

**MARION BOARD OF SELECTMEN
WATER/SEWER COMMISSIONERS**

April 17, 2007

Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. Present were Chairman Andrew N. Jeffrey, Board members Jonathan F. Henry and Roger F. Blanchette and Town Administrator Paul F. Dawson. Also present were Lee Craver, Kenneth J. Souza of *The Wanderer*, Andrea Smith of *The Tri-Town Observer*, Ruth Thompson of *The Sentinel*, Brian Fraga of the *Standard-Times*, Finance Committee members Richard Kemp, James Barron, Priscilla Ditchfield, Stephen M. Cushing and Alan Minard, Police Chief Lincoln W. Miller, candidate for Detective/Sergeant Craig Parker, Carol Sanz, Charlotte Sudduth, Christopher Bryant, David K. Pierce, Donna H. Maxfield and Helene Craver, secretary.

Mr. Jeffrey explained that the meeting was not being broadcast "live" tonight, as there was a technical difficulty, but will be rebroadcast later in the week.

The Board met with Chief Miller and Detective Parker; Chief Miller requested that Detective Parker be promoted to the rank of Detective/Sergeant to provide additional supervisory coverage at no cost to the Town. Chief Miller explained that Detective Parker has a leading role with the Department, where he has been employed since 1977.

Mr. Blanchette moved to promote Detective Parker to Detective/Sergeant Parker; the motion was seconded and carried unanimously.

Mr. Dawson reported that a ceremony will be held on April 25 at Littleneck Village to present the Boston Post Cane to Iva Griffith as the Town's eldest resident. Mr. Dawson explained that he would have more detailed arrangements for the Board's information as the occasion nears. Mr. Henry noted that Mrs. Griffith was his bus monitor when he was in the first grade.

Mr. Dawson reported that State funds for the Town's road work (Chapter 90 funds) had increased slightly from last year.

SRPEDD requested the Town's annual appointment of representatives for the coming year. Mr. Henry offered to continue in that capacity.

Mr. Blanchette moved to appoint Mr. Henry as the Town's SRPEDD representative; the motion was seconded and carried unanimously.

Dr. Kemp noted that, at the beginning of the budget process, Mr. Dawson had not yet been hired and the Town was without a Treasurer/Collector—there was a leadership void. Dr. Kemp said that Finance Committee had requested that all departments prepare a "flat" budget—no increases. Dr. Kemp said that they eventually made some adjustments based upon the Old Rochester Regional School District assessment and that the final budget reflects a total operating expense increase of 2.3%, which is a decrease from last year's 8%. Dr. Kemp noted that the student fluctuations are very

difficult for which to plan, as is the Special Education assessment. Dr. Kemp indicated that general government's increase was 2.1%, with salary increases offset by reserve transfers. Mr. Blanchette questioned whether there was some way to predict the number of students in the junior and senior high schools? Dr. Kemp explained that the biggest variable is the ninth grade, as some students leave the public system for Tabor Academy or Bishop Stang High School.

Mr. Henry asked about the cost of pensions—Dr. Kemp replied that it was a mystery, because they don't get data on the increases or the market value of the fund. A discussion followed regarding the options of joining the State pension fund or creating our own. Mr. Henry hoped that a study could be done to achieve some economies in this area. Mr. Jeffrey indicated that the health care and pension funding areas are complicated and it isn't as simple as getting a number of towns together to form a new system. Dr. Kemp noted that one of the Articles on the Warrant is for an actuarial study, which should bring some insight. Mr. Jeffrey pointed out that the options are somewhat limited, as the health care and pensions systems are not free enterprise and can't be self funded. Mr. Jeffrey requested the Finance Committee determine whether the Gateway Health Group is still maintaining a lower premium than Plymouth County.

Mrs. Ditchfield summarized Articles 3 and 4, water and sewer enterprise funds.

Dr. Kemp explained that they are transferring the free cash remaining from fiscal year 2007 to the stabilization fund, which will require a vote at Town Meeting.

A discussion followed on school funding. Mr. Jeffrey reported on several meetings he had attended regarding the school funding mechanism, which was unclear to everyone. Mr. Jeffrey explained that the Selectmen and Finance Committees from the three towns had met to try to make the assessments fair to everyone.

Chief Miller reported that he had been made aware of several instances of misuse of privilege stickers by the Town of Rochester, in that the stickers weren't being permanently affixed and were being moved to different vehicles. Chief Miller requested the Board request Rochester follow Marion's rules for privilege stickers.

Mr. Blanchette moved to send a letter to the Rochester Selectmen asking them to follow our procedures; the motion was seconded and carried unanimously.

Mr. Dawson outlined the Warrant Articles and summarized the content.

Mr. Henry moved to endorse the Articles submitted by the Town Administrator, with pending corrections to Article 20.

Mr. Blanchette said that he would abstain on this vote, as there are a few outstanding matters for which he has questions. Mr. Jeffrey said that they didn't want to sign the Warrant until Mr. Blanchette has clarifications to his questions. Mr. Henry asked if the problem concerned something other than the language? Mr. Blanchette said

that he had questions on some of the numbers and would be meeting with the Finance Committee tomorrow.

Mr. Henry moved to sign the Warrant; the motion was seconded and carried, Mr. Blanchette abstaining.

(However, Mr. Blanchette did sign the Warrants for posting at the close of the meeting.)

Mr. Blanchette moved the ballot questions; the motion was seconded and carried unanimously.

Mr. Dawson explained that the 2006 Annual Town Meeting had authorized the Town to enter into an agreement for a conservation restriction between the Town and Sippican Lands Trust. Mr. Bryant explained that the agreement had been approved by the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs and now needs approval from the Town. Mr. Bryant explained that, originally, rather than have the Town do a "taking", the Parks family had donated a piece of lowland with water access on Icabod Lane to the Town.

Mr. Jeffrey moved to approve the conservation restriction; the motion was seconded and carried unanimously.

Mr. Henry moved to proclaim May 12 Arbor Day in the Town of Marion; the motion was seconded and carried unanimously.

The Board reviewed the proposed Council on Aging Emergency Fund Policy. Mr. Henry suggested that the fund should be stipulated as assistance for the elderly. Mr. Blanchette pointed out that people can get into extreme difficulty at any age.

Mr. Henry moved to accept the policy as written; the motion was seconded and carried unanimously.

Mr. Blanchette moved to approve an extension of entertainment hours for Tabor Academy June 15-17, 2007; the motion was seconded and carried unanimously.

Mr. Henry moved to approve one-day, all-alcohol licenses for the Marion Social Club for May 5 and May 12, 2007; the motion was seconded and carried unanimously.

Mr. Dawson explained that the Town had received a letter requesting a petition Article on the Town Meeting Warrant, which was received after the deadline (March 1, 2007). Mrs. Sudduth and Mrs. Maxfield said that they had hoped the Board would "respect the seriousness" of their letter, which request dealt with the impeachment of the President. Mr. Jeffrey explained that the Board expected everyone to adhere to the deadline for Article submission.

Mr. Dawson noted that he had submitted a draft Policy on Committee Appointments some time ago for the Board's approval and suggested changes were

very minor. Mr. Dawson explained that the policy calls for anyone seeking reappointment (or appointment) to submit an application. Mr. Blanchette requested the list of persons who are due for reappointment by the end of May. Mr. Jeffrey said that the policy was a good start and they will make changes as they see the need.

Mr. Henry moved to accept the appointment policy; the motion was seconded and carried unanimously.

Mr. Henry moved to adjourn at 8:47 p.m.; the motion was seconded and carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



Roger F. Blanchette, Clerk

Date voted: 6/5/07