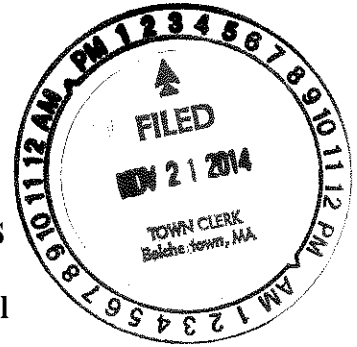


**TOWN OF BELCHERTOWN
BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, JULY 28, 2014
Selectmen's Meeting Room, Lawrence Memorial Hall**



Present: Brenda Q. Aldrich, Ronald E. Aponte, George D. Archible, Kenneth E. Elstein, William R. Barnett

- 1) **Call to Order:** Chairman Barnett called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.
- 2) **Sign Documents:**
 - a) Warrant #1504 was signed for \$424,263.07.
 - b) Routine documents
 - c) Approval of Minutes: None.
- 3) **Additions to the Agenda:**
 - Endorse Storm Alfred Reimbursement Documents: Mr. Aponte presented the details to the Board. He stated the Town had originally had requested cleanup reimbursement for Storm Alfred in the amount of \$144,000 to massDOT; unfortunately massDOT has approved a reimbursement of only \$113,818.30. Mr. Archible moved the Board authorize the Chairman of the Board to endorse the Storm Alfred Reimbursement Documents for the Town to receive the \$113,818.30 reimbursement and to have the Town Administrator try to get the remaining reimbursement money or at least an explanation as to why the Town did not receive it. Seconded by Mr. Elstein. Motion passes 5 – 0.
- 4) **Appearances Before the Board:**
 - 7:35 p.m. Public Hearing – Belchertown Regional FY12 Performance Hearing: Erica Johnson from Pioneer Valley Planning Commission came before the Board to provide the Board with an update. Mr. Aponte read the Public Hearing Notice.

Ms. Johnson stated she has been the project manager for the shared Community Development Block Grant. She stated that she brought a sign-in sheet with her that she would like to pass around. It goes into her file which is looked over by the State when they come in to monitor and make sure she's doing what she says she's doing.

She stated the Town had received the 2012 Community Block Grant which consisted of two big projects. One being housing rehabilitation and septic repair and the other being another regional project for the housing authority.

She stated the total grant was for \$889,889. The program was started in 2012 and will be completed at the end of this calendar year. Money was received to do housing rehab and septic repair for private residences. Residents were able to apply for deferred payment

loans on their property meaning that after 15 years these loans are forgiven. They received a grant for 17 units and have done 19 because some repairs came in cheaper than expected. Twelve units were done in Belchertown. Ten of those units were housing and two were septic replacement. Between the three towns (Hadley, Granby and Belchertown) there has been a total of \$343,095 that has gone directly into the three towns. Most projects are finished but there are three that are still ongoing.

The other project has been some improvements to the housing authority sites in the three towns. The Belchertown Housing Authority project is due to start on July 29th. The sidewalks in front of the units are going to be replaced in Belchertown. There will also be the installation of some handicap accessible ramps.

Mr. Aponte questioned if Ms. Johnson knew approximately when the Belchertown Housing Authority project is scheduled to be finished. She said they were given a three week estimate for the work to be completed.

Mr. Elstein questioned the estimate on jobs that were created and questioned if it is mostly local people doing the jobs. She stated that the housing contractors are local and it depends on what you consider local. Local for them is the Hampden and Hampshire County. The Housing Authority contractors are a little further out but still in Massachusetts.

Mr. Aponte questioned when Belchertown would be available to apply for another Block Grant. Ms. Johnson stated Belchertown could apply in the next round.

Doug Albertson, Town Planner stated this is the second time we've done this program and he thinks it's been a great success.

