

**Board of Selectmen
Minutes
August 26, 2008
Center School Offices
7:00 p.m.**

Select Board Chair Alan Sanderson, Jr. called the regular meeting of the Board of Selectmen of the Town of Whately to order on Tuesday, August 26, 2008 at 7:00 p.m. Also present were Selectmen Paul Newlin and Jonathan Edwards, Town Administrator/Town Clerk Lynn Sibley, and Municipal Secretary Barbara Hancock. Vendor and payroll warrants were reviewed and signed. Minutes from the August 12th meeting were accepted as written.

Town Administrator, Lynn Sibley: Emergency Spending – According to DOR, emergency spending must not exceed the tax levy. Lynn will ask DOR for permission to have bills associated with the July 19th storm paid out of an emergency spending account so that it is clear which bills are storm related. Then the emergency spending account can be addressed at the end of the year. **Police Station Update** – There were a couple of setbacks in the last week. An underground water line broke. The entire line was replaced with smaller piping that was installed inside of the old line. And the hot water heater was not working and will be replaced with a smaller size energy-efficient unit. The parking area was completed. Chief Sevigne is working with utility companies to transfer services. **Ag Commission** – The Ag Commission submitted a written response to the Selectmen in regard to the ongoing rooster problem between neighbors on Chestnut Plain Rd. The Ag Commission determined that the rooster owner does not qualify for protection under the Right to Farm bylaw because he is not operating a commercial endeavor. Lynn forwarded a copy of the Ag Commission's letter to Mr. Delaney, the rooster owner. **Comcast** – The Selectmen reviewed a letter Senator Stan Rosenberg wrote to Comcast in response to concerns from his constituents regarding basic service channels being moved to upgraded channel packages therefore increasing fees. **Mass Municipal Selectmen's Association** meeting will be held at the Whately Inn on Sept. 17th. All three Selectmen plan to attend. **Performance Contracting Update** – Lynn attended a meeting along with Beth Greenblat the hired consultant, Roland from Seimen's, and a leasing representative who was available for financing. Contracts for preliminary audits should be available soon or the Town could opt to skip the preliminary audit step. Several of the participating towns have the same legal counsel, Kopelman & Paige. The contract will be sent to Kopelman & Paige for review and the cost split between the towns. DOER has postponed action on any energy audits that are being considered in the group performance contract application. According to Scott Durkee the DOER grant could be used to supplement any areas that are not covered with the performance contracting grant. **Emergency Management: Letter to Radio Stations** – Lynn sent a letter to local radio stations and to MEMA regarding the problem she had contacting station representatives with emergency news reports during the recent storm. There has been no response so far. The Board may consider contacting the FCC if the problem is not rectified. **Door-to-Door Exercise** – Emergency Management personnel along with the Board of Health have been working together to organize a town-wide distribution exercise. The group hopes to divide the town into neighborhoods of equal size so emergency volunteers can deliver medication. A grant through the Mohawk Area Public Health Coalition will fund the purchase of supplies that emergency volunteers will use. The purpose of the exercise is to simulate an emergency that would require medication to be administered throughout the town. The next meeting is Sept. 11. **Thank you Letters** are still being drafted for those who helped following the July 19th storm. **Connect CTY** – Lynn will be meeting with a representative from Connect CTY, an automated contacting system. Lynn hopes to find a system that will enable emergency management to contact residents with emergency information. The system collects contact information from residents on a voluntary basis and may be able to record cell phone numbers and possibly email alerts. Lynn will report more details after her meeting. **CPA** – The Board discussed possible dates in mid-October to hold a town forum about the CPA, which will appear on the November ballot. The Selectmen want the forum be broadcast for residents to watch. The forum held

a couple of years ago could also be rebroadcast according to Joyce Fortune. The ballot committee is working on getting information out to residents. An article should appear in the next edition of the Scoop.

Town Clerk, Lynn Sibley: Dog Licenses – There are six owners who have still not licensed their eight dogs. Complaints will be filed in court. **Register to Vote** – The last day to register to vote in the September 16th state primary is tomorrow. Registration of voters hours will be held tomorrow from 2-4 and 7-8pm. October 15th will be the last day to register for the November general election.

FCAT: Director, Marty McGuane and Wayne Shaw, Chair appeared before the Board. FCAT is moving into a studio of their own in South Deerfield. By doing so, Comcast is requiring FCAT to have a contract signed from the participating towns that gives FCAT the right to broadcast onto the towns' channel 12s and charging a set-up fee of \$2800. FCAT has spent \$6000 out of their account (not capital from towns) to set up the new studio. The studio has two editing stations with professional programming and 4 Mac computers donated from Smith College. FCAT hopes that students and residents will make use of the studio. Training classes are planned. FCAT is planning two fundraisers, the first will be an auction held in November. They also hope to solicit membership and have paid programming. The Selectmen reviewed the final version of the FCAT contract, which deleted the phrase "future channels", and signed. The Board also voted to release Whately's share of the \$2800 (\$330) from Whately's peg access account. FCAT has a website in the works and will publish a programming schedule. Residents can email them at FCAT12@yahoo.com to submit items for broadcast.

Highway Department: Haydenville Rd Project - Lynn updated the Board. She plans to contact FrCOG to discuss how to handle the necessary easements involved in the Haydenville Rd bridge repair project. Haydenville Rd is a county road and Lynn thought it would be best to have FrCOG's executive board handle the easements. In the past FrCOG's engineering program was available, but that department no longer exists. Lynn will update the Board when she receives any information. **Hazardous Mitigation Grant** – Whately did not receive this grant. **Long Plain Rd Culvert Repairs** – No updated information.

Go Slow Children at Play Signs – Jonathan led the discussion regarding the need to slow traffic down in densely populated areas where children live. He asked that 'Children at Play' signs be installed at both ends of Swamp Rd and North St near Swamp Rd. Lynn will speak to the Highway Superintendent. The Selectmen also suggested that the Police Chief increase speeding patrols in these areas. And to further deter speeding by parking out-of-service cruisers on these roads and using the speed-reading machine.

Common Good Bank Project – Selectmen received information regarding this project and will review but felt the town was not the appropriate avenue to present such a project.

Ambulance Abatement – Lynn reviewed with the Selectmen, insurance write-offs for FY07 ambulance bills. The outstanding balances totaled more than \$18,000. The Selectmen reviewed, voted, and signed the abatements.

Northampton Fire Department – The new ambulance contract with the Northampton Fire Department includes a rate increase of \$50 per transport (from \$225 to \$275) and will also bill for all insurance carriers not just Medicare. It is expected that each ambulance company will have a rate increase as part of their new contract. For now, Whately will list AmBCare as their first choice to call for intercept. AmBCare currently charges \$225 per transport for all insurance carriers. Lynn will call Northampton's Deputy Fire Chief Norris to propose an agreement for those insurance bills that pay a total of \$275 or less, where Whately would receive at least some of the insurance payment. Lynn will update the Board after she talks with Deputy Norris.

There being no further business to come before this meeting, it was adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul K. Newlin, Clerk