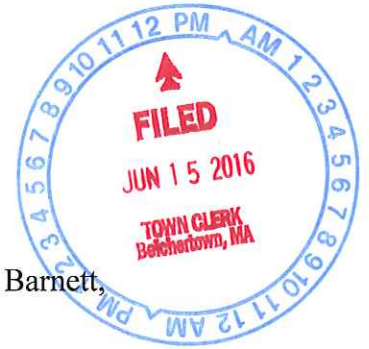


**TOWN OF BELCHERTOWN
BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, MAY 23, 2016
Selectmen's Meeting Room, Lawrence Memorial Hall**



Present: Ronald E. Aponte, George D. Archible, Brenda Q. Aldrich, William R. Barnett, Nicholas O'Connor

- 1) **Call to Order:** Chairman Aponte called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.
- 2) **Sign Documents:**
 - a) Warrant #1647 was signed for \$1,605,853.75.
 - b) Routine documents
 - c) Approval of Minutes: Ms. Aldrich moved the Board accept the minutes of May 11, 2016. Seconded by Mr. Archible. Motion passes 4 – 1 abstain (Barnett). Mr. O'Connor moved the Board accept the minutes of April 25, 2016. Seconded by Mr. Archible. Motion passes 3 – 2 abstain (Aponte, Aldrich). Ms. Aldrich moved the Board accept the minutes of May 2, 2016. Seconded by Mr. Archible. Motion passes 5 – 0. Ms. Aldrich moved the Board accept the minutes of May 9, 2016. Seconded by Mr. Barnett. Motion passes 4 -1 (abstain) O'Connor.
- 3) **Additions to the Agenda:** None.
- 4) **Appearances Before the Board:**
 - 7:33 p.m. Mindy Domb, Amherst Survival Center: Ms. Domb introduced herself as the Executive Director of the Amherst Survival Center. She presented an overview of what the Center does and emphasized that Belchertown is one of 13 eligible communities to utilize the pantry.

Their mission is to connect people with food, clothing, health care wellness and community. They are not a shelter. They have a food pantry where people can get free groceries every month. There is a community free store with donations from the community. There is a free walk in health clinic that operates twice a week with volunteer nurses and physicians. They offer a free breakfast bar at 11:00, a lunch four days a week and a dinner one night a week. There are also classes or movies that are offered on the day that they are opened late. There are also free computers for people to use with the internet. The Center offers so much more and Ms. Domb invited the Selectmen to come in and tour the facility.

The Center is mostly run by volunteers with a very small number of actual staff.

There were 46,000 to 47,000 visits to the Center in 2015 and Belchertown residents visited the Center 1,983 times in 2015. There were 202 Belchertown families that used the food pantry in 2015, serving 506 individuals with a total of 984 visits.

She came tonight so that she could get the word out about the Amherst Survival Center, what they do and where they are located. She presented some material to the Board with the Center's information.

Mr. Archible questioned if Veterans' were aware of the Center and if they take advantage of it. Ms. Domb said they are and they do take advantage of it but they could take more advantage of it.

Mr. Aponte questioned if the Center does any communication with the Belchertown Senior Center. Ms. Domb stated they do a little bit but it is one of their priorities for the coming year – to reach out to the senior center to see how the Survival Center's programs can meet the needs of our senior population.

- 7:50 p.m. Pole Hearing #2016-08 (continued), South Washington Street: Ms. Aldrich read the revised pole hearing. Andy Hufnagel from Verizon was present as was Mandy Patenaude from National Grid.

Mr. Archible indicates the abutter who initially objected is in agreement with the new location. Mr. Hufnagel presented the Board with a picture of the new pole location. There were no other comments or concerns from the residents.

Ms. Aldrich moved to close the public hearing. Seconded by Mr. Archible. Motion passes 5 – 0.

Ms. Aldrich moved to grant revised petition #2016-08. Seconded by Mr. Archible. Motion passes 5 – 0.

- 8:00 p.m. Class II Dealer's License Hearing – Jason Spellacy, Vehicle Ventures LLC, 147 Bay Road: Mr. Aponte read the public hearing notice. Jason Spellacy was present for the hearing. He has been in the business for 20 years. He spoke about his plans for the location and that his intention is to have 28 cars for sale even though the Planning Board came up with 35 cars. His hours will be 9:00 am – 5:00 pm Monday thru Saturday and Sunday by appointment. He stated that he has operated a lot in Chicopee since 2009. There will be no repairs done at this site.

Mr. Brougham informed the Board that he has spoken to the property owner who confirmed that he is okay with the 35 cars on site that the Planning Board approved.

Mr. Archible moved to close the public hearing. Seconded by Mr. O'Connor. Motion passes 5 – 0.

Mr. Archible moved the Board approve the Class II Dealer's license with 30 cars. Seconded by Ms. Aldrich. Motion passes 5 – 0.

5) **Discussion/Action Items:**

- a. Reorganize the Board / Discuss Liaison Duties: Mr. Aponte presented the details noting that every year following elections the Board reorganizes. He suggested that it be done in reverse order.

Ms. Aldrich moved the Board appoint Mr. O'Connor as the Clerk of the Board. Seconded by Mr. Archible. Motion passes 5 – 0.

Mr. Archible moved the Board appoint Ms. Aldrich as the Vice-Chairman of the Board. Seconded by Mr. Aponte. Motion passes 5 – 0.

Mr. O'Connor moved the Board appoint Mr. Archible as the Chairman of the Board. Seconded by Mr. Barnett. Motion passes 5 – 0.

Mr. Archible stated he will discuss liaison duties with the departments before making any changes. He asked the Board members to give him a list of what they would like or not like for liaison duties prior to the next meeting.

- b. Endorse State House Note #993 – Renewal of Borrowing for Old Town Hall Restoration: Mr. Aponte presented the details stating that this house note is to fund the Old Town Hall window restoration project.

Mr. Aponte moved the Board endorse the State House Note #993 in the amount of \$35,000 for one year at a rate of 0.79% for the remaining balance on the Old Town Hall window restoration. Seconded by Ms. Aldrich. Motion passes 5 – 0.

Mr. Aponte moved the Board endorse the Certificate of the Town Clerk which shows that this was voted on at Town Meeting and certified. Seconded by Ms. Aldrich. Motion passes 5 – 0.

Mr. Aponte moved the Board endorse the Certificate and Designation as a qualified tax exemption obligation. Seconded by Ms. Aldrich. Motion passes 5 – 0.

- c. Endorse Dog Warrant: Mr. Aponte presented the details. This is an annual endorsement that allows the Animal Control Department to perform their responsibilities. Mr. Aponte moved the Board of Selectmen endorse the dog warrant as presented. Seconded by Mr. Barnett. Motion passes 5 – 0.
- d. Endorse PVPC FY12 Belchertown Community Assistance Program Subordination Agreement: Mr. Aponte presented the details to the Board. The owner of the property received housing rehabilitation assistance under the FY12 Belchertown Community Assistance Program and the homeowner is now requesting that the balance of the FY13 Belchertown CAP assignment of proceeds be subordinated. There is sufficient equity in the property to protect the program's remaining interest.

Mr. Aponte moved the Board authorize the Chairman of the Board endorse the PVPC FY12 Belchertown Community Assistance Program Subordination. Seconded by Ms. Aldrich. Motion passes 5 - 0.

- e. Endorse Release Deed – George Hannum Street Intersection: Mr. Archible presented the details. Steve Williams, Director of Public Works has been working with the Department of Capital Asset Management to secure an easement on or across State owned property to improve drainage and the intersection.

Mr. Archible moved the Board endorse the Release Deed for George Hannum Street Intersection. Seconded by Ms. Aldrich. Motion passes 5 – 0.

- f. Miscellaneous Matters: None.

- 6) **Town Administrator's Report:** Mentioned how difficult the budget process was this year. There is a "glitch" in the special legislation for the Patrick Center. Last Tuesday he heard from Representative Petrolati that there are some points that need clarification on the amended legislation. Representative Kocot is in charge of taking care of this. He spoke

with Representative Kocot last week and again today and the special legislation is being read again tomorrow. He is not sure what went wrong as he had been assured previously by Representative Petrolati and Senator Lesser that everything was appropriate and reviewed by House Counsel and Town Counsel. Representative Kocot indicated that the legislation he had simply allowed the State to offer the Town the right of first refusal which was not what was filed most recently. Mr. Brougham has sent Representative Kocot a number of documents that he has regarding the Patrick Center.

The deadline for applications for the Recreation Director position was May 11, 2016. The Recreation Director Search Committee held their first meeting on May 12th and organized the committee. They met again the following Thursday and selected ten of twenty applicants for interviews and will have a list of finalists for the Board at the first June meeting.

The Bell and Hudson Putt-a-Thon was held last Friday for the Jimmy Fund. The Maintenance and Highway Department did a fantastic job supporting Bell and Hudson in preparing the town Center, mulching, mowing. Every year the Putt-A-Thon seems to get better and better. This year they raised \$57,000.00.

7) **Review of Weekly Mail:**

#15) – See Mr. Aponte’s member report.

8) **Individual Board Members’ Reports:**

Mr. O'Connor: At the next Board of Selectmen meeting he wants to include the following items for discussion:

- Talk about the Board going back to weekly meetings.
- Posting approved meeting minutes on line
- Emails being sent to the Board members in real time. He believes they are put in the mail packet and would like to have them in “real time”. He will speak with Kevin Hannon to see if this is possible.
- Calendar – He would like to see additional information on line. Again he will talk to Kevin Hannon to see if the calendar can be updated in real time and people can subscribe to it.
- Add remote participation document for review to the next agenda
- Continue discussion on a potential 2 ½ override. He feels the Town should shoot for having it on the presidential election ballot. We will have to get a deadline as to when it could be added to the ballot.
- There should be a committee to oversee the potential 2 /2 override consisting of a board of selectmen member, a finance committee member, the town administrator, the town accountant, school committee member. He will have a motion for the next meeting.

