



Town of Paxton
Board of Selectmen
697 Pleasant Street, Paxton, MA 01612
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Regular Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, January 20, 2016

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

Members Present: Peter Bogren, Jr, Chairman
John F. Malone, Vice Chairman
Julia N. Pingitore, Clerk

Carol L. Riches, Town Administrator

Attendees: see Attendee List

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

Police officer appointments

- **Motion (JM) seconded (JP) to approve the appointment of Christopher Duff as a full time police officer. Unanimous, all in favor.**
- **Motion (JM) seconded (JP) to approve the appointment of Diony Nunez as a full time police officer. Unanimous, all in favor.**
- **Motion (JM) seconded (JP) to approve the appointment of Mitchell Rogers as a full time dispatch officer. Unanimous, all in favor.**

Mass Clean Water Trust Bonds

- **Motion (JM) seconded (JP) to approve the signing of the Massachusetts Clean Water Trust Bonds. Unanimous, all in favor.**

Resignation of Timothy Hackett

- **Motion (JM) seconded (JP) to accept with regret the resignation of Timothy Hackett as the town's Veterans' Agent. Unanimous, all in favor.**

Appointment of Jeffrey Kent

- **Motion (JM) seconded (JP) to appoint Jeffrey Kent as the new Veterans' Agent. Unanimous, all in favor.**

Bay Path presentation

- John Lafleche, Superintendent of Bay Path and Robert Wilby, Bay Path School Committee member, presented the final phase of the school renovation project. Mr. Lafleche stated that the project came in \$465,000 under budget. The water system may be updated at a later date by the town. Mr. Lafleche proceeded to show a slid

presentation of the renovation project.

- Following the presentation Mr. Lafleche stated that part of the reason we were able to come in under budget was that our own students and teachers were able to do some of the renovation work.
- Mr. Lafleche also commented that they are looking to set up a program with the Paxton Seniors to have a day set aside that they can come to the school for a meal at a reduced cost.
- Peter Schur, School committee member, remarked that even through the renovations Bay Path was still able to achieve a level 1 standing.
- Mr. Wilby thanked Bay Path for all there assistance over the past year in providing assistance to the Town of Paxton for our 250th Celebration.

Sweet Pea update on building plans

- Maria McDonnell provided a slid show which updated the Board as to what areas of concern they have and how they are looking to correct these items with the new facility.
- A paper copy of the slid presentation that was show is available in the Selectmen's office.

School lease

- **(PB)** Have we received a timeline from Joe Scanlon yet?
- **(CR)** No, but I think that he understands now that they were behind the eight ball and that the letter was late in coming out.
- **(PB)** Since the letter was late does that mean that it is not up to the school to make the final decision on the lease as was originally implied?
- **(CR)** The lease was originally prepared by the School Counsel. They cannot make us sign a lease that we are not happy with.
- **(PB)** So with no negotiation on whether it will be a deductible or a threshold they expect us to sign what they provide?
- **(CR)** I don't know what you would do then if you don't sign the lease.
- **(PB)** At this point Paxton is the only town that is not in agreement with the lease.
- **(CR)** WRSD is to come in with the changed lease which will have a check box next to each amendment so that you can mark whether or not you agree with it.
- **(JM)** If we don't agree then what becomes of it.
- **(CR)** We did not discuss that aspect of it.
- **(PB)** Do we have to do this collectively with the other towns?
- **(CR)** No it's our lease. Remember that we initiated this process way back and said that we agreed to these terms, and then we changed.
- **(JP)** I'm in the minority here. I think we need to choose our battles a little bit and if we keep pushing its going to come back to us at budget time. We're getting what we originally asked for.
- **(JM)** There doesn't seem to be any sense of urgency to take care of any of the projects that have been noted at Paxton Center School.
- **(PB)** It was expressed by a Holden Selectmen that Paxton and Rutland aren't paying enough taxes. It will be a tough budget season. There will be pressure to pass an override.
- **(CR)** Overrides don't pass, so if the school budget is passed we will have to cut in other areas.

593 Pleasant Street

- **(JM)** At our last meeting I presented that this business was closing and that the owner asked if the town would have any interest in the property. Personally I don't see anything at this point that we would want to do with it.
- **(PB)** I agree. I do appreciate the offer though.

Paul Riches resignation

- **Motion (JP) seconded (JM) to accept with regret the resignation of Paul Riches from the Recreation Commission. Unanimous, all in favor.**
- **(PB)** I would like to comment that Mr. Riches has done a tremendous job with the Commission.

Meeting Minutes

- **Motion (JM) seconded (JP) to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of December 21, 2015. Unanimous, all in favor.**

Town Administrators Update

- **FY16 Budgets**
No major concerns at this time. Winter season will be the test. MIS could become an issue. We need to look at increasing this area for FY17.
- **Department Managers Meeting**
We held a meeting of department heads on January 12th and a copy of the minutes are attached.
- **Fire Department**
The Fire Dept. has recently been awarded a FY16 S.A.F.E Grant of \$3,337 and a Senior FY16 S.A.F.E Grant of \$2417.