Mr. Elstein commented that on the first grant all residents of town were eligible to apply but with this current grant it was restricted to the center of town. He questioned if similar restrictions would apply in the future. Ms. Johnson stated that was correct. The way the block grants work now is if the town has a population greater than 5,000 the activities have to be targeted to a specific area which can be altered with different block grants. Some towns keep it to the same area and others change the area. It would be up to the town to decide how they want the block grant to work. Mr. Elstein feels there are residents equally in need in other areas of Town. He believes Pioneer Valley Planning Commission drew up the maps for the target area and feels they should file those maps. Ms. Johnson stated that they are able to grant a certain number of emergency projects that are outside the target area.

Mr. Elstein moved to close the Public Hearing.
Seconded by Mr. Aponte. Motion passes 5 – 0.

- 7:50 p.m. Planning Board – Joint Appointment(s) to Planning Board: Mr. Elstein indicated there are two vacancies on the Planning Board. Christopher Laurenzo, Chairman of the Planning Board called the Planning Board meeting to order. He stated that they have an opening on the Planning Board as one of their members resigned.

There is a full member position open on the Planning Board and two applicants who are both here tonight.

Mr. Aponte stated, and asked for confirmation from the Town Clerk, that since it's an elected position and it's vacant that MGL is such that the Board of Selectmen and the Planning Board in a joint meeting actually get to interview the applicants and then vote on the appointment. Mr. Barnett clarified until the next election. Mr. Albertson, Town Planner explained that the seat is a 5-year term. The member resigned after a year so whoever gets appointed tonight would serve until the May 2015 elections and then the person who is elected would serve a 3-year term to finish out the 5-years. He stated there is also an opening for Alternate Member for Voting for Special Permits. Mr. Elstein questioned if the Board of Selectmen also vote on that. Mr. Albertson confirmed that it is a joint appointment. Mr. Albertson stated that this is an annual appointment that goes through the fiscal year.

Mr. Aponte suggested that Chairman Laurenzo have his Board come up with the Selectmen so they are all together. Chairman Aldrich asked Mr. Laurenzo to introduce the candidates to the Boards. Mr. Laurenzo indicated that the first candidate is Robert Wojtczak. Mr. Wojtczak has been the alternate voting member with the Planning Board for a year and a half to two years. Mr. Wojtczak would like the vacant seat. The next candidate is Michael Hofler. Mr. Hofler sent a letter in when the position was advertised. He would also like the vacant seat.

The candidates were asked to make a statement. Mr. Wojtczak introduced himself. He has been living in town for about nine or ten years. He is interested in the vacant Planning Board seat. He has been the alternate voting member for the past two years. He can't say that he's learned a lot but he did learn a lot of stuff that goes on in Planning Board meetings. As he said two years ago when he applied for the alternate voting member position he has a vested interest in the Planning Board because he lives in Town and likes to know what's going on. He wants to make sure the children have an enjoyable Town, it's the way he sees it and it's also the way his neighbors see it. If they have any questions he can try to help them out and answer those questions. His background is in insurance, homeowner's claims and such and construction. He has his builder's license and has built a couple of homes in town as well in some other towns. He likes reading blue prints and looking at land surveys. It's not a paid position and he feels like he has something to offer and give back to the Town.

Mike Hofler introduced himself to the Board and stated he appreciates the Board's time. He stated there are three things to know about him. He took early retirement so he has the time and energy to devote to supporting the Planning Board; being there for meetings and site visits. He retired from 30 years in the chemical industry; he is a chemical engineer so he is very comfortable with all kinds of technical drawings, technical rules and regulations, specifications and anything of that nature. The chemical industry is the second most highly regulated industry in America with nuclear power being number one. As an operations manager, an engineering manager with the chemical industry he is familiar with OSHA rules and regulations and the idea of climbing into the Mass General

Laws, Chapter 61 and 61A & B is very comfortable ground. He has no problem understanding all the by-laws, rules and regulations. He stated the last thing the Boards need to know is that he is committed to Belchertown. He said the first thing he did when he retired was to take all of his emergency response qualifications and went to the Fire Department and volunteered as a firefighter. He has been a volunteer there since his retirement until his heart gave out. His health is bad and he cannot physically be allowed to drive the engine anymore. He has been looking for another way that he can help the Town that he can support the Town with his knowledge and years of working in the chemical industry and really wants to help support the Belchertown of tomorrow in planning it out, thinking it out and figuring it out. He thinks he can be the one to do that. He is asking for the Boards support.

