



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

**Minutes of March 3, 2014**

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

**Others Present:** Michael Skorput, Administrative Assistant  
Jessica Bosworth, Administrative Secretary

**The meeting of the Board of Selectmen convened at 6:00 pm.**

The Board read the minutes of February 24, 2014. **After a discussion a motion was made, seconded and so voted by all members to approve the minutes of February 24, 2014 as amended.**

**Announcements**

Chairman Yohalem announced the resignation of Jessica Bosworth as Administrative Secretary. Ms. Bosworth received thanks and wishes for success from the Board.

Chairman Yohalem spoke with Treasurer, Patricia Mielke, about the anticipated cost of two new Highway vehicles, totaling around \$300,000 and asked for rates on a 10-year loan. Michael Skorput read the rates provided by the Treasurer which range from 1.95% to 3.25% on a 5-year loan.

The Chairman gave a brief summary of the School Committee meeting that was held on Thursday night, February 27. The total school budget was cut by approximately \$160,000 resulting in an increase to New Marlborough of \$103,000; \$40,000 of that amount is due to the Town's increased percentage of the budget, which is determined by the State. The meeting to finalize the school budget is scheduled for Tuesday, March 11, 2014.

It was noted that if the Monterey and Egremont schools were closed, it would save the school system close to \$250,000 with the Town's portion amounting to over \$50,000.

## **Budgets**

No new budgets were available due to the Finance Committee being unable to meet last Thursday night. The next meeting is scheduled for this Thursday, March 6. All budgets must be submitted by March 17, 2014.

## **Announcements**

Selectman White reported on the phone meeting with Marianne Sullivan and Betty Quinn of Sullivan & Sullivan and Treasurer, Patricia Mielke that took place earlier in the day. Ads are in the process of going out in the Berkshire Eagle, Shopper's Guide and Berkshire Record, and one has already been published in the 5 Village News. Bid packages are available at the Town Hall, and on the Town's and Auctioneer's websites. Postcards for all Town residents have been asked to be sent out as well. Michael Skorput suggested that the March 29, 2014 auction be publicly posted as an official meeting.

Chairman Yohalem read aloud a memo from the Conservation Commission requesting that the Board formally vote on remote participation, per the open meeting law. The vote would be for all boards and committees as long as the chair and a quorum are both present.

**A motion was made, seconded and so voted by all members to approve remote participation for all boards and committees, providing that the chair and a quorum are both present.**

It was announced that the Winter Roads account is going over budget. A letter making that statement must be sent to the Town Clerk and Finance Committee.

**A motion was made, seconded and so voted by all members to declare a Snow Emergency for the purpose of using funds for snow removal for the balance of the season.**

**A motion was made, seconded and so voted by all members to adjourn the regular session and reconvene the Special Permit hearing for David Ralph at 6:36 pm. A roll call vote was called for Nathaniel Yohalem – yes, Tara White – yes, Michele Shalaby – yes.**

## **Special Permit Hearing – David Ralph**

The Board opened the session with two concerns regarding the Ralphs property on Old Hitchcock Road, the first being that there is no water source on the premises that has been approved by the Health Department. To that, the Ralphs provided approved water test results from an independent source. The Board recommended that the results be sent to and approved by the Town's Board of Health. The second issue was concerning access to the property by emergency vehicles. Attorney Lynch, on behalf of the Ralphs, explained that Old Hitchcock Road is clearly documented on the Town's zoning maps and is relied upon by more than one homeowner as the primary means of access. Mr. Lynch also referred to the Protective By-Laws of New Marlborough, section 4.2, remarking that changes in the Town's Zoning Ordinance cannot affect single-family dwellings that were in existence before the Zoning Ordinance came into effect. Mr. Ralph addressed the Board, explaining that he has no issue with fixing the road to comply with the standards set by the Fire and Police Chiefs, but feels that the Board shouldn't be placing that condition on whether or not to grant the Special Permit. After a discussion the Board asked that the Fire and Police Chiefs be contacted to set a date with the Ralphs in order to drive Old Hitchcock Road for assessment.

