mr. Chaffee about his progress in measuring Town roads, and that Mr. Chaffee began yelling at him again. Mr. Comtois asked if there was anything underlying going on and Mr. Thomo said nothing was underlying.

Mr. Chaffee said the call from Mr. Thomo came before 7 a.m. and that he is tired of being asked about the same issues over and over again. He said his voice was raised but that he did not yell. Ms. Lincoln said the way Mr. Thomo describes it Mr. Chaffee seemed to be disrespectful. Mr. Chaffee said the Selectmen are not agreeing on what needs to be done and suggested going back to an old way of doing things in which the Selectmen put all directives on paper and Mr. Chaffee answers back on paper.

Mr. Comtois said the street lights were a new issue and that for the road surveys he was under the impression Mr. Thomo's measurements were acceptable. He asked Mr. Chaffee if he could complete the road survey in the spring and Mr. Chaffee said he would if he could.

Mr. Thomo recommended a verbal warning. Ms. Lincoln said she agreed. Mr. Chaffee said if a verbal warning was made he wanted to make a complaint against Mr. Thomo for continuing to come after him for the same things. Mr. Comtois said he wanted everyone to work together and that he'd like to see the personal issue between Mr. Thomo and Mr. Chaffee resolved. Mr. Chaffee said he agreed but felt like there were lingering issues from a year ago when Mr. Thomo was asked to leave the highway garage by an employee who didn't know him. Mr. Chaffee said he is looking out for the best interest of the townspeople and that he was tired of being harassed about the same issues.

Mr. Comtois said the disrespect cannot continue. Mr. Chaffee again asked that directives be put on paper and Mr. Comtois said his issue with that was that everything will have to wait two weeks for a Selectmen's meeting and that process isn't efficient. Mr. Thomo agreed and said effective communication is something that needed to be resolved.

Mr. Thomo said he would continue to ask Mr. Chaffee about the road survey until it is completed. Mr. Chaffee said he had approval from MassDOT to hire someone to do the survey and the Selectmen refused to authorize the hire. Mr. Comtois asked Mr. Chaffee to agree to survey the roads once the snow season ends.

Mr. Thomo made a motion to issue a documented verbal warning to Mr. Chaffee regarding the yelling; Ms. Lincoln seconded; so voted. Mr. Thomo said he'd fill out the Progressive Discipline Policy form for the verbal warning.

Mr. Chaffee said if he was uncomfortable with a conversation he would just walk away; Mr. Thomo said he saw that as disrespectful. Mr. Chaffee said he thought if there was a hint of his voice changing tone during a conversation, Mr. Thomo would complain about it again. Mr. Thomo said he would never put Mr. Chaffee in a position where they would have to turn and walk away.

Mr. Comtois said he wanted documented an agreement between Mr. Thomo and Mr. Chaffee to not have any animosity and to move forward without disrespect to work together for the Town. Mr. Comtois said if there are issues they should be brought to him directly.

Mr. Chaffee said his cell phone is his personal phone and unless the Town wants to pay for it, calls about Town business should be made to the Highway Barn, not his cell phone. Mr. Thomo suggested he shut it off then because he wasn't going to stop trying to call him. Mr. Comtois said it is his desire for Mr. Chaffee to answer if he calls because the Town cannot afford cell phones. Ms. Lincoln asked what happens in an emergency; Mr. Chaffee said dispatch would get a hold of him by radio.

Mr. Thomo made a motion that Mr. Chaffee receive a verbal warning for not completing his road surveying assignment; Ms. Lincoln seconded; so voted, with Mr. Comtois opposed.

Mr. Comtois argued against the motion, saying Mr. Chaffee will complete the survey when the snow season ends. Mr. Thomo said he thought Mr. Chaffee as adamant about not completing the survey and that for him to argue it's difficult or he doesn't have time to do it is unacceptable. Mr. Thomo said the Town is losing \$5,000-\$6,000 a year from having an incomplete survey. Mr. Chaffee said he told the Selectmen a year ago he didn't have time and that's why he appealed to MassDOT to hire someone. Mr. Chaffee said he was tired of being threatened.

2. ROAD SURVEYING

Mr. Chaffee asked what the deadline for getting the road survey done was; Mr. Comtois suggested either April 1, 2014 or April 15, 2014; Mr. Chaffee chose April 15, 2014 and said he would try to get it done sooner than that.

3. PROPERTY APPRAISAL

Mr. Comtois entertained a motion to allow the chair to sign the Howard Dono & Associates property appraisal price quote; Mr. Thomo so moved; Ms. Lincoln seconded; so voted.

4. OTHER

Mr. Comtois entertained a motion to appoint Sally Brown and Sandy Renaud as Election Workers; Mr. Thomo so moved; Ms. Lincoln seconded; so voted.

Ms. Grybowski reported that neither the Advisory Committee nor department heads receiving solar credits had yet asked about how much was being saved due to net metering credits. She said she was in the process of coming up with rough numbers to put into the budget.

Ms. Lincoln said employees aren't very happy about the new CORI and tobacco policies; Mr. Thomo said he would not readdress them.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Comtois entertained a motion to adjourn at 4:01 p.m.; Mr. Thomo so moved; Ms. Lincoln seconded; so voted.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Grybowski, Administrative Assistant

Approved: _____