Mr. Elstein indicated that one of the "policies" that the Selectmen have been interested in for a long time is the goal of reaching a 10% threshold in affordable housing. Mr. Elstein questioned Mr. Albertson if the Town is now between 6 – 7% of that goal. Mr. Albertson indicated we are at 6.4%. He asked both candidates if they had any thoughts as to how the Town could move in that direction.

Mr. Wojtczak stated that he feels it's important that the Town address the issue and try to move in the right direction. He would rather have the Town control what goes on in the Town and not have a situation like South Hadley where they had where a developer came in on Ferry Street near Brunelle's Marina and build 80 condos because they didn't meet the 10% threshold. He feels that Belchertown is in a situation where we are growing, housing is up and it's growing but it's a lot of single family residences. There is no low income housing or very minor low income housing. There should be a place in Town for more affordable housing but in general he thinks it's a sensitive issue when it comes to the taxpayers in Town as to where it's going to be. Having had said that he has no pros or cons for it but does agree it's something that needs to be addressed and to try and meet the 10% threshold so a developer doesn't come into Town and tell us that he's going to put in 80 units. He feels it's more of a democratic situation.

Mr. Hofler stated that in 2006 he was living in Virginia and had to relocate to Massachusetts. He went from Enfield, CT to South Deerfield and from Brimfield to Blanford. He drove the streets and talked to people. He was looking for a town of vitality, a town with some vibrancy, a town that was looking more towards the future then just trying to hold their own. One of the ways to get that vitality and vibrancy is with diversity. If low income housing can be mixed in rather than isolated pockets you will get the diversity and the vitality but if we look at trying to create separation to meet a number and try to isolate to meet a requirement then we will not build the quality of population that we need in town. To him it's more a matter of integration rather than just a sheer number of we've met the requirement.

Mr. Aponte stated that this appointment would be good until the next election and questioned both candidates if they were appointed if they would be willing to run for the position at that time and if not appointed would they be interested in the Alternate Voting Member to the Planning Board. Mr. Wojtczak stated he would run for the

position at election time. He stated he hasn't voted as an alternate voting member in two years that he's been in that position and would rather be a Planning Board member. Mr. Hofler stated that he would have the same answer for both questions.

Both candidates were asked what their vision is for Belchertown. Mr. Hofler answered first. Mr. Hofler believes that the Master Plan to have a village approach rather than a strip mall approach is what we need. He doesn't think that we are there yet and that we don't have walk-ability or bike-ability and we don't have a good score in terms of non-automotive access. The village approach will help build the walk-ability score. He thinks we should focus on the village concept / the community concept with a local tie in is the right direction for us to move in.

Mr. Wojtczak stated the way he sees the Town now he loves it. Seeing all the old maple trees everywhere. The schools are growing; people are going to keep moving here because it's a great Town to live in. We have to stay on top of things and not let it slip through the cracks. We have to form it to the way we want it for our kids. He feels we have a grasp of what we don't want here in Town, we don't want strip malls like Riverdale Road in West Springfield. He indicated that we don't just want single family homes in Town, we need business, and we need infrastructure. He thinks we just need one good break where a good food restaurant comes to Town and then they will all start coming and he feels we need to stay on top of it. He stated that his first year as the alternate voting member he brought the architectural design standards back for commercial use buildings. He indicated we don't want a box store looking like a box; we want the old New England feel. There should be room for parking and sidewalks with commercial buildings. He sees Belchertown in the future as a quaint New England town with Quabbin history; we are the 6th largest land wise town in the State. As a Planning Board member you don't get paid but you have to pay attention as it's a big job.

