

**April 24, 2017**

**6:30 PM:**

Open meeting.

Quorum present: Curt Wilton (CW), Chair; Earl Moffatt (EM); Peter Skorput (PS). Also present: Admin Asst Mark Webber (AA).

Press present: Local Yokel.

Board reviews and approves previous meeting minutes.

Board reviews and approves weekly warrants.

Turn Park Representative addresses the Board regarding a sign permit application. Board notes that the proper variances were granted by the Zoning Board of Appeals for set back and internal lighting requests. Accordingly, CW makes a motion to approve the sign permit application as per ZBA granted variances. EM seconds the motion. Vote taken, 3-0 in favor. It is noted that the facility's grand opening will be May 14<sup>th</sup>.

CW opens a discussion on the Town Custodian position. CW reads an opinion he solicited from the MA Ethics Commission as to whether he could discuss and vote – as a Selectman – on the hire of a potential new employee who would be under his jurisdiction as CW's role as Highway Superintendent. Ethics Commission response was that, yes, he can participate as a Selectman. CW has been Highway Superintendent for 21 years and the maintenance, mowing and cleaning was, up until recent years, done by Highway Department personnel. CW feels that rather than hire a replacement for the Town Custodian who recently resigned, it would be more efficient to hire a fourth Highway Department employee and have the Highway Department take care of the Town building maintenance. CW notes that up until about years ago, there had always been 4 Highway Department employees and Town Building maintenance was done by one or more of those employees. CW notes that a new hire would be properly licensed with the appropriate CDL and Hydraulics licenses so he or she could assist with winter snow removal.

PS disagrees and states that the Town Custodian position should stay as it is and that it's a full time job and that person could still help out the Highway with winter plowing

CW responds that the Town gave the Town Custodian position a 5 year trial and that it hasn't worked out as well as it could have. CW notes that the salary already in place for the Town Custodian position would be utilized for a new highway employee and that there would be no increase in the FY 18 Highway Department salary account.

Following some discussion, CW makes a motion to move the control of maintenance of the Town's buildings and grounds to the Highway Department and to begin the hiring process for a fourth employee. EM seconds the motion. Vote taken, 2-1 in favor with PS voting no.

**7:35 PM:**

CW continues the discussion that has taken place over the last several meetings regarding the Municipal Resources Institute (MRI) review the West Stockbridge Volunteer Fire Department (Department). Fire Chief Peter Skorput is scheduled to provide his monthly Department report to the Board this evening (report attached).

CW asks for a NIMS certification update for Department members. PS responds that all of his members are basic NIMS certified and he has records of those and that he and his assistant Chief or working with the State to schedule the required upper level NIMS tests. CW thanks Peter for addressing that Report item. PS discusses several upcoming and recent past training sessions that his members have participated in and has records of those attending, noting that attendance has been good. PS provides Standard Operating Procedures (SOP's) for the Department and notes that they haven't been updated in some time. EM suggests that they should be reviewed and updated annually. As in past meetings, CW reiterates that the MRI report should be used as a tool to help guide and improve the Department's operations. Board thanks Peter for his monthly rep

CW discusses a Town tree issue. Recently, 2 residents have approached him regarding dead trees that need removal. In both cases, the trees are located on the resident's property, not Town property. However, the trees were supplied and planted by the Town sometime back in the 1960's in response to the Dutch Elm disease which wiped out many of the Town's street trees. CW's concern is over who now is responsible for those replacement trees (maples) which are now dying themselves. Following a discussion, the matter is referred to Town Counsel for an opinion.

Following a discussion, it is agreed that that Town will make repairs to the parking area and turnaround located opposite the post office.

Roland Dudney, representing the Farmer's Market, seeks approval for temporary informational and directional signs for the one day a week Farmer's Market. Board agrees to allow the same signage and locations as in past years. However, it declines the use of an inflatable "Gumby" sign at the corner of Hotel and Main Streets.

CW notes that parking on either side of Moscow Road will not be allowed and that cars doing so will be subject to ticketing by the police. Signage warning of same will be installed shortly.

8:20 PM: There being no further business to come before the Board, PS makes a motion to adjourn the meeting. EM seconds the motion. Vote taken, 3-0 in favor.

*Meeting minutes approved by:*

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Curt Wilton, Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
Earl Moffatt

\_\_\_\_\_  
Peter Skorput

Date: \_\_\_\_\_