The Dept. has also submitted two further grant applications to the Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program to assist with the purchase of a tanker truck and the updating of the radios and frequency change.

- **Cable**
There is now a neat feature on the Cable Committee's webpage that allows you to see what is on Channel 192 Bulletin Board without going to the cable channel and waiting for the notice to appear.
- **Information Technology Needs**
Over the Christmas period the Town Hall was without internet service for several days. Unfortunately AMC was on break and we were unable to obtain assistance. Over the past few years we have been very grateful for the support that we have received from Mike Miers and his department but they are extremely busy and not always able to accommodate our requests when needed. It is for this reason I feel that it is time for the Town to consider either employing a technical person or outsourcing to a company. When we encounter technical problems it is disruptive and very non-productive. We have survived so far but it's only a matter of time before we have more major problems.

The options that we could consider are:

- Part-time employee: would anticipate paying approximately between \$25,000 and \$30,000 per year for 16 hours per week assistance. This would provide consistency and knowledge to stay within the Town.
- Outsource to IT Company: \$150-\$175 per hour, turnover often and no consistency.

I believe that we are at the stage where we need a complete documented assessment of our software and hardware and a program for our future IT needs. The Town runs several different software programs i.e. Vadar, Vision, Harpers Payroll, Dog Licensing Program, IMC, ESRI and we need a dependable on-sight IT person who can become familiar with all of these programs as well as our equipment.

I am looking for your support to consider funding in the FY17 budget.

- **Sale of Town Owned Land Committee**

The Board recently gave permission for the committee to dispose of a piece of land on Crowningshields, however an attempt to perk the property failed. We are therefore no longer considering the sale of this piece of land. The Committee will meet again to discuss an abutters program that entails the sale of lots to abutters to enable owners to increase their lot sizes to assist in septic issues, additions and improvements to their property.

- **Exempt Employees**

Last September I related to you the fact that the test for exempt employees is being changed by the Dept. of Labor. After several months of receiving comments, the DOL has decided to delay implementing the changes until July 2016. By raising the salary threshold from \$455 per week to \$970 per week for exempt employees it will have an effect on several positions as below: This should be taken into account when preparing FY17 budgets.

FLSA ADMINISTRATIVE EXEMPTION TO BE CONSIDERED A SALARIED EMPLOYEE

	CURRENTLY TEST 1	PROPOSED TEST 1	TEST 2	TEST 3
TOWN ADMINISTRATOR	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
CHIEF OF POLICE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC WORKS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
LIGHT DEPARTMENT MANAGER	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
FIRE CHIEF	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
LIBRARY DIRECTOR	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
CHILDREN'S LIBRARIAN	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
TOWN ACCOUNTANT	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
TOWN TREASURER/COLLECTOR	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
COA DIRECTOR	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSESSOR	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
TOWN CLERK	Yes	No	Yes	Yes

CURRENT

TEST 1 - EMPLOYEE MUST BE COMPENSATED ON A SALARY BASIS
AT A RATE OF NOT LESS THAN \$455 PER WEEK FOR 40 HOURS

PROPOSED

TEST 1 - EMPLOYEE MUST BE COMPENSATED ON A SALARY BASIS
AT A RATE OF NOT LESS THAN \$970 PER WEEK FOR 40 HOURS

TEST 2 - EMPLOYEE'S PRIMARY DUTY MUST BE THE PERFORMANCE OF OFFICE
OR NON-MANUAL WORK DIRECTLY RELATED TO THE MANAGEMENT OR
GENERAL BUSINESS OPERATIONS OF THE EMPLOYER OR EMPLOYER'S
CUSTOMERS

TEST 3 - EMPLOYEE'S PRIMARY DUTY INCLUDES THE EXERCISE OF
DISCRETION AND INDEPENDENT JUDGEMENT WITH RESPECT TO
MATTERS OF SIGNIFICANCE

- **Department updates**

The Tax Collectors office has sent out the first half tax bills

The Clerk's office has sent out the annual census and dog licenses are due.

Additional Comments

- **(JM)** We are going to have to make cuts this year. We should begin with drastic cuts rather than waiting for them. Look at closing the library or COA and cut back on Fire Department stipends and do not spend anything out of the Capital Improvement account.
- **(PB)** It's still very early in the budget process. We need to get a little further into it before we start talking about major cuts.

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, February 2, 2016 at 7:00pm.

Adjourned Meeting at 8:45 pm, Unanimous all in favor.

Documents from the Meeting filed in BOS office:

Meeting minutes

Agenda

Town Administrators Update

Attendance list

Sweet Pea presentation

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Graf-Parsons
Administrative Assistant