



**SELECTBOARD  
TOWN OF WESTHAMPTON  
TOWN HALL  
1 SOUTH ROAD  
WESTHAMPTON, MASSACHUSETTS 01027**

December 14, 2015

The meeting convened at 6:45PM.

Present were Art Pichette and Phil Dowling. Also present were Cheryl Provost, David Blakesley, David White, and Steve Holt.

The Tax Classification hearing opened at 6:45 p.m. Assessors Dolores Thornhill and Walter Morrey were present.

Dolores submitted a written report outlining the status of the values of the three classifications residential, industrial, and commercial; which includes chapter land.

Dolores reported that the assessors recommend not splitting the tax rate. Typically when that's done the residential rate is reduced and the commercial rate is increased. There's no benefit to that since residential is 94% of the tax base. The single rate that would be submitted to the Department of Revenue for approval will be 18.90 (FY15 rate is 18.25).

**Voted 3-0 to keep the tax classification at a single tax rate for FY16.**

The hearing closed at 7:55p.m. The meeting continued, with Jim Huston also present.

Warrants were signed for:     Payroll: \$68,235.55  
  Vendor: \$208,184.04

Accepted minutes from November 30, 2015.

- David Blakesley, Highway Superintendent reported:
  - warm weather has allowed the department to continue cleaning ditches and shoulders
  - repaired King's Highway "skinny bridge" railing, damaged from a hit and run accident a while back
  - returned two loads of scrap metal and received \$317.30 that was turned over to the Treasurer
  - the pump house repair at Hampshire Regional High School is complete
  - may need an article on a Special Town Meeting warrant to transfer \$15,104.10 from FY16 Highway Materials account to the Chapter 90 account. The warrant payment request was mistakenly charged to the wrong account. David is referring to Joe Boudreau, Accountant for appropriate procedure.
  - presented Chapter 90 reimbursement request for the North Road Project, in the amount of \$208,114.82
- Tanker truck: Cheryl reported that counsel sent an opinion of the bid by email. In his view

portions of the specifications could be deemed proprietary. That said, however, the specifications are similar to others he has seen for fire apparatus procurement and reflect the common situation of a vendor providing promotional literature and corresponding specifications to a department or group of fire professionals and the specifications then being used for preparation of subsequent procurement documents. It is his view that a determination of whether to reject the present bid and undertake a re-bid process is within the discretion of the Selectboard. Given the requirements of the Assistance to Firefighters Grant, though, if the Board elects to proceed with the current procurement process he recommend that any notice of award be subject to federal (FEMA) approval of the contract as noted in the Assistance to Firefighters grant information package – submission of vehicle purchase contract to Regional Fire Program Specialist. This submission should also include the bid specifications, in order to address the federal requirement that vendors and manufacturers that prepare specifications be excluded from competing for the related procurement. In addition, the Town should communicate to the bidder the federal contract requirements and confirm the bidder's acceptance of those requirements, including pre-payment bond when federal funds will be used for deposit payment and penalty clause of \$100/day for delayed delivery of compliant vehicle. If a decision to award is made, he can provide us with appropriate contract language to be added to the purchase agreement. Phil would like to also submit a cover letter from Chris Norris stating how the specs were created.

**Voted 3-0 to accept the Tanker Truck bid from Firovac in the amount of \$304,720.00, contingent on federal (FEMA) approval of the contract as noted in the Assistance to Firefighters grant information package-submission of vehicle purchase contract to regional Fire Program Specialist. Submission to include the bid specifications, in order to address the federal requirement that vendors and manufacturers that prepare specifications be excluded from competing for the related procurement. The process used to create bid documents will be described in a cover letter from the Chris Norris.**

- Capital Improvement Planning Committee; Cheryl reported that Kate Maloney is interested in joining the committee and plans to meet with the Selectboard at a future date for appointment.
- Voted 3-0 to approve the Class II License application from Wayne Buzzee for Country Automotive.
- Cheryl reported she sent notices out to departments, boards, and committees to prepare their 2015 annual report. Art confirmed that he will do the Selectboards report.
- Free Cash for FY15 was certified at \$211,839.00.
- Cheryl submitted a draft Selectboard budget as a preliminary review. Some numbers from accounting reports still require input. She suggested the board review it before the next meeting. There are only two meetings before the deadline to submit it to the Finance Committee and adequate time should be spent on it during those meetings. Phil is unavailable on December 28. Voted to meet Monday, December 21 to review the Selectboard budget. Cheryl will have all report numbers in.
- Cheryl drafted an IT policy and procedure. Part of this addresses the back-up issue. It is also designed to address the concerns and recommendations of the IT Committee and Northeast IT. She will continue to work on it and report progress. Recommendations and suggestions are

welcome.

