



TOWN OF MENDON

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

20 Main Street

Mendon, Massachusetts 01756

Telephone: (508) 473-2312 Fax: (508) 478-8241

MEETING MINUTESFEBRUARY 9, 2005

APPROVED: FEBRUARY 23, 2005

Meeting called to order at 7:00 pm by Chairman Dennis Shaheen, attended by Selectmen Ken O'Brien & Sharon Cutler.

1. Pledge of Allegiance

Board recites the Pledge.

2. Minutes

Motion by Ken O'Brien to approve the Meeting Minutes from the Executive Session for February 8, 2005 with the corrected date, Sharon Cutler 2nd, all in favor.

3. Fire Department

Motion by Sharon Cutler to appoint Ernest Horn of Mendon as the Fire Chief for the Town of Mendon, such appointment to take effect upon the resignation, retirement or vacation of the position by Chief Charles Johnson, which is expected to take place no later than June 30,2005.The terms of the new Chief's position will include the responsibility to remain the Police Chief, subject to reaching a mutually agreeable contract covering the terms of employment for the two chief positions. The Chief has agreed to step down as Fire Chief at the end of 5 years if the Board of Selectmen makes a written request that he do so at that time. To make this effective, the new Chief has agreed to execute an undated resignation letter to be held by the Town Administrator and to be submitted to the Board at its direction subject to the aforesaid vote after 5 years. The Board agrees that the Chief may resume his duties as Police Chief on a full-time basis, relinquishing the duties of Fire Chief at any time upon 90 day's notice to the Board, second by Ken O'Brien.

Chairman Shaheen asked the Board if they have any comments.

Selectmen O'Brien commented that the duties of the Board are to ensure the safety and well-being of our citizens and to provide exceptional service to the community. The decision being made tonight is of the utmost importance to the town. Before making his decision he did listen and talk to many residents and members of the Mendon Fire Department to better understand the needs & concerns.

- In the past there has been considerable flaws involving communications with the fire department and the Board
- Proper training within the department has been a concern
- Pay inadequacies
- The need to create an ambulance reserve account where all of the income from the ambulance is used for the purpose of replacing the capital equipment needs of the fire department

Having the same person responsible for both departments will ensure communication, training, as well as cross training between the police and fire department, and having personnel working as a team to improve the department as well as make the community safer. Selectmen O'Brien is in support of officially appointing Ernie Horn, Chief of the Mendon Fire Department. Selectmen O'Brien commented that all men and women serving as members of either the Fire Department or the Police Department are brave and dedicated individuals and believes Chief Horn would be a leader who will put them in the best position to succeed.

MEETING MINUTESFEBRUARY 9, 2005

Selectmen Cutler thanked the residents for their comments and concerns. She stated that she did a lot of research especially with towns who also have the same individual heading both fire and police departments. Of the four towns where one individual holds both positions, one could be considered a model and so she concentrated her efforts there. The Town of Lynnfield said it was not an easy transition but gave her some good points.

- Use of strong call fire fighter component
- Five full time fire fighters
- Run 2 ambulances 24/7
- Day-men rote shifts
- All policemen are EMT's, this is a requirement of employment
- An enterprise fund was established which supports the entire EMS as a self funded service. Enough revenue is earned in this fund to replace an ambulance every 5 years without cost to the taxpayers in addition to all expenses and salaries associated with providing EMS Service.
- Fire and Police share the same facility
- Ambulance does have a satellite office in So. Lynnfield.

Selectmen Cutler stated she weighed the pros and cons and sincerely believes that at this time appointing Chief Horn to both positions is in the best interest of public safety for Mendon, and she asked the fire fighters to offer their support to the new Fire Chief and help him meet the goals that have been given to him and the fire department.

Chairman Shaheen listed the goals that have been set for the Chief:

1. Develop a water resource plan to deal with the fact that Mendon does not have a public water system
2. Develop a catastrophic preplan for the schools
3. Develop productive relationships between the police dept., fire department and the Town
4. Strengthen the call dept. We have a combination fire dept. and that will not change for the foreseeable future. The call members of the dept are as important to the function of the department as the full time personnel.
5. Build a more efficient working relationship with the contiguous towns that will improve the public safety of Mendon.

Dennis further stated the he feels that Chief Horn is the right man for the job, he is well versed, very confident and he believes he can achieve the Board's goals. He believes that in 5 years, we will have a stronger, more productive fire department. He thanked Chief Horn for taking on these extra duties.

Chairman Shaheen called for a vote on the motion that had been made and seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

4. Finance Committee

Tom Grant & Lawney Tinio recommends David Breen to be appointed to fin/com. **Motion by Ken O'Brien to appoint David Breen to the Finance Committee with a term to expire on 6/30/07, Sharon Cutler 2nd, all in favor.**

Police Station Design

Chief Horn, Tom Grant, Lawney Tinio and the Board discussed a new Police Station. Chief Horn told the Board he has started with a new design and would be looking to use about \$9700 from the Police Station Design account for conceptual drawings that can be presented to a town meeting. A new station is needed
MEETING MINUTESFEBRUARY 9, 2005

because it will cost the Town approximately \$150,000.00 this year in overtime to house prisoners in other towns' stations.

Selectmen Cutler stated she is uncomfortable going forward with a new police station without a total capital plan; she is not sure she supports a police station on the Fino land. Maybe a joint facility would be better. However, she does favor sending this police station proposal to the voters.

Chairman Shaheen stated he is not in favor of a committee; that the Town needs a police station; fire station, library and new growth will dictate the school and we do not need a committee to tell us what we need.

Chief Horn stated we have been dealing with police station issues since 1997 and spent \$100,000. We desperately need a police station, the longer we wait, the more it will cost and in the meantime we will be paying \$150,000-\$250,000 per year to guard prisoners in other towns.

Selectmen O'Brien suggested amending the current bylaw to change the requirement for a Capital Planning Committee from every year to every 5 years. But we shouldn't wait to do a police station until a capital plan is in place. Selectmen Cutler supported putting a bylaw amendment on a warrant.

Motion by Sharon Cutler to approved spending up to \$12,000 from the Police Station Design account for conceptual drawings for a police station located on the Fino property. Ken O'Brien 2nd; all in favor.

School Committee

Tom Grant told the Board FinCom met with the School Committee and to expect a significant increase in school debt payments.

5. Administrative Issues

Boy Scouts-use of town seal for neckerchiefs

The Board discussed the request of Mendon Boy Scout Troop 1 to use the Town Seal on their neckerchiefs.
Motion by Ken O'Brien to allow Mendon Boy Scout Troop 1 to use the town seal on neckerchiefs to be made for their trip to Germany this summer. Sharon Cutler 2nd; all in favor.

Set Town Meeting Dates

The Board set Special Town Meeting dates of March 21, 2005 & April 25, 2005.

The Board would like Ms. Tetreault to discuss with Chief Horn his need for money for over time.

Forest Park

The Board discussed the request Mr. Hackenson made for release of more bond money. Selectmen Ken O'Brien would like to bring in Highway, Planning Board & Engineering in for a final walkthrough. Selectmen O'Brien asked Ms. Tetreault to check for the deed to Forest Park.

MEETING MINUTESFEBRUARY 9, 2005

Dudley Road

Ms. Tetreault discussed with the Board a request received by Taniel Bedrosian to accept Dudley Road.

Ms. Tetreault will advise Mr. Bedrosian of the procedure to get a road accepted.

Motion by Ken O'Brien to adjourn, Sharon Cutler 2nd, all in favor. Meeting adjourned @ 8:33 pm

Respectfully Submitted

Terry Palmer
Administrative Secretary
Board of Selectmen