

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

Select Board Chair Paul Newlin called the regular meeting of the Board of Selectmen of the Town of Whately to order on Monday April 7, 2008 at 7:00 p.m. Also present were Selectmen Alan Sanderson, Jr. and Jonathan Edwards, Town Administrator/Town Clerk Lynn Sibley, and Municipal Secretary Barbara Hancock. Minutes from the March 25th meeting were accepted as written.

Town Administrator, Lynn Sibley: Police Station- Greenberg and Associates created a set of new bid documents based on recommended changes. Lynn, Alan Sanderson Jr, and Jim Sevigne have reviewed the new bids and are satisfied with the changes and clarifications. It was hoped that the new bids could be opened before Annual Town Meeting on April 29th. But due to scheduling requirements at the Central Register, the earliest bid opening date would be April 30th. Annual Town Meeting can be continued until after the bids are opened and reconvene to consider Article 20, which would allow for additional funds to be voted toward the police station renovation project if necessary. The Finance Committee is reluctant to support the article on Town Meeting floor without a dollar amount defined. Their support is expected for a figure of less than \$10,000. **Energy Performance Contracting-** Bill Gran from FrCOG is handling the regional contract which includes 12 towns and 2 school districts. Three energy service companies (ESCOs) have responded. FrCOG has hired a consultant, Beacon Integrated Services, to analyze the agreements. The Board was concerned that Frontier Regional chose not to participate in this project. The Selectmen will send a letter to Regina Nash, Superintendent of Schools, encouraging Frontier's participation. The program wouldn't cost Frontier anything because the costs for the energy updates will come out of their energy savings. **Thanks to Snowmobile Club-** The Selectmen reviewed and signed a letter of thanks to the Greater Whately Snowmobile Club for their donation to the police station renovation project. **Lottery Revenue vs Aid-** At a recent conference, the question as to why towns' lottery aid has been level funded when the Lottery Commission is boosting record high revenues, was clarified somewhat. Apparently the Governor increased projected lottery revenues from 6% to 15% in order to balance the budget. So, while the Lottery has enjoyed increased revenue it has not met the 15% rate projected. It is suspected that the increases in revenue over last year are probably covering other shortfalls in budget projections. **Chapter 70 & Circuit Breaker-** The Selectmen reviewed and signed a letter to Stan Rosenberg thanking him for his efforts which have benefited Whately but went on to address the need for adjustments to the Chapter 70 formula and changes in the Circuit Breaker for transportation costs. Changes such as, cutting the reimbursement time for circuit breaker aid to less than a year would enable Whately to cover costs within the same fiscal year. **Assistance to Firefighters Grant-** Fire Chief, John Hannum has applied for the grant to replace the 1975 pumper truck. If awarded the grant would cost the Town \$18,750 in matching funds. The grant is a very competitive federal grant that could take more than a year to be awarded. The Selectmen would support the matching funds if Whately were awarded the grant. **Fire Dept. Pagers Grant-** The department was awarded a grant for pagers under a joint application through FrCOG. Whately applied for the cost of 32 pagers. The bidding will be done

as a group. **Town Reports** will be delivered the weekend of April 19-20 by Whately Elementary 5th Grade students and volunteers. Anyone that does not receive a copy should contact the Selectmen's office and one will be delivered.

State Road (5 & 10) Culvert

Residents, Patty Devine and Fred Warren, appeared before the Board to discuss the problems they are having with the pond/ditches/culvert in their neighborhood. Patty Devine explained that she has been pumping water from her basement for the past six weeks. She is concerned about the affect of the constant pressure on her foundation. The residents hoped to be updated by the Selectmen and revitalize the project with Mass Highway. Patty Devine explained that the culvert's inlet and outlet were covered four years ago when the road was widened and paved, creating the backup of water. The Selectmen have been working to get Mass Highway to fix the problem for the past two years or more. The Board suggested all the residents involved should meet to discuss the issue and agree on the best solution – Should the ditches be cleaned/lowered to meet the culvert, Should the culvert be lowered, Will that drain the pond, Will residents on the west side have new water problems, Will trees need to be cut, Will wetlands protection filings need to be applied for, etc. At that point, the Selectmen would facilitate a meeting between Mass Highway and the residents to agree on the best course of action. The residents thanked the Board for the information and guidance.

Highway Department: Chapter 90- Lynn attended Stan Rosenberg's conference where Chapter 90 funds were discussed. \$150 million has been appropriated for Chapter 90, half of what it used to be years ago. Whately will receive the same amount as last year, \$114,694. The money will likely be used to finish Long Plain Rd and work on Haydenville Rd. Additional Chapter 90 money helps towns offset TIF and allows adequate maintenance saving money by extending the life of roads, for example. **STRAP grants** were discussed at the conference. These grants provide money upfront for projects and the town pays back only 30% off the cherry sheet over an extended period of time. Keith would like to apply for STRAP grant funds for Egypt Rd. Towns that had received STRAP grants in the past used to have to wait 5 – 8 years before applying for a new grant. That has been changed to three years. The last STRAP grant awarded to Whately was \$500,000 used on Masterson Rd.

New Business

Representative for Frontier Instructional Assistants Association negotiations- Jonathan will be the Selectmen's representative for Whately, Sunderland, Conway, and Deerfield.

Insurance Quotes- In an effort to compare MIAA and Massamont, Lynn requested a quote from both companies for \$100,000 medical coverage under the police and fire policy. Massamont does not offer coverage less than \$250,000 for medical. MIAA has not yet provided a quote for the \$100,000 amount. Lynn plans to accept MIAA's coverage on all policies except police and fire for now. A decision between the two companies for police and fire will be determined when the rates are available for comparison. The Board agreed.

Senior Center Resignations- Director, Shirley Pielock and her assistant, Frances Symanski will retire as of June 30 after many dedicated years.

ISO- Received a letter from ISO regarding hose and pump tests that are still not being done by the fire department. Lynn has spoken to Chief Hannum many times regarding the need for these tests, as they affect our rating and therefore coverage costs. Alan Sanderson Jr. agreed to talk with Chief Hannum. The water department also needs to conduct hydrant checks.

Warrant- Lynn reviewed a draft of the warrant for the April 29th Annual Town Meeting with the Board. The Selectmen will sign the final version Friday, April 18th at 4 pm. Articles on the warrant include: a new revolving fund to buy trees with cord wood revenues, 2½% increase in fixed salaries, re-word dump truck lease to read purchase, CPA, two articles presented by Franklin County Technical School to create a stabilization fund, bicycle regulations, quarterly real estate tax billing effective July 2009, additional funding for the police station project (if necessary), an article that would allow the Town to enter into a lease term greater than the three years currently allowed (attractive copier lease rates are available for leases of more than three years), and the election warrant.

Selectmen's April 29th Meeting will be held at Whately Elementary School at 6:30pm, instead of 7pm at the Center School Offices.

Executive Session – The Selectmen voted by role call vote to enter into executive session at 8:50 to discuss pending litigation and would not return to open session. The role call vote to enter into executive session was as follows: Paul Newlin – yes, Alan Sanderson, Jr. – yes and Jonathan Edwards – yes.

Respectfully submitted,

Jonathan Edwards, Clerk