

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

April 1, 2008

Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 7:04 p.m. Present were Chairman Roger F. Blanchette, Board members Andrew N. Jeffrey and Jonathan F. Henry 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*, Stephen M. Cushing, Carol Sanz, Finance Committee members Richard A. Kemp, Lee Vulgaris, Karen Kevelson and Alan Minard, Town Accountant Judith Mooney, Deborah Thompson, Henry and Barbara Mauro and Helene Craver, secretary.

Dr. Kemp gave an overview of the budget and noted that they had met with the department heads and School Committee members. Dr. Kemp said that, in the next few weeks, work will begin on budget projections for 2010-2014 to attempt to determine future expenses and revenues and communicate to the taxpayers their choices and options.

Mr. Vulgaris pointed out that the Town's leaders need to be aware of the ramifications of union negotiations—if salaries are increased by 3-5% per year and the Finance Committee is asked to "hold the line", it is incompatible. Mr. Vulgaris said that this issue needs to be discussed now. Mr. Blanchette agreed. Mr. Henry thanked the Finance Committee and reminded everyone that, when he first ran for office, he said that reductions would have to be made. Mr. Dawson pointed out that there are costs which the Town can't control while being constrained by Proposition 2-½; it is unrealistic to maintain services with this scenario. Mr. Dawson said that the federal government should do its part—the local governments can't handle this alone. Dr. Kemp said that it was his experience that the Town's employees are good people who work hard, are very helpful, loyal and have the best interests of the Town at heart.

Mr. Henry moved to appoint Jacqueline Gleiman paramedic with the Marion Emergency Medical Services; the motion was seconded and carried unanimously.

Mr. Dawson explained that NSTAR has requested a temporary license to install a pole for the Mattapoissett River Valley Water District, to be finalized with a permanent grant at the Annual Town Meeting.

Mr. Jeffrey moved to grant the temporary license to NSTAR; the motion was seconded and carried unanimously.

Mr. Jeffrey moved a one-day, all-alcohol license to the Marion Social Club for April 26, 2008; the motion was seconded and carried unanimously.

Mr. Dawson explained that the Open Space Acquisition Commission had received a grant for an expansion of the Eastover Farm project, which requires the Board members' signatures.

Mr. Jeffrey moved to approve the contract of the Eastover Farm's expansion project; the motion was seconded and carried unanimously.

Mr. Jeffrey moved to approve the request for power and road closure for the Annual Feast of St. Anthony on June 8, 2008; the motion was seconded and carried unanimously.

Mr. Dawson reported that he had received numerous complaints concerning a fund-raising effort being conducted by a private fund-raising company; he had met with representatives of the company and they agreed to advertise prior to resuming the effort.

Mr. Dawson addressed the "information" contained in an article of the March 28 *"Tri-Town Observer"*, alleging that an Emergency Medical Services July 2007 response to a call from the Walkers took more than 1-1/4 hours to transport a patient (following a 20-minute wait for a police cruiser). Mr. Dawson said that he had researched the matter and found that the initial call was for a rapid heart rate (non life threatening); the time from the original call until the first police cruiser responded to the scene was 5 minutes, 14 seconds; the ambulance responded in 12 minutes, 59 seconds (in addition to the first of the EMS personnel arriving in 2 minutes, 47 seconds before the ambulance). Mr. Dawson summarized other information gleaned from the emergency tape recordings. Mr. Dawson noted that he can understand that a short period of time may seem excruciatingly long when waiting for help—the fact remains that the allegations of lengthy waits for emergency response are untrue and the newspaper did not verify its information. Mr. Henry thanked Mr. Dawson for his research and commented that both the response times and level of response were timely and adequate.

Mr. Dawson announced that there will be a special Selectmen's on April 8 to address trash collection issues raised by the Finance Committee at the March 18 meeting. Mrs. Sanz asked if this was to be a public hearing? Mr. Blanchette said that it was not a public hearing, only a meeting devoted to this issue—anyone was welcome and encouraged to come and comment.

Mr. Blanchette read a letter from Margherita Baldwin requesting Christina Bascom be appointed to the Parks Committee. It was agreed to address this matter at the next meeting.

A letter of resignation from the Water Committee by Priscilla Ditchfield was received.

There was a brief discussion regarding several Articles for the Annual Town Meeting Warrant. Mr. Henry noted that the Police Station Building Committee will again be meeting tomorrow evening. Mr. Blanchette said that the Committee hoped to have a cost estimate for the new police station before the Annual Town Meeting. The Council on Aging had requested an Article to reduce the rate of interest that accrues on property taxes deferred by the elderly from 8% to 2%. The Board agreed that 4% was adequate and fair.

Mr. Jeffrey moved to accept and sign the Warrant for the May 19, 2008 Annual Town Meeting as agreed; the motion was seconded and carried unanimously.

Mr. Jeffrey moved to go into executive session at 8:43 p.m. to discuss collective bargaining and not to return to open session at the conclusion of the executive session; the motion was seconded and carried unanimously, Messrs. Blanchette, Jeffrey and Henry voting aye.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jonathan F. Henry", written in a cursive style. The signature is positioned above the printed name "Jonathan F. Henry, Clerk".

Date approved: