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

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Billings called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. in the Selectmen's Office at Town Hall. She announced that the meeting was being recorded by Ashburnham Westminster Community Access TV.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- > Trick or Treat Rescheduled: Trick or Treat has been rescheduled to Saturday, November 1, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. There will be not town bonfire this year. The change was made in the interest of public safety, inconsideration of the continued critical status of the Town for exposure to the EEE virus.
- EEE Alert: The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) announced on October 16th that the EEE risk level in Westminster was raised to "Critical" following detection of the EEE virus in a horse in Town. Mosquitoes will be around until the first hard frost. Although they are much less active when temperatures are below 60 degrees, this recent detection of EEE warrants that residents take precautions when outdoors. Use insect repellant, cover up exposed skin, and avoid outdoor activities at dusk and night time, when mosquitoes are at their most active.

More information can be obtained on the Board of Health website at www.westminster-ma.gov

APPROVED WARRANT

Board members reviewed and approved the following warrant: October 27, 2014 Accounts Payable #19A \$ 950,537.52

BOARD OF HEALTH DRAFT REGULATIONS

Ms. Billings made the following comments: I recognize that there are people in attendance this evening who wish to voice their opinion on the Board of Health Draft Regulations to Prohibit the Sale of Tobacco Products in Westminster. Unfortunately, it was incorrectly assumed and publicized that this matter would be taken up at the Selectmen's meeting this evening. As the chief executive officers of the Town, the Board of Selectmen is taking great interest in this matter. We want to hear your comments and we will ensure that all voices are heard. However, as these regulations legally fall under the purview of the Board of Health, we are urging the public to attend the Board of Health public hearing scheduled for Wednesday, November 12, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. in the Westminster Elementary School Cafeteria. This Board will take a position on this matter, but we do not feel that it would be appropriate to preempt the Board of Health hearing here this evening. Please be assured the proposed regulations, if enacted, will not be enacted without proper public comment and consideration. All parties will have ample opportunity to express their comments and concerns through the proper process. The Board of

Health public comment period extends through Monday, December 1. Your comments may be submitted to the Board of Health, 11 South St., Westminster MA 01473, or by email to Health Agent Wibby Swedberg at eswedberg@westminster-ma.gov

APPROVE NOVEMBER 18 SPECIAL TOWN MEETING WARRANT

Mr. Walker moved that the Board approve the warrant for the Special Town Meeting being held at the Westminster Elementary School on Tuesday, November 18, 2014, at 7:30 p.m. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

DISCUSS SUPERINTENDENT SEARCH CRITERIA

Mr. Fairbanks mentioned that the first meeting of the Superintendent Search Committee is scheduled for Wednesday, November 12th. Unfortunately, he will not be able to attend the Board of Health hearing that same night and he did not want people to interpret this as him being uninterested in the hearing.

Mr. Fairbanks mentioned to the Board that the School Committee has already written the job description for the Superintendent's position prior to the Search Committee meeting. He spoke with Dave Christianson and requested that the School Committee change the prior teaching requirements from 3-5 year preferred (as presently written) to 5 to 10 years of teaching required.

The Board asked if the survey being conducted will modify the criteria already established by the School Committee. Mr. Fairbanks stated he would find out the answer when the Search Committee meets on the 12th.

HOME HEATING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FUNDING

Ms. Billings explained that the language in the Giles Trust specifies that the funds from the trust be appropriated at an annual town meeting. Mrs. Murphy recommended that the Board vote to authorize the expenditure of \$5,000 from the Fred Smith Poor Fund for this heating season and place an article for the use of Giles Fund on the May town meeting warrant for next year.

Mr. Walker moved that the Board authorize the expenditure of \$5,000 from the Fred Smith Poor Fund, subject to the Committee's decision on how to distribute the money. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

He noted that this vote replaces the prior vote on October 6, 2014 authorizing \$1,000 for potential emergencies which cannot be covered by any other sources from the Fred Smith Poor Fund to be handled through the Emergency Home Heating Program.