The Boards continued to ask questions of the two candidates giving both parties time to respond. At the conclusion of the question and answer section of the interviews, Mr. Aponte informed both candidates that he was very impressed with them and he would be comfortable with either of them being selected to fill the vacant seat. As a tiebreaker he would vote for Mr. Wojtczak as he has been in the position of the Alternate Voting Member and would hope that if that were to happen that the Planning Board extend the offer to Mr. Hofler to be the Alternate Voting Member to the Planning Board.

Mr. Aponte moved to appoint Mr. Wojtczak as a full Voting Member to the Planning Board. Mr. Barnett stated that he thinks that everyone should write down the name of the person that they want in that position; it's what they did in the School Committee vote rather than making a motion. Mr. Aponte stated that this is binary – it's one way or the other. He thinks that if the motion is seconded then everyone votes and if the majority is for Mr. Wojtczak then he's appointed. If the vote is not in his favor then another motion needs to be made to appoint Mr. Hofler and then another vote taken in which Mr. Hofler should be appointed. Mr. Barnett thinks everyone should write the name down for the candidate they want. It was agreed that the Board would do a roll

call vote. Planning Board members voted first: Chris Laurenzo voted Mr. Hofler, Dan Beaudette voted Rob Wojtczak, George Synan voted Rob Wojtczak, Jim Natle voted Rob Wojtczak, Selectmen's votes: Mr. Archible voted Rob Wojtczak, Mr. Barnett voted Rob Wojtczak, Mr. Elstein voted Mr. Hofler, Mr. Aponte voted Mr. Wojtczak and Ms. Aldrich voted Mr. Wojtczak. Mr. Laurenzo announced that Mr. Wojtczak is the new Planning Board member.

Mr. Synan moved to appoint Mr. Wojtczak as the Planning Board member. Seconded by Mr. Natle. Motion passes 9 – 2

Mr. Laurenzo asked Mr. Hofler if he would be interested in the Alternate Voting Member for Special Permits. He indicated he would accept the position. Mr. Synan moved the Boards appoint Mr. Hofler as the Alternate Voting Member for Special Permits to the Planning Board. Seconded by Mr. Elstein. Motion passes 9 – 0.

Mr. Synan moved the Planning Board adjourn their meeting. Seconded by Mr. Natle. Motion passes - all in favor.

5) Discussion/Action Items:

- a. Appointment of Auxiliary Officer(s): Mr. Archible stated that Chief Fox is requesting the appointment of five Auxiliary Police Officers. Mr. Archible moved the Board appoint Vincent Daponte, Ron Bibby, Brittney Vallee, Stephanie Cusson and Jeffrey Beleski as Auxiliary Police Officers, effective July 31, 2014. Seconded by Mr. Elstein. Mr. Elstein stated that he is glad the auxiliary police officer program has been continuing successfully now for several years. Motion passes 5 – 0.
- b. Appointment of Department Assistant I – Assessor's Office: Mr. Barnett moved the Board appoint Jennifer Oey-Benoit to the position of Department Assistant I, effective August 7, 2014. Seconded by Mr. Elstein. Motion passes 5 – 0.
- c. Acknowledge DPW Employee Notice of Retirement: Mr. Archible read the retirement letter from Michelle Burns, DPW employee. Her retirement date was effective July 9, 2014. The Board acknowledged Ms. Burn's retirement. A thank you letter will be sent to Ms. Burns for her years of service.
- d. Accept DPW Highway Laborer Resignation: Mr. Archible informed the Board that Walter Henry resigned as a highway department laborer effective July 25, 2014. A thank you letter will also be sent to Mr. Henry for his service to the Town.
- e. Endorse Amendment to Traffic Rules and Orders – Specific Provisions Signal and Intersection Project – Main Street, Maple Street, Jabish Street: Mr. Archible read all the specific provisions for the amendment to traffic rules and orders originally voted on July 14, 2014. These were signs for Left Land Must Turn Left, Right Lane Must Turn Right, Pedestrian Sign, Stop Here on Red, Left Turn Yield on Green, Bicycle Detection Sign. Mr. Archible moved to amend the traffic rules and orders. Seconded by Mr. Elstein. Motion passes 5 – 0.
- f. Endorse Chapter 90 Request: Mr. Archible stated that there is a project request for Chapter 90 funds for paving Maplecrest Drive, Rockrimmon Street, River Street and Cold Spring Street in the amount of \$378,000. Mr. Archible moved the Board endorse

