



Town of Paxton  
Board of Selectmen  
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## Regular Meeting Minutes

Monday, November 21, 2016

**Meeting Location: John Bauer Senior Center 17 West Street, Paxton, MA 01612**

Members Present: Peter Bogren, Jr., Chairman  
Julia N. Pingitore, Vice Chairman  
John F. Malone, Clerk  
  
Carol L. Riches, Town Administrator

Attendees: see Attendee List

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

### Insurance Advisory Committee

- Committee representatives Travis Thibault and Deirdre Malone presented the Board of Selectmen with the updated employee health insurance plans for 2017. Travis provided the Board with the following letter to explain the decisions that the Committee came to.

*The Insurance Advisory Committee met with Lively Insurance to review our options for renewing the Town's health insurance for the calendar year of 2017.*

*Upon review of all the options presented the committee voted to recommend that the Town continue with its current plan of Harvard Pilgrim Affordable HMO 25. Initially, the increase was at 19.9%. However, they were able to get the final quote down to 15.9% increase this year. The increase is mainly due to an aging pool, high increase in pharmaceutical brands and the fact that we have had very little increase in the past several years. Other health care providers were asked for quotes all declined except Neighborhood Health Plan and Minuteman Health. Minuteman Health Insurance must be offered alongside of another carrier and Harvard Pilgrim does not accept Minuteman. Neighborhood Health Plan quote came in much higher than Harvard Pilgrim.*

*We did discuss the possibility of offering an Opt-Out program for the future and voted on having new employees come on at a 70/30 split if approved by the Selectboard.*

*As far as the retirees are concerned again we were only presented with quotes from Harvard Pilgrim and Tufts. The Harvard Medicare Enhanced, which has 5 individuals, will increase by 12.5%. The Tufts Medicare Preferred HMO, which has*

*8 members, will increase by 10.6% and the Tufts Medicare Preferred Premier which has 3 members will increase by 5.9%. The Committee proceeded to vote to keep the retiree plan the same next year.*

*Again the committee will remind the employees to about the 20% cost savings for inpatient visits to UMASS if paid within thirty days of your procedure. If not paid within the time allotted, the \$200.00 charge becomes the responsibility of the employee. We are also encouraging the employees to utilize an urgent care facility when appropriate.*

*At this point in time we would like to request that the Board of Selectmen accept the recommendations of the Insurance Advisory Committee for the 2017 employee and retiree health insurance plans.*

- (PB) How was Lively able to get the rate down from the 19.9%?
- Deirdre Malone replied that they worked really hard and we are a long time customer of Harvard Pilgrim so they were able to work it down.
- (PB) You mentioned moving to a 70/30 split for new employees.
- Travis Thibault replied that the Committee felt that this would be a way to try and help the town with the expenses.
- (PB) I just want to make sure that we stay competitive and are able to acquire quality employees. Do we know what the cost saving on that would be?
- (CR) We did not calculate that out but certainly can.
- **Motion (JM) seconded (JP) to accept the recommendations of the Insurance Advisory Committee to keep the same health insurance plans with the 15.5% increase for current employees and the 10.6% increase for the retirees and will hold off at this point on changing the employee contribution. Unanimous, all in favor.**

#### **Lease for Land and Sea**

- (PB) We are going to pass over this discuss.

#### **Paxton Municipal Light Department**

- Selectmen Malone was provided a recorded copy of the recent meeting that the Light Department had to which Selectmen Bogren and Pingitore attended along with Town Administrator, Carol Riches.
- (PB) I would like to thank the Light Department Commission for allowing us to provide input during this meeting. The Managers letter is still unresolved and some new questions have surfaced in regards to the Town's contract and whether the Town ever accepted GL 43 Sec 53 ½. The Board of Selectmen requested a copy of the Light Department Managers contract and in return they requested a copy of the Town Administrators contract. We have requested another joint meeting with the Light Department Commission.
- (JM) At a recent Water Department Meeting it was discussed that the Light Department is looking to put in new meters. We just purchased a new water tank and were hoping to hold off on any future projects that would be costly.
- (PB) Perhaps the Water and Light department should hold a joint meeting as well.

### **Support staff**

- **(PB)** I would like to reach out to the Town Boards and Committees to see if anyone feels that they could benefit from hiring an employee to help support their Board.
- **(CR)** I think most Boards are covered but I will reach out to them and get some feedback.
- **(JM)** Would we want to look at possibly lowering the number of members that are required for certain Boards?
- **(CR)** You would have to go to Town Meeting in order to change the number of members for most of the Boards that we have.
- **(JP)** Perhaps we could run another article in the Landmark if we are still in need of filling some of our Boards and Committees.

### **Meeting Minutes**

- **Motion (JM) seconded (JP) to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes from November 7, 2016 . Unanimous, all in favor.**

### **Town Administrators Update**

- **Town Clerks Office**

I just want to give a shout out to Susan Stone, Town Clerk, and Adam Menard, Asst. Town Clerk and all the election workers and registrars that were involved with the November 8, 2016 election.

There is a great amount of work involved leading up to the election and following and it was handled extremely well.

The Town Clerk informs me that there was an 82% voter turnout with 2705 votes recorded, approximately 100 of which were absentee ballots and 600 first time early voters.

- **Assessor's Office**

The Paxton Board of Assessors has announced that they have received Preliminary Certification for the Fiscal 2017 property values. As part of the triennial Revaluation and Re-certification of values by statute there is a period of public disclosure between November 15<sup>th</sup> and November 22<sup>nd</sup>. Residents can view these new property values during normal Town Hall hours or by visiting the Assessors page on the Town's website.

The Tax Classification Hearing will take place during the Board of Selectmen's meeting on Monday, December 5<sup>th</sup>.

- **Snow Removal at Town Buildings**

Last meeting I mentioned that I was looking for someone to remove snow at town buildings for the period December through January. I posted the opening and I received one application from Michael J. Putnam. I intend to hire Michael on an hourly basis rather than a flat fee as was paid in previous years.

- **Motion (JM) seconded (JP) to approve the hiring of Michael J. Putnam for snow removal at an hourly rate. Unanimous, all in favor.**

- **Tree Lighting**

Recreation will be lighting the Holiday Tree on the Common on December 2, 2016 at 5:30pm. Following the lighting residents are invited to join Recreation at the John Bauer Senior Center for pizza and a movie. This year's showing will be Santa Claus is coming to Town. The cost is \$3 per person and under 4 years old are free.

The next meeting is scheduled for Monday December 5, 2016 at 7:00pm.

**Adjourned Meeting at 7:27pm, Unanimous all in favor.**

**Documents from the Meeting filed in BOS office:**

Meeting minutes

Agenda

Attendance list

Town Administrators update

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Graf-Parsons  
Administrative Assistant