FIRE CHIEF - PERMISSION TO APPLY FOR GRANT FOR RADIOS

Ms. Billings explained that Chief Nivala is requesting permission to apply for a \$150,000 federal grant to replace the department's portable and mobile radios. The grant requires a 5% match from the town (\$7,500). The application period opens in November.

Chief Nivala explained that he is asking the Board for permission to apply for the federal grant. Due to the life expectancy of the present equipment, we are in a high category of eligibility to receive funds according to the grant application. There is no guarantee that the Town will receive a grant but if approved, Chief Nivala will come back to the Board to discuss funding for the \$7,500 match.

Mr. Walker moved that the Board authorize Chief Nivala to apply for the federal grant (\$150,000). The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

FIRE CHIEF – INTRODUCTION OF NATIONAL GRID'S "COMMUNITY ZONE APPROACH"

Ms. Billings invited Chief Nivala to explain a pilot program he has agreed to participate in with National Grid to help the utility company improve responsiveness during storm emergencies.

Chief Nivala explained that he is a 'Zone Leader' and main contact for other communities for power restoration. He wanted people to understand that when they have a power outage, they should contact National Grid at 1-800-322-3223. Calling the Police or Fire Department does not help you get your power back up. This information will also be on the Town's website.

REVIEW CAPITAL PLANNING POLICIES

The Board reviewed the Capital Improvement Budget Policies, Debt Management Policy, and Reserve Policy.

Mr. Walker moved that the Board approve the policies as presented. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

REMINDER -- NOVEMBER 10TH AGENDA ITEM

The Board mentioned that the proposed tobacco ban will be an agenda item on their upcoming meeting for Monday, November 10th. Interested parties are encouraged to submit their comments in writing to the Board of Selectmen prior to this meeting.

Mr. Walker reminded everyone that the Board of Selectmen will express its comments, but that the Board of Health has sole authority to make the decision.

CODE RED

Chief Nivala encouraged everyone to sign up for 'Code Red' to receive notification of urgent town news. Go to the Town's website www.wwestminster-ma.gov and click on the revolving banner entitled 'Code Red'.

6:30 PM RECESS

The Board recessed until the next agenda item scheduled for 7:15 p.m.

7:15 PM RECONVENED

INVESTMENT POLICY

Treasurer/Collector Melody Gallant stated that most of the changes to the Investment Policy were to reflect changes in Mass General Laws.

Mr. Walker moved that the Board adopt the proposed "Investment Policy Statement" as presented by the Treasurer/Collector. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

SEWER IMPROVEMENT PROJECT – DPW COMMISSION, ADVISORY BOARD, CAPITAL PLANNING COMMITTEE, PLANNING BOARD, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE.

Members of the DPW Commission, Advisory Board, Capital Planning Committee, Planning Board, and Economic Development Committee were on hand to review the updated presentation on the Sewer Improvement Project.

DPW Commissioner Vance Butterfield conducted an overview of the Public Works Commission Sewer Issues and Recommendations proposed project, noting the following changes and updates:

Alternative #4 Funding Assumptions: Town is awarded a 25% USDA grant on the \$2.5M project and issues 3.5% bond over 40 years with fixed principal payments

Costs and Timelines: Annual average cost of \$25.68 (Taxpayer cost), Sewer Users Costs: \$21.91 annually (Total including property tax \$47.59)

In-Line vs. Siphon Project: The inline storage project does require recurring costs associated with the pumping station, i.e. electrical, annual maintenance and pump replacement (say every 10 years).

- Annual Pump Cost Estimates (electricity and maintenance) \$18K
- Pump replacement cost (\$50K every 10-15 years)

Ms. Billings suggested that a sketch of the proposed in-line storage option be included in the presentation. It was noted that it is important to begin negotiations with Fitchburg on the Intermunicipal Agreement. Joe Flanagan stated that his calculations on a cost-benefit analysis showed \$96,000 per year for the in-line storage option and \$75,000 per year for the siphon project.

The entire presentation will be available on the Town's website for viewing. The Commission will prepare a condensed version to be presented at the Special Town Meeting.

8:30 P.M. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Walker moved that the Board adjourn. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Wayne R. Walker Clerk (Prepared by B. Kazan)