

Members Present: Wayne R. Walker, Heather M. Billings, James A. DeLisle

Others Present: Karen Murphy, Stephanie Lahtinen, Keith Harding, Melody Smith, Roy Hughes, Steve Wallace, Shubi Kalra, MRPC; John Hume, MRPC

CALL TO ORDER

W. Walker called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. in room 205 of the Town Hall. He announced that the meeting was being recorded by Ashburnham/Westminster Community Access TV.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

W. Walker announced that the 2015 Annual Town Report has been selected by the Massachusetts Municipal Association to receive an award for its composition and content at this year's MMA Annual Conference.

APPROVALS

WARRANTS

H. Billings made a motion to approve the following warrant.

December 1, 2016	Accounts Payable 17-22A	\$63,630.15
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The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

MINUTES OF DECEMBER 5, 2016

H. Billings made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of December 5, 2016. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

PAYROLL AUTHORIZATION – FULL TIME POLICE OFFICER

H. Billings made a motion to appoint Andrew Loescher as a Full Time Police Officer. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

COMMUNITY COMPACT PROGRAM GRANT APPLICATION

S. Wallace indicated that the Town Government Study Committee requested his assistance with the completion of a grant application through the Community Compact Program. These funds would be used to hire a consultant to guide the committee through the development and acceptance of a new Town Charter. The project cost is estimated at \$22,000 and would include the evaluation of existing organizational structure and processes, analysis and recommendations, the development of a Home Rule Charter and guidance through the process of charter adoption and implementation.

H. Billings made a motion to authorize the Town Planner to assist the Government Study Committee with the preparation and application for the Community Compact Program Grant. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

LETTER OF SUPPORT – MRPC INDUSTRIAL LAND GRANT STUDY PROPOSAL

H. Billings made a motion to authorize the Town Planner to draft a letter of support for the \$250,000 grant MRPC is applying for to prepare an industrial land study, involving all 22 communities in the region. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

HEARINGS/OTHER SCHEDULED MATTERS

SENIOR HOUSING FEASIBILITY REPORT

Shubi Kalra and John Hume of MRPC presented the Senior Housing Feasibility Study to the Board. The study included traffic information, current waitlists on other senior housing locations in the area, the senior population trend in Westminster, as well as other contributing factors. The MRPC staff discussed the lot size and requirements for this project; with this lot size it would be possible

to build between 69-72 one bedroom units at this location. The MRPC report also included the potential community impacts that might occur with this housing development.

The Board reviewed the report and the potential next steps with staff present at the meeting.

H. Billings made a motion to hire a consultant to prepare an RFP seeking a client to building and manage senior housing units and allow the expenditure of funds appropriated at Town Meeting for this purpose. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

ANNUAL TAX TITLE UPDATE

Melody Smith and Steve Wallace updated the Board on the current properties in town that are under tax title. The properties on this list range from vacant locations, owner unknown properties, properties where the owner has a valid payment agreement, foreclosures and land court cases.

M. Smith indicated that Land Court has been very successful in motivating homeowners to pay back taxes, and that she will be asking for another article at the next Annual Town Meeting to pay for the legal and filing fees associated with Land Court.

The Board discussed the list of properties in tax title as well as the value associated with the unpaid taxes.

2017 LICENSE RENEWALS

W. Walker made a motion to renew the following licenses (listed below) for 2017. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Common Victualler	Serio Brothers, Inc. dba Westminster Pharmacy
Common Victualler	Town House of Pizza
Common Victualler	Leominster Donuts, Inc. Db a Dunkin Donuts
Common Victualler	Wachusett Mountain Associates, Inc.
Common Victualler	Douglas E. Hicks VFW Grill
Common Victualler	McNally's West, Inc. dba Blueprint
Common Victualler	New England Restaurant Association dba The Old Mill Restaurant
Common Victualler	Westminster Country Club
Common Victualler	McNallys Grille & Pub
Common Victualler	The Markevich Sub-Station Food Corp./ Subway Restaurant
Common Victualler	Eurest Dining At Tyco F & S
Common Victualler	Stefanos' House of Pizza
Common Victualler	Kay's Dairy Bar
Common Victualler	Mike's Pizza
Common Victualler	The Woods of Westminster
Common Victualler	The Angler Fish Market & Chowder Co., Inc.
Common Victualler	Green Tea
Common Victualler	Westminster Café
Common Victualler	Leominster Donuts, Inc. Db a Dunkin Donuts
Common Victualler	The Narrows Bed & Breakfast

Common Victualler	Cumberland Farms
Amusements	McNally's West, Inc. dba Blueprint
Class II	North Atlantic Trading Co.
Class II	dba Albert's Used Cars
Class II	Westminster Collision
Class III	dba Albert's Used Cars

2017 SELECTMEN MEETING SCHEDULE

The Board will meet on the following dates at 6:00pm in room 205 of the Town Hall, unless otherwise specified: January 9, 2017; January 23, 2017; February 6, 2017; February 27, 2017; March 13, 2017; March 27, 2017; April 10, 2017; April 24, 2017; May 1, 2017.

ESTABLISHMENT OF A COMMUNITY CENTER COORDINATOR POSITION

The Board discussed the potential need for a Coordinator position at the Community Center. The Board determined that more research on the current use of the building and community needs was required before action could be taken on this item.

PERSONNEL BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS

Initial Review – Personnel Policies

W. Walker indicated that the Personnel Board has reviewed and updated the Town's Personnel Policies. A draft update is available to the Selectmen for review. The policies will be forwarded to department heads for review and comment before final approval of the Board.

Dispatcher and Assistant Accountant Positions – Reclassify from Grade 2 To 3

W. Walker indicated that the Personnel Board has reviewed the job responsibilities of the Dispatcher and Assistant Account positions, and based on the level of responsibility and duties required, they have recommended reclassifying them from Grade 2 to Grade 3.

H. Billings made a motion to reclassify the positions of Dispatcher and Assistant Accountant from Grade 2 to Grade 3, based on the Personnel Board's recommendations. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Recommendation on FY2018 Merit Increases

W. Walker indicated that the Personnel Board is recommending that the Selectmen offer up to a 2.5% merit-based pay increase for non-contractual employees that fall beyond on the benchmark on the compensation plan.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

W. Walker moved that the board enter into Executive Session at 7:18 p.m. to discuss contract negotiations with non-union personnel. H. Billings seconded the motion. Mr. Walker indicated that the meeting would adjourn directly following Executive Session. The motion was passed unanimously on a roll call vote.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

James A. DeLisle, Clerk
(Prepared by S. Lahtinen)