

Members Present: John F. Fairbanks, Wayne R. Walker, Heather M. Billings

**CALL TO ORDER**

J. Fairbanks 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**

J. Fairbanks announced that the Annual Town Benefit will be held on August 9, 2015.

**APPROVALS**

MINUTES

W. Walker made a motion to approve the minutes of May 18, 2015. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

WARRANTS

W. Walker made a motion to approve the following warrants.

May 28, 2015	Accounts Payable 49A	\$62,741.72
	Accounts Payable 50A	\$49,591.79
	Payroll 50B	\$199,118.88
	Deduction 50C	\$175,515.37
June 4, 2015	Accounts Payable 51A	\$96,537.88
	Accounts Payable 52A	\$116,680.37
	Payroll 52B	\$240,344.30
	Deduction 52C	\$214,807.84
June 11, 2015	Accounts Payable 53A	\$101,131.54

The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

PAYROLL AUTHORIZATIONS – PARKS AND RECREATION

W. Walker made a motion to authorize placing seven Summer Recreation Program employees on the payroll. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

CONTRACT EXTENSION – TOWN ACCOUNTANT

W. Walker made a motion to extend Julie Costello, Town Accountant’s contract for 3 months from 7/1/2015-9/30/2015. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

VETERAN’S SERVICE OFFICER AGREEMENT

W. Walker made a motion to authorize Karen Murphy to enter into an inter-municipal agreement for shared Veteran’s Service Officer with the towns of Ashburnham and Hubbardston. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

AMBULANCE WRITE-OFFS

Chief Nivala requested the Board’s approval to write-off \$80,334.62 in uncollectable ambulance debts. These bills cover a period of 1-7 years and have been deemed uncollectible by the billing authority; additionally the auditor and accountant have also recommended these amounts be written off. Going forward, this should be done a couple times a year as to not carry forward such a large amount of receivables on this account.

W. Walker made a motion to authorize the write-off of uncollectible bills presented by Chief Nivala. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

## **HEARINGS/OTHER SCHEDULED MATTERS**

### HR CONSULTANT – DON JACOBS

Don Jacobs updated the Board on the status of his work with the Classification and Compensation Plan for the Town. D. Jacobs has been working with the Personnel Board, Personnel Administrator and Town Administrator on this plan. He reviewed the method he used and the market data he surveyed for the draft plan up to this point. One of the major changes proposed is to take the current 13 grade payscale down to six grades, in order to more effectively match the organization of employees at in the town.

The Board discussed several aspects of the plan with Mr. Jacobs; they indicated that he should bring his plan before the Advisory Board for input on the financial aspect he will be proposing.

### MART – BUS ROUTE/VAN OPTIONS

Mohammed Khan, Bruno Fisher and George Kahale of MART were all in attendance at this evening's meeting to discuss the options available to Westminster to expand their public transportation service in the town.

Representatives from MART explained that Westminster pays an annual MBTA assessment of approximately \$20,000 because it is a bordering town to the Commuter Rail, and currently receives no additional service with this payment. MART indicated that this money can be used to offset the cost of a bus stop in town or another van for the Council on Aging.

M. Khan explained that with an additional van, the COA would be able to accommodate more ride requests and passengers; with the addition of a bus stop in town, any resident would be able to use the bus service to get to Gardner or Fitchburg at which point they could connect to the other bus lines or the Commuter Rail. He also discussed the costs associated with each option.

Ann Berube, Jane Clabaugh and Gerri Spencer discussed the transportation needs of the disabled population of Westminster. They indicated that they would like to see a timeline for action on this topic as it is important for many of the residents.

J. Fairbanks stated that the Board, the COA and the Town Administrator would work to define the transportation needs of Westminster residents in order to choose an option that would best serve them.

### OLD TOWN HALL REUSE – PLAN OF ACTION

S. Wallace indicated that at the last meeting, the Board of Selectmen instructed him to prepare a list of options for the Old Town Hall. He presented the following six options to the Board for consideration:

- sell for \$1 with a deed restriction requiring the building's preservation
- sell the building for what we can get for it with no preservation deed restriction
- rehabilitate the building for use as senior housing
- tear down the building and use the land for a parking lot
- tear down the building and use the land for a pocket park
- rehabilitate the building for use as office space then sell the building

S. Wallace also indicated that he would like to complete a Public Preference exercise in order to get input from the residents and then based on that exercise, hire a historic preservation consultant to give an accurate cost estimate for the options residents are most interested in pursuing.

Betsy Hannula expressed her disapproval with the proposed plan of action; it was her opinion that the Town should not do additional outreach and instead move forward with the recommendations of the last Town Hall Reuse Committee.

S. Wallace indicated that this process would be different because there would be an actual dollar amount affixed to the options available, so that residents could make a fact based decision on how to proceed.

The Board and meeting attendants discussed the options S. Wallace presented.

W. Walker made a motion to approve the process brought forward by the Town Planner, with the addition of two options; mothball the building for future use and, complete a public preference exercise. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

##### ACCEPT DONATION OF FLAG POLE FOR SENIOR CENTER

W. Walker made a motion to accept the donation from Kevin and Elaine Jones, of a 25 foot flag pole, including a solar powered spotlight for the Community/Senior Center. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

##### USDA GRANT/LOAN FOR SEWER PROJECT – LOAN RESOLUTION/LEGAL SERVICES

W. Walker made a motion to approve the signing of a legal services agreement and loan resolution to lock in a lower interest rate for the funding of a potential sewer project. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

##### DOG HEARING

K. Murphy indicated that Chief Sam Albert and Animal Control have requested that the Board hold a dog hearing, due to several reports of the animal acting aggressively.

W. Walker made a motion to appoint Karen Murphy as the designated Hearing Officer for this situation. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

##### YANKEE STREET FAIR

W. Walker made a motion to allow the First Congregational Church of Westminster the use of grounds at the Old Town Hall for their Annual Yankee Street Fair. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

FY2016 REAPPOINTMENTS

W. Walker made a motion to reappoint the following individuals for the terms indicated below. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

<b>Board/Committee</b>	<b>Appointee</b>		<b>New Term</b>
Animal Control Officer	Kim	Landry	6/30/2016
Agricultural Commission	Ann	Patsis	6/30/2018
Asst. Insp. of Plumb. & Gas Piping	Wayne	Little	6/30/2016
Asst. Animal Control Officer	Robyn	Inniss	6/30/2016
Asst. Animal Control Officer	Cheryl	Slack	6/30/2016
Board of Registrar	Sharon	Halloran	6/30/2018
Building Commissioner - Part Time (Alt)	Richard	Reynolds	6/30/2016
Building Commissioner - Part Time	Michael	Gallant	9/30/2015
Cable Advisory Committee	Bill	Ewing	6/30/2018
Cable Advisory Committee	David	Monty	6/30/2018
Conservation Commission	John	Regan	6/30/2018
Conservation Commission	Gary	Smith, Jr.	6/30/2018
Council on Aging	Don	Barry	6/30/2018
Council on Aging	Shirley	Lombard	6/30/2018
Crocker Pond Rec. Area Comm.	Kathleen	Brennan	6/30/2018
Cultural Council	Karin	Mills	6/30/2018
Emergency Management	Charles	Clarkson	6/30/2016
Emergency Management	Jeffrey	Curtis	6/30/2016
Emergency Management	Gilbert	Parks	6/30/2016
Emergency Management	Robert	Hamm	6/30/2016
Emergency Management	Clay	Swenor	6/30/2016
Emergency Management Radio Operator	Bill	Leger	6/30/2016
Energy Advisory Committee	Douglas	Hurley	6/30/2018
Energy Advisory Committee	Kevin	Keena	6/30/2018
Energy Advisory Committee	Kerry	Koskinen	6/30/2018
Fire Chief, Forest Warden & EM Dir.	Kevin	Nivala	6/30/2016
Insp. of Plumbing & Gas Piping	Tom	Wiinikainen	6/30/2016
Inspector of Wiring	Loring H.	Barrett	6/30/2016
Inspector of Wiring - Alternate	Richard	Cannavino	6/30/2016
K-9	Bruin	-	6/30/2016
Liquor Commission	Michael	Denzer	6/30/2018
Local Inspector	Dan	Martin	6/30/2016
Local Inspector	David	Lantry	6/30/2016
Parks & Recreation	Michael	O'Brien	6/30/2018
Parks & Recreation	Andrew	Sears	6/30/2018

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Part Time Police Officer	Steven	Couture	6/30/2016
Part Time Police Officer	Nathan	Hawkins	6/30/2016
Part Time Police Officer	Andrew	Loescher	6/30/2016
Part Time Police Officer	Joseph	Picariello	6/30/2016
Police Chief & Special Constable	Salvatore	Albert, Jr.	6/30/2016
Police Matron	Nanette	Pierce	6/30/2016
Police Matron	Michelle	Chevarie	6/30/2016
Public Works Commission	Lorraine	Emerson	6/30/2018
Town Counsel	Kopelman &	Paige	6/30/2016
Veterans' Services Agent	Tom	Maeder	6/30/2016
Weigher, Sealers & Meas. of Commodities	Jason	Tamulen	6/30/2016
Zoning Board - Alt. Member	Peter	Romano	6/30/2018
Zoning Board - Member	Matthew A.	Kotoski	6/30/2018

**ONGOING BUSINESS**

REGIONAL ACO AGREEMENT (REVISED)

K. Murphy indicated that this agreement had been revised by the City of Gardner to include indemnification language.

W. Walker made a motion for Karen Murphy to enter the town into a Regional Animal Control Agreement with the City of Gardner and Town of Ashburnham. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

W. Walker moved that the board enter Executive Session at 8:09 p.m. to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining and to discuss the value of real estate. 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**

The Board adjourned directly from Executive Session at 8:45 p.m.



Heather M. Billings  
 Clerk  
 (Prepared by S. Lahtinen)

**June 22, 2015 BoS Meeting Exhibits:**

6/22/15 Meeting Agenda

5/18/15 Meeting Minutes

6/22/15 Town Administrators Report

Warrants:

Payroll Authorizations – Parks and Rec

Town Accountant Contract

VSO Agreement

Ambulance Write Offs

DI Jacobs Handouts

MART Correspondence re: Bus/van options for Westminster

USDA Grant and Loan correspondence

FY2016 Reappointments

Regional Animal Control Agreement – revised

Letter from Celia Burgess re: use of land for Yankee Street Fair

Old Town Hall Reuse Committee Reports and Town Planner Recommendations