Ms. Aldrich: Mentioned the upcoming Memorial Day Events and urged everyone to participate.

Mr. Aponte: Addressed the letter sent in from Anne Mileski regarding the wooden playground at Chestnut Hill Community School. Her family likes to use it and have enjoyed it for a long time. They are volunteering to help make repairs to the playground to save it. Mr. Aponte stated that it can’t be done. There is an inspection report indicating

there are dozens of violations and the recommendation is to close the playground and remove it. The remediation cost to try and get it back to pass inspection are outrageous. It is not feasible. The playground will remain closed and will be dismantled. He understands the sentiment. Mr. Archible stated he had spoken with Steve Williams regarding the playground and was told that there could be some serious injuries if the Town had continued to keep it open.

Mr. Archible: This past budget season was the most difficult he's seen in seven years. People don't understand the challenges the Town faces with the budget and how difficult it is to make these decisions. There was an election last week where only 179 people came out and voted; everyone ran unopposed. There were many complaints from residents regarding the budgets but no one stepped up to run for office. It's wrong for people to come in once a year during a budget meeting to rant and rave but then not step up to make changes. He wishes people would get involved.

He commended the town administrator and town accountant for putting a package together which was almost derailed at the end.

Monday is Memorial Day and the Town parade will kick off at 10:00 a.m. in the Town Hall parking lot. He hopes that people will attend the ceremony on the Town Common. There is a picnic open to the public at the VFW beginning between noon and 1:00 p.m. and it is all you can eat, all day long for \$5.00. There will also be a service at South Cemetery beginning at 9:00 a.m.

Mr. O'Connor asked if he could make additional comments. As this was his first budget cycle he could not compare it to other years. It felt more cumbersome than it needs to be. He was upset with what happened at town meeting as the Board had consensus with a unanimous 5 – 0 vote on the town side for the budget. He was not in favor of changing the warrant at the last minute because it had not been discussed and the finance committee was put up to an adjustment in a warrant that wasn't posted and an alternate motion. He is happy that alternate funding sources were found for several positions but thinks that as a Board they need to be able to make these tough decisions. He feels that what happened at town meeting may have helped to erode that capability a little bit and it concerns him. He is happy that funding sources were found for positions that were being cut because of budget deficiencies. There were positions that were cut that had nothing to do with lack of budget but with other things such as value, staffing within the department, services. Cuts in certain areas are not specifically tied to budget deficiencies. The finance committee did not have a heads up but were told on-stage at the time what was going to happen and that the Selectmen endorsed it and they did not. The Board was not even involved in the conversation. He felt it was still in appropriate but a better way to go about it would have been to read the original motion as intended for town meeting and then to have a board member make a motion to amend it.

Ms. Aldrich stated that all members on the Board come from different areas in the Town but when they come together at the meeting and they all work together. It doesn't mean that they all always agree on everything but they work for the best of the town. She felt that when everyone was blindsided by the motion at town meeting they all felt betrayed. She felt it was underhanded.

Mr. Aponte agreed that the difficult discussion/decisions need to happen prior to town meeting otherwise chaos and confusion rain. That definitely was the case at this past town meeting.

Ms. Aldrich stated that tomorrow night there is a school committee meeting. She encouraged people to attend, to participate. She noted that at tonight's selectmen's meeting that there are members of the press in the audience but no residents.

- 9) **Questions from the Press:** Eric Goldscheider from *The Gazette* asked if the Board knew anything about the Board of Health write in. He spoke with the Town Clerk who was going to speak with the individual who received the three write in votes to see if he wanted the position. He questioned if the Board knew the decision. Mr. Aponte indicated that Town Counsel was questioned on this. Counsel stated that whoever received the most votes won the election and in this case it is the person with the write-in votes. Mr. Aponte did not know if the individual accepted the position.

He then asked Mr. O'Connor to confirm that he wanted a committee to be formed to look at the pros and cons of a proposition 2 ½ override. A discussion regarding such a committee ensued.

He questioned the discussion about the Patrick Center as he had stepped out of the room. He was told there is a snag in the process and they are reading it again in the State House. Mr. Brougham indicated there is a question about the legislation that was filed and it's not as if someone is going to come and buy it out from under the town. The legislation needs to be resubmitted in order to allow DCAM to sell the property to the town for municipal reuse.

- 10) **Adjournment:** Meeting adjourned at 8:43 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Gary L. Brougham, Town Administrator


Board approved/endorsed: 6/13/10

Board of Selectmen - Town of Belchertown

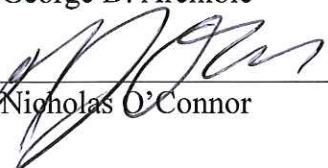
Endorsed by a majority:



Ronald E. Aponte, Chairman



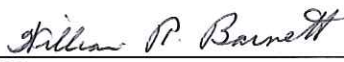
George D. Archible



Nicholas O'Connor



Brenda Q. Aldrich



William R. Barnett