

**TOWN OF BELCHERTOWN  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING MINUTES  
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 2015  
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 #1621 was signed for \$1,602,756.71.
- b) Routine documents
- c) Approval of Minutes: Ms. Aldrich moved the Board accept the minutes of November 9, 2015. Seconded by Mr. O'Connor. Motion passes 5 – 0.

3) **Additions to the Agenda:** None.

4) **Appearances Before the Board:**

- 7:35 p.m. Checker's Inc to Shree Manki Inc. – Liquor License Transfer Hearing: Mr. Aponte read the Public Hearing Notice. Viral Patel spoke on behalf of the applicant.

Mr. Archible questioned if the applicant is familiar with the laws pertaining to selling alcohol in Massachusetts. Mr. Patel indicated they were from Connecticut and were not familiar with Massachusetts laws but that he would continue to be the one holding the liquor license and that he lives in Belchertown.

Mr. Aponte questioned if all the partners will be working at the store and selling the alcohol. It was confirmed that the three partners would be working at the store. Mr. Aponte questioned that they have experience in Connecticut selling alcohol. It was confirmed that they did.

Mr. Brougham, Town Administrator confirmed that everything was in order with the application. He indicated it was one of the best applications he has seen in that it was complete. He has spoken with the applicant and as a customer of Checker's he has witnessed enforcement of the liquor laws. He is convinced if the application is approved things will continue to run smoothly.

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

Mr. Aponte moved to transfer the existing liquor license which is currently held by Checkers Inc. d/b/a Checker's Market Place to Checker's General Store and Deli. Seconded by Mr. Archible. Motion passes 5 – 0.

- 7:55 p.m. Tax Classification Hearing with Board of Assessors: Ray Goff, Chairman of the Board of Assessors was present for the discussion as well as Tom Barry the Vice Chairman. Mr. Goff indicated that Jay Whelihan, the Director of Assessments, will do a presentation.

The Board of Assessors has met and recommends a flat rate of 1.0. Mr. Whelihan took over the presentation. He indicated that this is basically the last step in setting the tax rate. The State has provided their estimate as to what they will be providing the Town for revenue. This last step is for the Board of Selectmen to decide if they want to shift some of the tax burden between the classes.

He presented the values for 2016, discussed the FY16 recap, and discussed budget planning documents.

He reviewed rates in comparable communities. He feels that Belchertown should remain with a single rate as the Town doesn't have enough business to split the rate. He mentioned that Longmeadow had gone to a split rate last year and this year changed it back to one rate.

He along with the Board of assessors concur it's not worth shifting the rate between classes. Mr. Archible confirmed that if approved the average increase would be about \$59 year at \$17.97 / thousand.

Mr. Archible moved the Board set a factor of one tax rate. Seconded by Ms. Aldrich. Motion passes 5 – 0.

- 8:15 p.m. LeeAnne Connolly, Conservation Administrator: Ms. Connolly came before the Board at 7:45 (time change). She still has not heard if the Town has been awarded the LAND grant. The decisions have been made but they are not public yet. This grant is in the amount of \$127,000.

EOEA wants a town meeting vote by the end of the calendar year. She spoke with the Town Administrator who suggested writing a letter that's from the Board of Selectmen stating the reasons the Town wouldn't have a fall town meeting. She has the draft letter for the Board's review and approval. Upon further discussion it was decided

that wording would be changed to say a special town meeting is probable in January or February 2016.

Mr. Aponte moved the Board authorize the Chairman to sign the LAND grant letter as discussed. Seconded by Ms. Aldrich. Motion passes 5 – 0.

Ms. Connolly also discussed the deed restriction on the Van Zandt Order of Conditions. So the owner doesn't have to obtain a 401 Water Quality permit the Conservation Commission is putting a deed restriction on this property. It has been done in the past. All parties have agreed to the conditions. The owner has the permit saying there will be no additional wetland fill ever on this parcel. He is altering 3,784 sq ft of wetland.

The town attorney, Shirin Everett has reviewed the document and has several concerns with section 2 enforceability. Attorney Everett will make some changes. Also in a couple of places in the deed restriction the square footage is off and needs to be corrected. The document is not ready to be signed.

