BOARD OF SELECTMEN

P.O. Box 372
West Brookfield, Massachusetts 01585

BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING MINUTES OF AUGUST 23, 2022

PRESENT: Mr. David J. Pierce; Chairman, Mr. Roland Sickenberger; Vice-Chair and Mr. Eric von Bleicken, Clerk

ATTENDEES: Town of Warren Board of Selectmen & Staff (David Dufresne, Derek Veliz, Richard Eichacker, James Ferrara, and Karen Dusty), Tammi Melanson, Mark O'Donnell, and Jessica Wemette

Called meeting to Order at 6:00 PM

QUABOAG REGIONAL M/H SCHOOL – AUDIT

Members of the Board of Selectmen for the Town of Warren were in attendance this evening seeking support from the Board in a request for an audit of the schools' finances. Mr. Dufresne, Chair of the Warren Selectboard felt that considering the administration changing hands, this is the perfect opportunity to start with a clean slate and a clear view of the budget. Mr. Dufresne stated that it was confirmed by the prior administration that they (QRMHS) have created a slush fund, to which neither town can sustain. Both towns are very concerned over the spending that has gone on at the expense of town departments. Under the Regional Agreement, a 2/3's vote by the School Committee is necessary to see this happen. Both Boards are in full agreement to sign a joint letter requesting the audit. Jim Ferrara, Town Administrator in Warren will work with Mrs. Acerra in drafting a letter for both Board's to sign. A draft will be presented to both Boards for their approval. ***Motion to draft a joint letter requesting fiscal audit of the school made by Mr. von Bleicken; second: Mr. Sickenberger – unanimous.***

In addition, both Boards agreed to meet quarterly to keep the lines of communication open.

AGENDA ITEM #7 – ARPA FUNDS – ESSENTIAL WORKER PAY (ITEM OUT OF ORDER)

After many discussions, the Board reaffirmed their previous vote to approve Essential Worker Pay from ARPA Funds. Mr. Sickenberger, who took the lead in this matter had to re-do the formula in which to pay. The intent is to move forward with the revised numbers.

NEPBA LOCAL 83A & 83B – COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENTS

After many months of negotiations, the following motion was made to ratify the Collective Bargaining Agreements with the Police Department. ***Motion to ratify the Collective Bargaining Agreements for the NEPBA Local 83A (Patrolman's Union) and NEPBA Local 83B (Sgt. Letendre) as presented and approved by Counsel made by Mr. Sickenberger; second: Mr. von Bleicken – unanimous.***

COLONIAL POWER – MUINICIPAL AGGREGATION PLAN

With the current contract expiring soon, Colonial Power was looking to enter into another agreement for the Municipal Aggregation Plan. Since its inception, this program has saved the residents of West Brookfield close to $600k in electrical costs. With no objections from the Board the following motion was

made: ***Motion to enter into a one (1) year municipal aggregation agreement with Colonial Power for electricity made by Mr. Sickenberger; second: Mr. von Bleicken – unanimous.***

TREASURERS POSITION

To date, this position has been offered to an individual, however the offer was declined. Mr. Sickenberger will take another look at the resume's that were received and go from there.

PERSONNEL BYLAW – DISCUSSION ON REVISED DRAFT

The Board would like the opportunity to review the revised draft. This matter will be placed on an upcoming agenda.

SENIOR CENTER SEPTIC ISSUE

While not on tonight's agenda, the Board discussed the septic issue with members of the Board of Health. This matter has been kicked around with no resolution. The Selectmen's Office will take the lead.

Also, while in attendance, the members of the Board of Health requested support with restoring their original FY 23 budget request. They need an additional $2,600 for the testing at the landfill. The Selectmen suggested that they go before the Advisory Committee with their request.

STORMWATER AUTHORITY – FIRE DEPARTMENT REPRESENTATIVE

With the recent retirement of Lt. John Hicks from the Fire Department, the SWA needed a current member from the Fire Department to serve as their representative. With no objections, the following motion was made: ***Motion to appoint Deputy Chief Dan Santos to the SWA as the Fire Department Representative made by Mr. Sickenberger; second: Mr. von Bleicken – unanimous.***

MINUTES

Motion to approve and sign the Minutes of July 12th and August 9, 2022, as written made by Mr. Sickenberger; second: Mr. von Bleicken – unanimous.

TREASURY WARRANTS

Motion to approve and sign Warrant No's 23 P#4, 23 W #4 dated August 25, 2022, in the amounts of $62,297.17 and $93,176.11 respectively made by Mr. Sickenberger; second: Mr. von Bleicken – unanimous.

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY REPORT/CORRESPONDENCE

1. The office received a letter of resignation from Louise Douglas from the Cultural Council. - ***Noted***
2. The office received a letter from the Water Department regarding the status of the Leland Road Water Project. – ***Noted***
3. The office received an inquiry from Sgt. Letendre regarding his current schedule as the Acting Chief. As a Sergeant he was working a 4/2 schedule, now as Acting Chief he is working a 5/2 schedule which is resulting in lost days off. He is looking to see what the board can do to remedy the situation. – ***The Board agreed to allow every***

other Friday while serving as Acting Chief providing it does not cost any more money to fill a shift.

4. I put in a request for an additional disbursement of ARPA funds. This allotment is for $195,000.00. The town should receive an additional payment of $361K, however the US Treasury has yet to provide a date as to when. - ***Noted***
5. NEIT was on site today. They worked on installing new hard drives on 6 computers and are also replacing 5 computers in various offices. Work will be completed by tomorrow afternoon the latest. - ***Noted***

COMMENTS & CONCERS - NONE

NEXT MEETING DATE: September 6, 2022 – 6 PM

Motion to Adjourn made by Mr. Sickenberger; second: Mr. von Bleicken – unanimous at 7:50 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca Acerra

Rebecca Acerra
Executive Secretary

Eric von Bleicken/mm

Eric von Bleicken, Clerk

9-20-22

Date Approved