

BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MINUTES OF MEETING – MARCH 17, 2011

Present: Gordon D. Bailey, Chairman, David J. Consolati, Patricia D. Carlino, Board of Selectmen.
Robert L. Nason, Town Administrator

1. **Approval of Minutes:** March 1, 2011
2. **Public Hearing:** None
3. **General Business:** Bob Daley, Daley & Sons Trucking, came before the Board to ask for a letter of support for a site on Route 102 he is planning to move his business to. Selectman Consolati recused himself. Presently, his business is located in Lenox Dale. Mr. Daley explained that the site contains 15 acres of land but National Heritage Foundation, a division of Mass. Fisheries and Wildlife, has declared ten areas as a sanctuary for an endangered box turtle. He said the National Heritage Foundation is mandating a considerable amount of work within the protected area to accommodate the turtles. Mr. Daley said that he had wanted to develop seven acres but five acres would be adequate for his business. Mr. Daley said the move is important to maximize the recycling portion of his business. The Selectmen agreed that having Mr. Daley move to Lee was good for the town and voted, unanimously, to send a letter of support to the National Heritage Foundation on behalf of Daley & Sons Trucking. Selectman Consolati returned to the meeting.

Fire Chief Alan Sparks came before the Board to review a revised work force roster. Chief Sparks reported that all officers have been moved up one position. Salaries have been adjusted but have stayed within the bottom line of the budget. The Board voted, unanimously, to approve the new work force roster for the Fire Department. Next Chief Sparks went over proposed changes to the Fire Department by-law. This has not been changed in many years. He and Mr. Nason went over the by-law and most of the changes modernize the language. Chief Sparks will make the proposed changes available to members of the department for their review and comments. The final draft will be put on the annual town meeting warrant. Lastly, Chief Sparks said he will be going before the Finance Committee with three proposals. The first is to purchase ten Scott airpaks. These need to be replaced periodically. He is also looking to replace a 35 year old motor for a boat used for rescues. Chief Sparks said he has asked Police Chief Glidden for the police cruiser that is to be retired. Chief Glidden is in favor of this but said it had to be repainted and Chief Sparks will ask the Committee to recommend the expenditure. Chief Glidden will purchase a new radio for the car through a grant. The Board thanked the Chief for his time and wished him well in his new position.

The Board voted, unanimously, to sign an agreement with Northeastern Commercial Services, LLC for the installation of insulation in the attic of the Central Fire Station.

Robert Macintosh, Bradley Architects, came before the Board to discuss the installation of a new dual oil/gas burner at the Central Fire Station. Mr. Macintosh stated that the one bid received by the town, \$12,980.00, was twice the cost estimated in an energy audit prepared by CET. If natural gas is vented into the existing chimney, the chimney will have to be relined with stainless steel at an additional cost of \$10,000.00. Mr. Macintosh suggested that the town look further into a gas only system which would include removing and existing oil tank and related heating system but that could cost \$20,000 to \$30,000, which is in the same price range as retrofitting the existing gas heating system. The whole project would than to be rebid. He also suggested that the Board wait until bids come in on the South Lee Fire Station project to see what funds from that grant may still be available. The Board voted, unanimously, to reject the single bid for the gas/oil burner at the Central Fire Station. Mr. Nason asked if the Board could meet on March 29th for this purpose. The members agreed to meet on March 29th at 5:30 PM.

Mary Brittain, Agricultural Commission member, came before the Board to ask them to approve a ballot question that would be considered at the May town election asking that the town cease assessing the excise imposed under General Laws Chapter 59, Section 8A on animals, machinery and equipment owned by individuals and non-corporate entities engaged in agricultural. Ms. Brittain said that the method used by the state to assess animals is unfair and in many instances some farmers are taxed while others are not. She felt that eliminating the excise would help promote local agriculture. After a brief discussion, the Board voted, unanimously, to place the question on the ballot at the May town election.

The Board received a letter from Steven Mack, Principal Engineer, Foresight Land Services, asking them to approve an amendment to the contract for the east side parking lot project. The additional costs are primarily for negotiations with Verizon and Dr. Cerruti to allow for the parking lot project to be completed. The additional cost totals \$2,250.00. The Board voted, unanimously, to approve the additional funding and authorize the Chairman to sign the amendment. Ch. Bailey asked for an itemized list of expenses.

The Board received a letter from CTSB-TV asking the town to sign a two year franchise agreement renewal to provide local cable access to the town. The Five Town Cable Advisory Committee unanimously supported this agreement. The Board voted, unanimously, to sign the two year renewal franchise agreement with CTSB-TV.

The Board received a Temporary Sign Permit application from St. Mary's School to place a sign in front of Carr Hardware announcing their Auction for Education on March 26th. The Board voted, unanimously, to approve the sign permit and waive the filing fee.

The Board received a request from Berkshire Housing Development Corp. to write a letter of support to the Dept. of Housing and Community Development in support of their application for funding for the renovation of the Consolati Building at 57 Main Street. Selectman Consolati recused himself. The Board voted in favor of writing a letter to the Dept. of Housing and Community Development in support of Berkshire Housing Development Corp.'s application for funding. Selectman Consolati returned to the meeting.

4. **Pending Business:** The Board received a memo from Suzanne Scarpa, Town Clerk, outlining a vacancy on the Planning Board and in four districts for representative. The memo stated that nomination papers are available until March 25th and must be returned by March 28th. Anyone interested should contact her office.

The Board received an e-mail from the EPA outlining a series of Housatonic River mini workshops to be held to provide the public with additional information and the opportunity to offer input to the "Rest of the River" clean-up solutions.

5. **Town Administrator:** Mr. Nason provided the Board with a list of FY12 budget requests. Mr. Nason said that employee health increases will amount to \$213,000 and the school budget will be coming on March 30th. Mr. Nason and the Board discussed various ways to reduce health insurance costs, while unlikely to be implemented this fiscal year, the changes were possibilities for fiscal 2013. The Board also discussed the Berkshire County Retirement Board voting to increase the COLA base from \$12,000 to \$14,000. Final approval will be determined by the Berkshire County Retirement Advisory Council. If approved, this will have an impact on the town's annual retirement appropriation starting in FY2013.

Mr. Nason provided the Board with a list of FY12 Capital Outlay and other special requests which far out way the amount of available funding. Mr. Nason reported that the Board of Assessors released overlay funds from 2000 to 2006.

Mr. Nason received a copy of a letter addressed to Mary Philpott, President, Lee Library Association, from Georgia Massucco, Library Director, stating that she will be retiring as of June 30, 2011. Mr. Nason said that will be approaching the town of Stockbridge and Lenox to discuss sharing the services of a Library Director. Mr. Nason met with Mary Philpott and Ms. Massucco regarding this. The Board thanked Ms. Massucco for her years of service to the town and voted, unanimously, to accepted her resignation with regret.

6. **Public Comments:** None

The Board congratulated the Lee Lady Wildcats basketball team for winning the Division III Western Mass. championship. The Board wished them well in the finals and Selectman Consolati said there is a fan bus going to the finals for anyone interested.

7. **Motion to adjourn:** The next regular Selectmen's meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 5, 2011 at 7:00 PM. The meeting adjourned at 8:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Suzanne M. Alderman, Selectmen's Secretary

cc:	Board of Selectmen	Board of Assessors	Dept. of Public Works
	Town Administrator	Board of Health	Town Treasurer
	Town Clerk	Conservation Commission	Town Reps. District Chairmen
	Town Collector	Police Chief	Superintendent of Schools
	Planning Board	Building Inspector	Town Accountant