

## Selectmen's Minutes 01/25/2017

Minutes of Meeting – January 25, 2017; meeting called to order at 7:00pm. Present: Warren Archey; Channing Gibson; Dave Roche; Ken Fowler. Absent: Ed Lane.

MOTION by CG, seconded by DR to accept the Minutes of January 11. 3/0 vote with KF abstaining.

Consent Agenda: MOTION by CG, seconded by DR to approve the consent agenda as follows: acceptance of monetary donation to the Fire Department; acceptance of monetary donation to the Police Department; approval to The Gateways Inn for a sandwich board sign. 4/0 vote.

The TM made a presentation of his recommended FY18 budget. He stated that the format is similar to prior budgets. The total proposed budget is \$28.1M, and represents a level service operating budget. He went on to show where the funds come from and where they go, what the challenges are and our next steps to be taken. He emphasized that this budget fully funds the Superintendent of Schools operating and capital budget requests. DR stated that the Town is in good shape. CG stated that he appreciates the department heads hard work with the budgeting process. The Board then briefly discussed how the Town could assist the Library with their budget. KF suggested that the Permanent Building Committee put together a list of priority buildings that need work.

The Board discussed the Community Compact Grant Application for Shared Chief Administrative Officer with the Town of Lee. Each community is eligible to receive \$100,000 toward this endeavor. The Town of Lee has already voted to authorize their Administrator to submit their grant. MOTION by CG, seconded by DR to authorize the TM to submit a Community Compact Grant application for implementation of a Shared Chief Administrative Officer with the Town of Lee. 4/0 vote.

The Board discussed the January 24 Shared Services public forum. CG was happy to see so many people attend with the bad weather that occurred. He felt that we received good comments and support. He suggested two items going forward: 1) set criteria as to how to measure our success and failure annually, and 2) determine how to guarantee that we get Chris Ketchen back as our Town Manager should it not work out. It was a consensus that the Town must keep looking for efficiencies. DR suggested that we review quarterly rather than annually. No vote was taken at this meeting so that additional citizen input could be received. However, this item will be placed on a future agenda for a decision.

The Board reviewed the proposed Town Policy toward applications for Special Tax Assessments/Tax Increment Financing. Land Use Director Gwen Miller stated that the only change made since the previous draft appears on page three, and deals with points received for job positions paying \$40,000 or more. CG stated that EL suggested the guidelines be reviewed annually. MOTION by CG, seconded by DR to approve the policy as presented, with the addition that the policy be reviewed at the end of each fiscal year. 4/0 vote. The Board agreed that the current applications previously submitted to the Town now need to be acted upon. Ms. Miller then quickly reminded everyone that the Housing Production Plan update survey is online and would appreciate everyone completing it.

The Board then held a discussion regarding proposed changes to employee health insurance benefits under MGL Chapter 32B, Sections 21-23. The TM explained that the Town is part of the Berkshire Health Group, a consortium of 31 towns and school districts. They met in December, and it was voted to institute plan design changes for FY18 and offer a deductible plan. The law stipulates that the Town must go through the process of collective bargaining with the various units, including the schools. This process begins with an affirmative vote of the Board. MOTION by CG, seconded by DR to engage in the process to change the health insurance benefits under MGL Chapter 32B, Sections 21-23. 4/0 vote.

BOS Liaison Reports: DR stated that Susan Wissler from The Mount has been working with the Historical Commission and determined that the house located on Laurel Lake was built by Edith Wharton. They would like to restore it back to what it was originally. WA informed the Board that he will be sending a letter to EPA requesting that the Town become a member, and have representation on the advisory board regarding the PCB/ROR issue. KF stated that the real estate tax bills are out and due on February 1. By roll call, CG, DR, KF and WA voted to go into Executive Session at 8:10pm to discuss strategy with respect to potential litigation.

Minutes Taken By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Mary Ellen Deming  
Director of Administrative Services

Minutes Accepted By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Clerk  
Board of Selectmen

