

**Board of Selectmen
Minutes
January 27, 2009
Town Hall
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, January 27, 2009 at 7:00 p.m. Also present were Selectman Jonathan Edwards, Town Administrator/Town Clerk Lynn Sibley, and Municipal Secretary Barbara Hancock. Selectman Paul Newlin was absent. Minutes from the January 13th meeting were accepted as written. Payroll and vendor warrants were reviewed and signed.

Community Development Block Grant Public Hearing – The hearing opened at 7pm. Residents Marianne Simon and Joyce Palmer-Fortune were in attendance. Deb Little and Charity Day from the Franklin County Regional Housing and Redevelopment Authority appeared before the Board to discuss the proposed activity to be included in the Town of Warwick four-town FY09 CDBG application and to solicit public response. The \$770,000 grant will fund home improvements, including but not limited to: repairs, weatherization, wells, septic, and historical preservation for income eligible owner occupied single or multi-family homes. Whately will have 3 units available under the new grant, which is funded by federal money through the state, and is expected to be awarded this June. Charity Day explained the process for homeowners beginning with an initial eligibility assessment, an application, field inspectors visit to inspect the home first for code violations and then evaluate the project for bid (\$30,000 max). Homeowners can choose their contractor. Deb Little explained that Whately currently has funds available under the current grant and also needs to build a waiting list for this future grant. The Franklin County Regional Housing and Redevelopment Authority does work with homeowners in coordination with Community Action, MassSave and other community programs to put homeowners in touch with the program that suits their needs. The Selectmen thanked Deb and Charity for their presentation. The Board thought a testimonial from a Whately resident that had received these funds may help to get the word out. The women agreed to check into that.

FCAT, Director Martin McGuane appeared before the Board to request funding for their upcoming calendar year budget. Whately was asked to pay \$5582.50 from its Community Access funds based on the Town's percentage of Comcast subscribers within FCAT. An additional expense request of \$751.33 to cover a percentage of the \$6,850 cost to move the Frontier feed line to the new station on Elm St. in South Deerfield. The Selectmen voted unanimously to approve the expenses as presented: \$5582.50 operating budget for the 2009 calendar year and the one-time \$751.33 expense. The Selectmen also requested a method be developed to display upcoming programming on the access channels, preferably through Comcast's menu guide.

Town Administrator, Lynn Sibley: Regionalization – A proactive committee of school committee members and government officials is forming to investigate the feasibility of regionalizing Union #38 for grades K-12. A Select Board member has been asked to participate. Jonathan agreed to be Whately's Select Board representative. **Land Preservation** – Received a letter from the Whately Land Preservation group advocating the establishment of an open space committee that would prioritize and advocate for open space in Town according to the goals in the Open Space and Recreation Plan. Appointment letters are set to go out to those original members that have agreed to serve: Tom Litwin, Mary Shanley-Koerber, Cris Coffin, and Jonathan Edwards. Bill Obear is unable to serve. Jonathan suggested contacting Terry Reynolds to see if he could serve. Lynn will also check on the number of committee members allowed. **Recycling** – Received a letter from the Springfield Materials Recycling Facility Advisory Board regarding the importance of recycling in spite of the decline paid per ton, down from \$50 per ton to \$15.67 (guaranteed flat rate). Springfield's letter reiterated FCSWMD's message regarding the

importance of recycling despite reduced revenues. Recycling is still environmentally important and reduces solid waste disposal costs for the Town. **Stantec's Contract** for engineering services associated with the Planning Board's review of Pine Plain Estates has been referred to Town Counsel for review. The Selectmen voted unanimously to authorize Chairman Alan Sanderson, Jr. to sign the contract once Town Counsel is satisfied with its content.

Town Clerk, Lynn Sibley: Town Elections' Date – The Attorney General approved the Town's vote to change Town Elections to the second Tuesday in June. The 2009 Whately Election Calendar is available. Nomination papers will be available Feb. 17th.

Highway Department, Keith Bardwell, Superintendent: Haydenville Rd Bridge – Town Counsel is working with FrCOG on the order of takings. Bid advertising for the work has been postponed from February to April. **Long Plain Rd** – Hoping to work the NOI concerns out so that work can be completed in the spring. Keith spoke with Jim Toth recently about the suggestion Scott Jackson had made to replicate wetlands elsewhere. Keith is also hoping that the state will consider the positive effect that the improvements will make in that area by reducing the current erosion from seeping into the wetlands. **Conway Rd** – Letters have gone out to the residents of Conway Rd to see if they would approve of improvements to their road, including paving, as the Town considers applying for a STRAP grant to do the work. No responses yet. **Trench Reg** – Depart. of Public Safety responded to Lynn's questions/concerns. The DPS recommends the Town respond to a report of a violation of the regulation in the same manner the Town responds to a fire or police call. Shelburne Control plans to review their possible role at their next dispatch oversight committee meeting. A fee schedule and permitting authority must be in place by March 1st. The Selectmen agreed that more than one person should be assigned to respond to calls and be reimbursed for responding (discussed \$25), perhaps through a revolving fees account. The Board discussed how the new trench regulation and permit would be considered in light of the Town's current trench permits (required when utilities need to cross a Town road). Discussed combining the two. The current Town trench permit fee is \$75. Discussed charging the same fee for both types of trench permits. **Vehicle Inspections** – Keith explained that beginning Oct 1, 2008 the RMV requires all vehicles, including those over 10,000 GVW, be DOT safety inspected in addition to the regular inspections. The regular inspections cost \$29 each. The new safety inspection will cost much more in inspection fees, necessary repairs to pass inspection, and the manpower hours it will take to get each vehicle to the inspection site. Keith did investigate a mobile inspection program that would come to highway garage and do all the necessary inspections. Keith will call other towns that have used the Mass Mobile Inspection Program for recommendations. May consider including the Fire Department's vehicles. Keith explained that the grader will not pass inspection and because of its age, will be expensive and difficult to find parts. Hatfield has discussed sharing equipment through a joint purchase or a sharing/rental agreement. Will further investigate the possibility of an agreement, possibly a general equipment agreement to include other equipment (wood chipper, street sweeper, etc). Discussed selling the Town's grader. The backhoe also needs some repairs including a parking brake. **Winter Roads Account** – Keith has enough sand to respond to 2-3 more storms and enough salt for 3-4 more storms. His account will run short if he has to buy more materials.

New Business

Frontier Senior Center – The atmosphere at the Senior Center has become very tumultuous. There appears to be disagreements between the different towns' council on aging members, the consortium, and the executive board. It was discovered that there is no agreement between the towns participating at the Center. Lynn distributed a draft copy of a proposed agreement based loosely on Buckland/Shelburne Senior Center. The Selectmen will review the contract and suggested paring down the consortium members to three from each town (total of 9) rather than the current 21 membership. Lynn felt the contract needed some financial clarifications with regard to building and ground improvements.

Local Aid Cuts – The Governor announced budget cuts at the MMA Conference last week. Chapter 70 will be level funded for next year with no new cuts to this fiscal year. Local aid will be cut by 10% for this current fiscal year (amounting to \$25,000 cut for Whately) and additional cuts next fiscal year. While Chapter 70 was not cut, the schools may lose grant programs.

Agricultural Preservation Restrictions – The Selectmen announced two APRs : 8.4 acres on River Rd (Map 21, Lot 39-132) and 82 acres on Long Plain Rd (Map 6; Lots 12-1 & 23, 13-1, 15, 15-2, 23).

There being no further business to come before this meeting, it was adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jonathan Edwards, Acting Clerk