COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
TOWN OF NEW MARLBOROUGH
OFFICE OF THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN
807 Mill River Southfield Road, Mill River, MA 01244-0099
Phone: 413-229-8116 Fax: 413-229-6674
E-mail: nmbos@newmarlboroughma.gov

Tara B. White, Chair
Michele Shalaby
Nathaniel H. Yohalem
Board of Selectmen

Minutes of Selectmen's Meeting
Monday - April 13, 2015

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

Others Present: Joseph Kellogg, Administrative Assistant
Sharon Fleck, Administrative Secretary
Vito Valentini
David Hastings, Superintendent of Schools
Kristin Sparhawk, SBRSD Committee Member
Fran Lartigue, SBRSD Committee Member
Prue Spaulding
Chuck Loring

The meeting of the Board of Selectmen convened at 6:03 p.m.

A motion was made, seconded and so voted to approve the minutes of April 6, 2015 Selectmen's.

Highway Superintendent, Chuck Loring, advised it would take $1 million to pave Clayton Mill River Rd. from Brewer Hill to the bridge. Selectman Yohalem suggested that the MassWorks grant be used for Clayton Mill River Road (assuming the grant is awarded to the Town). Chuck, in his conversations with BSC, felt that the $1 million should be used for roughly one and one half miles Rt. 57. However, the Town, along with Sandisfield, is petitioning the State to takeover Rt. 57. Joe Kellogg recommended that the monies allocated to the Town this year be used on Clayton Mill River Road. Chuck he would like to use Chapter 90 monies on repairing/resurfacing the following roads this year: County Road top coat ($133,000) Canaan Southfield Road ($123,000), Sisson Hill ($50,000), Clayton Mill River Road ($306,000). Chapter 90 monies total $344,000, plus $119,000 leftover from last year. Chuck emphasized that it was very important to maintain the existing good roads. He also stated that anticipating doing the work he would like to

do on the other roads in Town would stretch the manpower he has available. The $51,673 pothole money, along with Town funds, awarded this year will be used to reclaim and grade Mill River Great Barrington Road. Chuck also stated he would still like to have a meeting with Smitty Pignatelli and Peter Niles to discuss Rt. 57.

Southern Berkshire Regional School District – The purpose of the School Board's attendance is to discuss Article 20 (SBRSD operating and capital budget for 2016). Selectman Yohalem discussed why the Board of Selectmen as well as the Finance Committee was not recommending the school operating and capital budget. He further stated the reason for not recommending this budget was the fact they believed the Monterey School should be closed. Vito Valentini stated that in order for the SBRSD to level fund New Marlborough's share of the budget would mean cutting other programs. Selectman Yohalem then stated that by closing the Monterey School would not only save the $81,000 additional monies charged as New Marlborough's share but would enhance the educational process. Selectman Yohalem stated that the closing of the Monterey School is the issue; it need not close in September, but that a good faith process be put in place to evaluate, and ultimately close, the Monterey School in FY17. Vito Valentino proposed that a process be put in place whereby the school committee could recommend to the superintendent, based on certain measureable criteria, that a school be closed. The criteria set would have to be ratified by the School Committee. A regular majority by the School Committee could pass such a measure. Vito stated he had spoken with Counsel who rejected this process believing that "suspension" and "closure" meant the same thing; however, Vito believed it was the best alternative to which the Board of Selectmen agreed. This would be a one-year suspension during which the criteria established would be measured. The Board of Selectmen would vote to approve the school budget if such a program were instituted by the School Committee prior to the New Marlborough Annual Town Meeting on May 4, 2015. Dave Hastings stated he supported such a program being put in place.

Selectman Shalaby suggested that the School District contact the State to ask for their suggestions in how to move forward in structuring schools, i.e. long term capital expenses, compensation for staff, flexibility in classrooms, etc. and to do this proactively before there are issues that need immediate attention. Vito stated he would be happy to sit down and discuss these and other issues at bi-monthly symposiums. Vito Valentini explained that there is a capital plan in place, for instance, the Transportation Committee will be evaluating every route.

Annual Town Meeting – Joe Kellogg has the warrant complete, with the exception of waiting for language from the Planning Board, and double checking for typos and rechecking numbers. The Warrant has to be posted by April 27. Joe Kellogg suggested the Selectmen vote on the 35 Articles as there is no planned Selectmen's meeting the following week. **A motion was made, seconded and so voted to approve the Draft Warrant of 4-8-15 containing 35 articles.**

Town Administrative Structure – No resumes were received during the past week.

Administrative Assistant Updates - There were no updates to report.

Selectmen's Updates - Chairman White reported that the Planning Board received the DLTA grant for technical assistance. Chairman White also reported that the Planning Board requested that the Planning Board set compensation for clerical services; Tara to confirm the compensation rate with the Planning Board.

Selectman Shalaby reported she received a phone call from Mr. Levin who requested a "litter" sign be posted on his property with a $1,000 fine. He had previously requested a sign be erected with a posted fine; Joe Kellogg to check with Jeremia Pollard as to what kind of sign/fine can be posted. Michele also asked about the status of the sign to be put up on Clayton Mill River Road, just before the bridge, that would indicate "slow." Police Chief Frank and Highway Superintendent Loring were to discuss this matter. Michele also reported she spoke with Police Chief Frank about coverage from Sheffield while he is out of town, and, if needed, Sheffield will provide additional coverage.

Selectman Yohalem reported he attended a meeting the previous Friday on Wired West, and stated that there was a bond counsel person present as well as two financial advisors, one financial officer and a person very familiar with the operations of Wired West. Selectman Yohalem stated that the bond counsel and financial advisors suggested that the Towns put in an extra $50,000 in expenses for the bond as their fees. Selectman Yohalem asked them whether or not the Town's credit would be affected adversely. He was told that if the ratio of debt service to the total budget exceeded a certain number, and if the Town was never bonded before, and if that number exceeded 10 percent, it could be a factor in determining the Town's future lending ability. A computer-generated projection shows Wired West will have $21 million in retained earnings at the end of 20 years. During the first year of Wired West's operations an anticipated short-fall would be $2.5 million in operating expenses which the Towns would be asked to contribute their proportionate amount. The anticipated bond amount for New Marlborough would be $3.220 million and that number will be used for the warrant. If not all of the 32 towns sign up for Wired West, the $40 million from the State would be divided among the participating towns, which would lower the bond amount. Joe Kellogg explained that the $2.5 million is the operating shortfall for which the Town would be borrowing.

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 7:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Fleck
Administrative Secretary