



**COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
TOWN OF NEW MARLBOROUGH
OFFICE OF THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN
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**Tara B White, Chair
Nathaniel H. Yohalem
Michele Shalaby
Board of Selectmen**

**Minutes of Selectmen's Meeting
July 12, 2014**

Board Members Present: Tara B. White, Chairman
Michele Shalaby
Nat Yohalem

Others Present: Sharon Fleck, Administrative Secretary

The meeting of the Board of Selectmen convened at 10:03 a.m.

The Board read the minutes. **After a discussion, a motion was made and seconded and so voted by all members to approve the minutes of the May 13 and May 19, 2014 Selectmen's meetings. The minutes of the June 30, 2014 meeting are being held.**

Chairman Tara White expressed her gratitude and thanks for the Highway Department, Fire Department and Emergency Management Department for their exemplary and dedicated service performed during the past weeks' storms as well as during the State of Emergency the Town of New Marlborough experienced over the July 4 weekend. In addition, Chairman White expressed her gratitude to Ronnie Leonard, Scott McKenzie and Joe Wilkerson who also assisted the Town during this time in keeping its residents safe.

Prudence Spaulding discussed the fact that she is working on forming a committee which will identify people who may be in the need of help and assistance during an emergency.

Transfer Station – New Marlborough is the only town that accepts construction and demolition materials. New Marlborough receives no money for this service. A policy was put in place allowing residents to bring in one load (that load not to exceed a 250 truckload) per household, per week at a cost of \$100.00 per load. The decision was made to monitor this policy for its efficacy and decide, in the future, whether or not this policy needs to be modified.

School Policy – Selectmen Nat Yohalem attended the Tuesday, July 8 meeting in Monterey. Per Selectman Yohalem, a discussion took place regarding renovating the old school building and making it a multi-purpose building, at a cost ranging from \$500,000 to \$1,000,000. Per Dave Hastings, he projected the in-district school population in Monterey would, in the foreseeable future, vary between 4-7 children. However, a \$125,000.00 savings could be realized if the school were to close vs. \$161,000.00 to keep it open. Savings, however, could not be realized

through bussing, nor would the salary of the Principal and Assistant Principal, as they would remain, so the real savings is approximately \$140,000.00. There is a strong feeling among the Monterey Selectmen and the one school representative that the school should stay open. Both Chairman Tara White and Selectman Nat Yohalem attended a meeting at the Mt. Everett High School on Thursday, July 10, 2014. Although all agreed that giving the children the best education possible is the objective, the issue is financial and how the children can get the best education for the monies available, while the enrollment continues to decline. Per Chairman White, according to the School Board there are 891 district children attending school, to which was added the "Choice Out" children, which amounted to 151 children, leaving 740 who could be going to all schools. Chairman White then backed out the "private" schooled children, which was 120, leaving 620 children, who would be going to all schools. David Hastings disagreed with that number and stated the actual number was 770 children from the district. The balance of the children are coming from Mount Washington (number of children is not known), and "choice" children (number of children not known), and some are teacher's children that come in from the outside who attend free of charge. The real number of children to educate is 620, which is a substantial decrease from years ago. There would not be a problem for New Marlborough Central School to absorb the Monterey children. There are three issues that must be addressed: (1) it's important to provide the best education possible, (2) the costs for educating the children continue to rise. If Monterey and Egremont want to keep their schools open, the capital projects, roof and boilers at a cost of approximately \$1.5 million, must be addressed, (3) maintenance costs on the other buildings are unknown. Chairman White also expressed her opinion that if the playing field were levelled and each district had to pay 20%, the towns would definitely reconsider their priorities. Selectmen Yohalem then discussed the savings that would be realized from closing Monterey would (a) pay the entire cost (\$150,000.00) of the air conditioning that's going into the second floor of the high school, and (b) over the next ten years, the savings would pay for the roof and the three boilers, thereby eliminating the need for a bond.

Fence at Peg Phillips Property - It was previously discussed at a Selectmen's Meeting that the Highway Superintendent would make the decision regarding the distance that fence had to be erected off the road. In a memo received from the Highway Superintendent, he recommended that the fence must be 10 feet off the road. His reasons for this were two fold: (1) in the event the Town receives a grant from the State to repave this road, the State will want to widen it by 2 feet, and (2) plowing in the winter is a concern if the fence is too close to the road. The Board therefore agreed with the Highway Superintendent, and Tom Farley will be notified of this decision. Prudence Spaulding questioned the legality of stating the fence must be 10 feet off the road.

Bid Opening for Mill River Great Barrington Road (Pothole money) – The bid opening took place on Monday, July 7, 2014 at 2 p.m. Bids were received from L. B. Construction for \$56,638.50 and Tri-Town Paving for \$48,755.00. The Highway Superintendent recommended that Tri-Town Paving be awarded this project: **A motion was made and seconded and so voted by all members to approve the Highway Superintendent's recommendation that Tri-Town paving be awarded this project.**

Land Court – Chairman Tara White advised that the property located at 129 Lake Road (Spiess property) has come out of Land Court and the Town now owns the property as of July 2, 2014. A decision has been made to auction off the property, time and date to be determined.

Beer and Wine License – The Fire Company has asked for a one day beer and wine license for Burritt day on August 16, 2014. **A motion was made and seconded and so voted by all members to grant a license to the Fire Department for one day, August 16, 2014.**

School Committee – Per Chairman White, although a formal resignation has not been received, Kenzie Fields is not going to run for School Committee. According to the Town Clerk, one other person was referred, and although the Town Clerk has the paperwork for that person, it has not been picked up. Thirty three signatures are required, verified by the Town, and then forwarded to Linda Higgins at SBRSD by July 22, 2014.

Monday, July 14, 2014 Selectmen's Meeting – Sheila LaBarbera will be available at 5:00 p.m. to answer any questions regarding the Berkshire County Retirement Program. At 6:00 p.m. the Town is hosting Senator Ben Downing and Representative Smitty Pignatelli. They are attending this meeting at the Board of Selectmen's request. Seven surrounding towns have been invited. Alford, Mt. Washington, Egremont and Sheffield have responded favorably.

Police Chief – An email was received from Scott Farrell indicating he will be resigning as Police Chief. No date has been given for his resignation.

Town Hall Renovations - Must be reviewed and scaled back due to the high cost. Mike Skorput to review.

Highway Superintendent and Fire Chief Contracts – Mike Skorput advised he is working on these contracts.

Wired West – A form letter was received from Wired West requesting we send a letter to the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative requesting their assistance in moving forward with Wired West. A form letter will be prepared for the Board of Selectmen's signature requesting their assistance in moving this project forward.

Being that there was no further business to be brought before the Board, a motion was made, seconded and so voted by all members to adjourn the meeting at 10:59 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Fleck
Administrative Secretary