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MINUTES
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 2005
REGULAR SESSION
SELECTMEN'S MEETING ROOM, TOWN HALL
7:00 PM

Call to Order

A regular meeting of the Board of Selectmen was convened in open session in the Selectmen's meeting room at Town Hall at 7:00 PM. All members were present. Town Administrator Younger and Assistant Town Administrator Conti were also present.

The Belmont High School Girls' Swim Team appeared before the Selectmen. Selectman Brownsberger introduced team co-captain Kayley Seder who updated the Board on the team's winning achievements at its Friday meet at Northeastern. The team received a standing ovation from the Selectmen. The winning relay team members were also recognized and honored.

Questions from Town Residents

There were no questions.

Action by Appointment

*Application for Licenses and Permit – Original
Victualler's License*

Teddy Piandes d/b/a Teddys Kitchen, 462 Common Street

Mr. Piandes appeared before the Board of Selectmen. He hopes to be ready to open his shop in two weeks. He and his wife will staff the restaurant. He plans to offer breakfast and lunch. Teddys Kitchen will have 20 seats to start and hopes to obtain a variance which will allow for 9 more seats.

The Board moved: to approve the petition and grant the victualler's license for 20 seats, with the understanding that a variance will be sought to expand to 29 seats.

The motion was carried unanimously (3-0).

Discussion of Police Officers Hiring

Police Chief Andrew O'Malley appeared before the Selectmen to review recent personnel changes in the Police Department. Chief O'Malley noted that the department is now down 7 people. He requested the Board's approval to hire three officers in addition to the three the Board had verbally approved previously, for a total of six positions. He also noted that there are a handful of other officers that are of retirement age and could retire at any time.

The Board moved: to approve the hiring of six officers.

The motion was carried unanimously (3-0).

Chief O'Malley raised the issue of transfers and noted that the Town loses out if it hires an officer, pays for their medical exams, pays to send them to the Academy and for additional training, and then loses the officer through a transfer to another Town. These costs amount to \$22,000 per officer.

The Board of Selectmen discussed whether or not to permit transfers, or whether to require that the community receiving the officer reimburse the Town for the training costs over a period of years.

Chief O'Malley noted that an 8-10% bump-up in salary would also eliminate some of the incentive to transfer.

The Board of Selectmen expressed interest in researching what neighboring towns and cities that have accepted transfers from Belmont are paying their police officers. The Board also inquired whether regionalization might have a role to play. The Chief expressed his view that regionalization of police departments would not be popular with the general public. He noted that 80% or more of the Town's police officers grew up here and attended Belmont High.

The Board of Selectmen asked Chief O'Malley and Mr. Younger to research these issues further and present the Board with some recommendations. They were also asked to consider non-monetary changes that could be made to the work environment for police that would help keep officers here.

Discussion of BEMA Appointments

Belmont Emergency Management Agency Director Leo Saidnawey appeared before the Board to discuss twelve appointments. The Board noted that these individuals for the most part are volunteers who do not receive compensation. The appointments constitute official recognition for the work that these individuals are already doing.

The Board moved: to appoint Robert Gad III, John Steeves, Angus Davison, Ernest Fay, Alexander Corbett III, Keith McLean, David Frizzell, Leo Saidnawey, Rick Nohl, Cory Taylor, Matthew Davison, and Emily

Saidnaway to the Belmont Emergency Management Agency; and further to designate them as special employees.

The motion was carried unanimously (3-0).

Action by Consent

Approval of BOS Minutes (9/26/05; 10/01/05; 10/05/05; 10/17/05)

The Board moved: to approve all the minutes from the 9/26/05, 10/01/05, 10/05/05, and 10/17/05 Selectmen's meetings.

The motion was carried unanimously (3-0).

Other

There was discussion of the next steps in the Woodfall Road process. The Town had received an offer to conduct an auction of the property. The Board expressed interest in learning more about this option and asked Mr. Younger to look into it.

The Board of Selectmen discussed its upcoming schedule. It plans to review and discuss budget options at its November 21 meeting, and review the roads program on November 28.

The Board asked Mr. Younger to contact the HealthCare Insurance Committee to arrange for it to report to the Board of Selectmen sooner rather than later. Other issues the Board hopes to take up soon are the disposition of the Harvard Lawn Fire Station and senior tax relief. The Board also recalled its upcoming meeting on building committees on December 5.

Mr. Younger reported that the financial software consultant recently hired by the town will be on site in December and then will put together the Town's RFP package.

The Board discussed ensuring that all Committee chairs are familiar with the provisions of the Open Meeting law and the requirement to post meeting minutes online. The Board asked Mr. Younger to make a list of important rules and considerations for chairmen to follow.

The Board also briefly raised the town's overnight parking ban in response to a citizen's correspondence and asked that this be put on the agenda for a future meeting.

The Board noted Comcast's communiqué requesting that they receive equal terms with whatever deal is worked out with Verizon.

Town Administrator Younger gave his report. The Police Department is monitoring parking complaints on Bright Road. The state has approved the Town's new tax rate. Fire Chief Dave Frizzell and Assistant Fire Chief Davison were commended by the Board for the grant they recently obtained for equipment.

The Board noted that the Senior Center project has passed the \$1 million milestone in private contributions from individuals and organizations.

The Board moved: to enter into executive session for the purpose of discussing litigation and the lease of real property and not to return to open session.

The motion was carried unanimously (3-0).

The open meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:45pm.

Thomas G. Younger
Town Administrator