the Chapter 90 Project Request in the amount of \$378,000. Seconded by Mr. Barnett. Motion passes 5 – 0.

- g. Endorse Fair Contract: Mr. Aponte stated that this is an annual contract with Mark Fanelli's Travelling Amusement Park for the 2014 Belchertown Fair. To his knowledge there have never been any complaints against Mr. Fanelli and all paperwork is in place. It is for approximately \$29,000 being paid to the Town. Mr. Aponte moved the Board of Selectmen endorse the 2014 Fair Contract. Seconded by Mr. Elstein. The motion passes 5 – 0.
- h. Right of First Refusal – Wilson: Mr. Elstein presented the details to the Board regarding the Right of First Refusal for Chapter 61B, Robert A. Wilson, parcel of land identified as map 244, lot 55.1. He indicated that the Belchertown Water Commissioners have requested an opportunity to review this property. He further stated that there is "breaking news" that the Conservation Commission just voted to refer this to the Belchertown Water District. Mr. Elstein moved that the Board follow that lead and refer the property to the Belchertown Water District. Seconded by Mr. Aponte. Mr. Elstein added that this will delay the Board's making a decision on exercising the right of first refusal. The Board confirmed that they are well within their 120 days to make a decision regarding the right of first refusal. Motion passes 5 – 0.
- i. Reverend Haqq -5K Road Race: Mr. Aponte stated that Reverend Haqq is requesting the Board of Selectmen endorse and allow a 5k race for charitable reasons to be held on September 6th here in Town. Chief Fox and Public Safety officials have reviewed the request and have no concerns with the race. Reverend Haqq indicated that one of the routes provided was no longer in play. That route would have included a small section of Rt. 9. He expects between 50 and 75 people to participate in the race. He stated that his church has supported a mission since 1990. It is an orphanage for children with Aids. All profits will go to them.

Mr. Elstein moved the Board endorse the 5K Race. Seconded by Mr. Aponte. Motion passes 5 – 0.

- j. Executive Session – MGL Chapter 30A, Section 21, Subsection 2: Mr. Aponte moved the Board enter executive session at the conclusion of their regular session pursuant to MGL Chapter 30A, Section 21, Subsection 2 and not to reconvene in open meeting. Seconded by Mr. Elstein. Roll call vote: Aldrich – yes, Aponte – yes, Elstein – yes, Archible – yes, Barnett – yes.
- k. Miscellaneous Matters: None.

6) Town Administrator's Report: None.

7) Review of Weekly Mail:

#16) Lori Allen, the new coordinator for the Belchertown Family Center sent a letter introducing herself to the Board. Mr. Elstein reminded the Board that during budget talks it was decided to try and sell the Family Center building but to try and move the Family Center to the Teen Center. He will be meeting with them tomorrow to try and sort out what their needs are.

#22) Mr. Aponte indicated the Town Administrator has submitted a letter regarding the electricity aggregation / Mass DPU and concerns that he has with all the correspondence

going back and forth between different agencies. He feels that Todd Ford from the Hampshire Council of Governments should come before the Board to answer these questions. Ms. Aldrich thinks he should be invited to come to the Board's meeting on the 28th. The Board was in agreement.