Mr. Aponte confirmed that it's just some minor changes but that everyone agrees on the concept. Ms. Connolly confirmed that was correct. Ms. Connolly is not ready to ask the Board to sign the restriction she just wanted to make them aware of what was going on. She will continue to work with the Town Attorney in getting the restriction ready for the Board's signature.

**5) Discussion/Action Items:**

- a. Appointment of Real Estate Member to EDIC: Mr. Aponte presented the details to the Board indicating the Mr. Richard Kump was a former EDIC member, who has agreed to join at least on a temporary basis. There is a public hearing that will be occurring next month so it is very important to appoint him. Mr. Aponte moved to appoint Richard Kump to the position of Real Estate Member to the EDIC, term to expire June 30, 2017. Seconded by Mr. O'Connor. Motion passes 5 – 0.
- b. Vote to Waive Hearing for Class III License: Mr. Barnett presented the details to the Board. Massachusetts General Laws require a hearing for Class III licenses. He indicated that the Board has waived this hearing as permitted by Massachusetts General Law for years. Mr. Barnett moved the Board waive the Hearing for a Class III License for P&T Enterprise. Seconded by Mr. Archible. The Town Administrator confirmed there have been no complaints regarding this business. Motion passes 5 – 0.
- c. Discuss Chestnut Hill Community School Basketball Court: Mr. O'Connor presented the details. The Recreation Department is looking for the Board's support in applying for CPC funding to re-level and re-pave the basketball court by the tennis courts. Mr. O'Connor moved the Board support the Recreation Department in this endeavor. The CPC application must be submitted by December 14, 2015. Seconded by Mr. Archible. Motion passes 5 – 0.
- d. Miscellaneous Matters:

**6) Town Administrator's Report:** None.

**7) Review of Weekly Mail:**

#15. Mr. Barnett stated the Hampshire Council of Governments announced that on December 3<sup>rd</sup> the Hampshire County Selectboards will be holding their quarterly meeting to elect new officers. It will be held at the Blue Bonnet Diner at a cost of \$20.

#12. Michael Norton is requesting permission to conduct a bike race in April. Mr. Aponte asked the Town Administrator to have this request placed on the next meeting agenda.

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

Mr. Barnett: He handed out to Board members a book produced by the Hampshire Council of Governments listing the Council directory which includes all of the Towns in Hampshire County.

- 9) **Questions from the Press:** Scott Feldman from the *Sentinel* questioned what exactly is happening with the basketball court. Mr. O'Connor indicated the Recreation Department will be doing a grant application for the Community Preservation Committee for funding to re-level, re-pave and re-constitute the court itself. Mr. Aponte presented a brief overview of what happened with Jessica's Boundless Playground and the basketball court.

Mr. Feldman confirmed that the tax classification is something that is standard and done every year. Mr. Aponte briefly explained the process to Mr. Feldman. He explained that by saving the homeowners a very small amount of money you devastate the businesses with a greater tax burden.

Mr. Feldman also questioned what the LAND grant was for. The Board indicated it is for Holland Glen which is on the north side of Town. He questioned if the grant would purchase the property. It was explained that it would be partial payment.


- 10) **Adjournment:** Meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

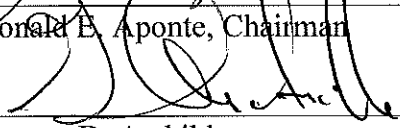
Minutes submitted by Gary L. Brougham, Town Administrator


Board approved/endorsed: Jan. 11, 2016

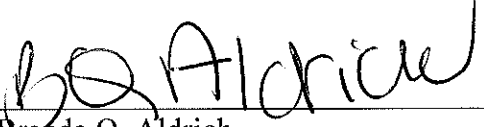
Board of Selectmen - Town of Belchertown

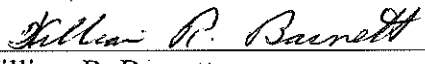
Endorsed by a majority:

  
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Ronald E. Aponte, Chairman

  
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George D. Archible

  
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Nicholas O'Connor

  
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Brenda Q. Aldrich

  
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William R. Barnett