**A motion was made, seconded and so voted by all members to adjourn the Special Permit hearing at 7:08 pm. A roll call vote was called for Nathaniel Yohalem – yes; Tara White – yes; Michele Shalaby – yes.**

**A motion was made, seconded and so voted by all members to reconvene the regular Selectmen's meeting at 7:10 pm.**

### **Wired West**

Selectman Shalaby provided a summary of the presentation given by the Executive Director on Wired West's plan of completing the last mile. The final step is wiring residences and businesses, of which there are 28,000 in the 42 towns that are members. The project will cost approximately \$100 million with the State contributing up to half. Wired West is proposing a GO Bond for up to \$50 million which would be backed by the credit of all member towns. The towns must vote on the proposal and at least 40% of businesses and residents would have to agree to the service.

### **Announcements and Updates**

It was noted that there is still no update on an insurance quote for John Lander, Clerk of the Works and the artificial traffic light is still hanging in Town.

The Board discussed options about obtaining a professional assessment of the Fire Department vehicles which would outline what, if any, the needs are.

Chairman Yohalem mentioned the reminder that was provided by Tom Loughlin of BSC Group, about the Town's eligibility to apply for a MassWorks grant for up to \$1 million this September.

The Board read and reviewed the letter from the Board of Health (BOH) regarding the water supply at the Highway garage. A water storage tank was tied into the building's plumbing system which is a potential for bacterial contamination. The BOH requested that steps be taken to fix the main water lines. However, the repairs cannot happen until warmer weather. The Board recommended that a letter be written to the BOH acknowledging their mandates and requesting an extension of the deadline.

Chairman Yohalem outlined items scheduled for the meeting of March 10. The Fire and Police Departments, Emergency Management, Emergency Services Fund and Fire Company will join the Board to discuss the future plans with the old Fire Company station at 6:00 pm. At 7:00 pm the Cultural Council will be presenting grant awards. The regular Selectmen's meeting will be at 5:00 pm.

The Board reviewed and discussed the budget worksheet, concentrating on the Special Articles.

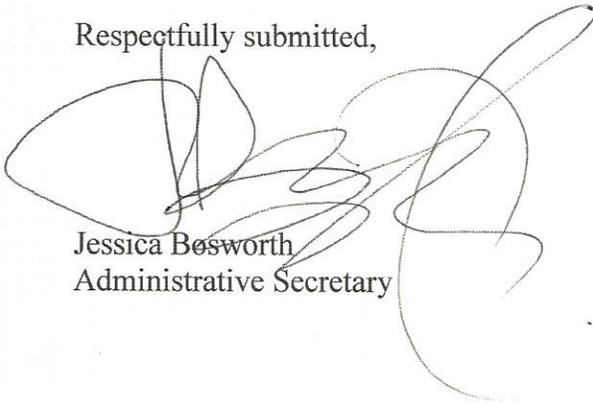
It was announced that two interviews will take place next Monday, at 4:30 pm and 4:45 pm.

Chairman Yohalem reported that the Secretary of Education will be visiting the Egremont and Monterey schools within the next month, due to the fact that the two schools may be the only remaining one-room schoolhouses left in the State. The Chairman proposed that a letter be written to the Secretary asking him, during his visit, to inquire about the safety and structural problems in both buildings and the costs to fix them, and to also be aware of the costs of educating the few students that attend the schools. The purpose of such a letter would be the

possibility in strengthening the case of closing the two schools. After a discussion it was decided that a letter would not be written at this time and further consideration on the matter would take place at next week's meeting.

**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 7:55 pm.**

Respectfully submitted,

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several overlapping loops and lines, positioned to the right of the typed name.

Jessica Bosworth  
Administrative Secretary