8) Individual Board Members' Reports:

Mr. Archible: Mentioned that this past Wednesday a group of people got together at Chestnut Hill Community School and moved the basketball court. These were volunteers who volunteered their time and equipment and fuel. He wants to thank Steve Hulmes, Jason Lafleur, Dave Kibbe, Lloyd Butler. It was a good start. This past Saturday at the VFW they had a beer and wine tasting and raised \$19,000

Mr. Archible questioned Channel 5 if they will be broadcasting the Public Hearing for the Charter / Comcast switch. He was told that they will broadcast it. Mr. Aponte stated that if the public can't make it and has a question to call the Board of Selectmen's Office with the question so the Selectmen can pass the question on.

Mr. Elstein: Reminded everyone that this Thursday at 7:00 p.m. in the Selectmen's Meeting room there will be a public hearing specific to the agreement that Charter Communications has made with Comcast. The understanding is that Comcast is taking over all of the Charter accounts and Charter towns in Massachusetts. It is open to the public, all are invited to attend and ask questions. He hopes there will be representatives there that can explain the impacts to the Town.

He attended a meeting for the Council on Aging last Thursday. He stated that there are some short and term requirements. There are some very serious potential problems for the long term requirements in terms of space which may require additional building and all the implications that has in the appropriate terms of appropriate town votes, bonding, architectural plans and those kinds of things. The Council on Aging appointed a committee to study this and look at what kinds of questions should be asked for the short term problem and for the long term problem.

Mr. Aponte: Stated there are a lot of happenings with the EDIC. He began with the Bell Arts Artisan Solar Village Proposal. There was a full proposal/presentation several weeks ago which is very different from anything we have seen so far. As it is so different both Mr. Aponte and the EDIC stressed that there needs to be an informational process. He also stated that the Governor had "allocated" upwards of \$4 million for clean up of the state school. Also it was recently discovered that \$1 million is immediately available which ties in as we did receive a MEMA waiver. The only roadblock right now is the Massachusetts Historical Commission. They have to perform an archeological review at the site and unfortunately it does sound like it could take months. The paperwork is in and moving forward. One of the developers who responded to the RFP has been "appointed" for the Pad I assisted living facility. There seems to be consensus among the EDIC Town team that the \$1 million should be dedicated primarily for the remediation that would effect Pad I and if any remaining funds to branch out from there.

Ms. Aldrich: On Tuesday night the School Committee will be presented with a group of candidates for the superintendent position. They want to have someone in place by January 2nd or 3rd, 2015. They will get the applications on Tuesday night and will begin the interviews the following week.

- 9) **Questions from the Press:** Jim Russell from the *Republican* asked if the federal regulators had already approved the transfer between Comcast and Charter and then stated that the public hearing isn't for people to decide if they want Comcast or Charter. He was told that no, that is not the case. He also confirmed the meeting date with the Hampshire Council of Governments, it will be August 25th, Ms. Aldrich was looking at the July calendar dates.

Ms. Aldrich noted that she needed to mention that Board's regularly scheduled meeting on August 11th is going to be postponed as there will not be a quorum for the meeting. It is tentatively being scheduled for August 18th. It is also tentative that Hampshire Council of Governments will attend the August 25th meeting.

Mr. Russell also asked the Board if they had any comments regarding the letter that Mr. Brougham had written regarding the electricity aggregation. Mr. Aponte informed Mr. Russell that Mr. Brougham has concerns about the way questions are being asked and responded to. The Attorney General's office and DPU wants to see the Town have greater involvement in the question and answers.

- 10) **Adjournment:** Meeting adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

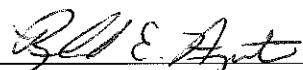
Minutes submitted by Gary L. Brougham, Town Administrator


Board approved/endorsed: 11/20/14

Board of Selectmen - Town of Belchertown

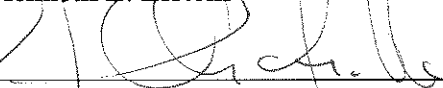
Endorsed by a majority:


Brenda Q. Aldrich, Chairman


Ronald E. Aponte


Kenneth E. Elstein

William R. Barnett


George D. Archible