- Dave White, Chief of Police, reported he spent \$26,400.00 of the \$27,000.00 grant to purchase two body cams and upgraded radios. He is developing a policy for the department to regulate the use of the equipment. He will submit a draft when it's completed. The repeater on the mountain in Holyoke isn't working. The department is using back radios for now. The town owns the license for the repeater and Dave encourages it to be repaired at the cost of approximately \$2,400.00. He does not have it in his budget. Art inquired what the repeater does. David explained that it works as a booster to enhance radio signal strength. He believes that it's well worth the cost. Cheryl suggested seeking Finance Committee approval of a Reserve Fund transfer, they're meeting in January. She also suggested that the Selectboard send the Committee a letter of support. She will provide Dave with information how to proceed with the request.
- Steve Holt visited to apply for his wholesale retail license. Cheryl will prepare one for the next meeting.
- Ginny Curtis, Gary Wood, and Patricia Wood visited to hear the Board of Health correspondence. Copies of the Board of Health minutes from September 1, 2015 and October 1, 2015 were supplied. Cheryl reported that the Selectboard requested the Board of Health to confirm the operational season of the campground, from an inquiry. No complaints were filed. The season is six months, from May 1 to October 31. Ms. Curtis reported that the abutters have a list of complaints regarding the campground. Mr. Wood's reported that people are staying there. He spoke of past issues with the campground. Ms. Curtis also complained of past activities. Art stated that the Board addressed their concerns in the past and would again. The Board needs to know what the issues are so they can be addressed to the proper authority. Different complaints require action from different boards or officials. Phil requested they put their complaints in writing so they can be designated to the proper authority. Discussion ensued regarding the siren and horn issue earlier in the year. Ms. Curtis claimed the horn is still in use and believes that they (John and Sally) were not prohibited from using the horn. Art replied that the siren and horn issue were addressed and if they're not compliant it will be addressed again. Phil closed the discussion by requesting all their complaints be submitted in writing to the Selectboard for proper disbursement.
- Ms. Curtis spoke on behalf of the TRIAD, noting the emergency Planning Meeting on Thursday, Dec. 17 at the Safety Complex. She inquired if there is still a plan for warming shelters during extended periods of outages. Art replied that's what the meeting is for, adding that yes, there are warming shelters. Discussed how to communicate this to the seniors and disabled. Also spoke of the dangers of CO2 from generators.
- Reviewed the following correspondence:
  - Chris Norris scheduled an Emergency Management meeting for Thursday, December 17 at 7p.m. Art will try to attend, Phil may attend. Cheryl will attend.
  - Animal Control Officer sent an email reporting of a coyote lingering in the area of the elementary school. The Northampton Animal Control Officer is attempting to trap it so she can send it to rehab. No updates at this time.
  - Bryan Balicki sent a letter of intent to remove a portion of Lyman Road property from Chapter 61 tax Classification. The letter did not request action by the Selectboard, however they have the

right to exercise first right of refusal.

- Administrative Assistant, Cheryl Provost reported:
  - submitted work schedule for December 15-December 27 and work report for December 1-December 14. She requested to hold public hours Monday, December 21 and close Thursday, December 24. The Collector and Library will not be open on the 24. The Board agreed to the schedule change.
  - website; the committee is meeting on Tuesday to delegate members to meet Wednesday at 2p.m. for a webinar type session. The session will be to learn the process of the development of pages.
- Patty Cotton, Town Clerk, visited to discuss the Annual Town Meeting and Election dates. She has concerns of not having set dates due to the difficulty of finding poll workers. She conducted a study of area town meeting and election dates and many have them on the same day. Some have the election before the meeting. She believes the current schedule does not require a change. Phil would like it to be more than thirty-five days apart to enable Town Meeting to recommend an over-ride or debt exclusion question on the election ballot. Patty stated that town meeting does not authorize debt exclusions. Phil acknowledged that. Patty and Cheryl agreed that a Special Town Election can be called. To place a question on the Annual Election in such a short time is demanding. Furthermore, override votes from Annual Town Meeting have until September 15 for approval (per state). Discussed budgeting procedures and planning ahead for questions, where there may be shortfalls. Patty reported she spoke to Joe Boudreau, Accountant, about dates and procedures. She believes he can explain some of the requirements better. The board agreed to meet with Joe and asked Patty if she could join them. Patty agreed.
- The Selectboard voted by roll call, 2-0 to enter into Executive Session at 8:35PM as the Chair declared that discussion in a public meeting may have detrimental effect on the towns' litigating position. The public meeting will reconvene at the end of the Executive Session.
- Closed the Executive Session and resumed Public Session at 8:47PM.
- Signed the Chapter 90 reimbursement request for the North Road Project, in the amount of \$208,114.82
- Signed the Class II License application from Wayne Buzzee for Country Automotive.

Adjourned meeting at 8:50 p.m.

Approve: \_\_\_\_\_

Arthur Pichette, Chairman

\_\_\_\_\_  
James Huston, Clerk

\_\_\_\_\_  
Philip Dowling