

BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MINUTES
August 1, 2012

MEETING: Chairman Sushchuk called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM. Roll call established that Selectman Paul Sushchuk, Ronald Furmaniuk and Brian Patacchiola were all present.

Chairman Sushchuk declared the Sterling Lancaster Television as the only official electronic copy of the meeting.

MINUTES Selectman Patacchiola made the motion to approve the minutes of June 20th, 2012 regular meeting. Seconded by Selectman Furmaniuk. All in Favor.
Selectman Patacchiola made the motion to approve the executive session minutes of June 20, 2012, but not to be released until issue is resolved. Seconded by Selectman Furmaniuk. All in Favor.
Selectman Patacchiola made the motion to approve the minutes of July 11th, 2012 regular meeting. Seconded by Selectman Furmaniuk. All in Favor.

WRSD STERLING
REPRESENTATIVES

The Select Board met with Sarah LaMountain, Norman Plourde and Lance Harris to discuss recent events concerning the WRSD finances. Mr. Plourde informed the Board that the central office is trying to develop a new spending plan, due to the current crisis. Spending is currently frozen. They may need to reduce personnel and must have a balanced budget soon. He informed the Select Board that the School Board meeting is scheduled for Aug. 6, 2012, in the hopes of developing a new budget.

Ms LaMountain stated that Finance will reassess every line item on the budget. She stated that there is an estimated deficit of 700 thousand dollars. The school board is recommending a forensic audit. She also stated that the Chocksett School Principal has already been laid off, however, they are preserving direct services to the children.

Selectman Sushchuk and Furmaniuk expressed concern in this lay-off of the Chocksett Principal and the adverse affect that it may have on the students. Chairman Sushchuk requested a follow-up by the School Representatives at an up-coming Selectman's meeting.

Chairman Sushchuk commended Principal Morgan for her efforts and her work with the students of Chocksett.

SPECIAL TOWN
MEETING

VOTE: After some discussion, Chairman Sushchuk made the motion to set Tuesday, November 13, at 7:00 for the Special Town Meeting. Seconded by Selectman Patacchiola. All in favor

Selectman Patacchiola made the motion to open the warrant on August 1st and to close it on September 26th.

GOVERNMENT STUDY
RECOMMENDATIONS

Each Board member discussed each of the 12 Government Study Recommendations in turn.

1. 5 Member Select Board:

Discussion was held. There was no consensus. No action was taken.

2. Define Role of Select Board:

Chairman Sushchuk suggested that the Board set up Policies and Procedures. Selectman Furmaniuk suggested that the Board adopt the Policies and Procedures, similar to those currently in practice within the Town of Maynard. All agreed that liaisons to the Boards and Committees would enhance communication and help to keep the Selectmen informed as to the happenings within town boards and committees.

Chairman Sushchuk requested that a full list of all boards and committees be provided before the August 15th meeting and that a "short list" of boards and committees be provided by September.

3. Define the Powers and Responsibilities of the Town Administrator:

The board agreed decided to look at the Town Administrator's job description at a future meeting.

4. Approve the Appointment of Boards and Committees:

There was consensus that this concern has been adequately addressed during the last few months.

5. Re-Organize:

Board discussed the need for a full time or part time Town Planner. It was decided to bring in the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission for assistance in establishing the criteria for this possible position. The Board asked the MRPC be invited to a future Board meeting to discuss the role of Town Planner within the Town of Sterling..

6. Town Charter:

The possibility of establishing a Town Charter was discussed. The Board wishes to meet with the Government Study Committee to discuss further details.

7. Amend/restate bylaws:

The Board wishes to meet with the Government Study Committee to clarify this recommendation.

8. Maintain/publicize Town meeting:

Moderator, Dick Shepard requested that he receive a copy of the Warrant prior to printing.

He also informed the Board of Selectman that he will provide the Cable Committee with a video, explaining the Town Meeting process to the residents of Sterling to be televised prior to the Meeting. The Board agreed that more information should be provided to the town residents. By posting the Town Meeting via website, television and public distribution of Town Warrants, they believe that more people will attend the meetings .

9. Finance Committee Role:

Regarding their input on Every Town Article:

Chairman Sushchuk suggested that the Board meet with the Finance Committee. However, the Board agreed that the Finance Committee is doing a good job and that their input on EVERY Town Meeting Article is not necessary.

10. Create Town Organizational Chart:

All in favor.

11. Clarify Roles-Employment Practices:

Selectman Furmaniuk stated that Policies and Procedures are important and that at some point Sterling will likely need to employ a full-time Human Resource Director. All agreed.

12. Increase informational resources-Handbook/website:

Chairman Sushchuk suggested that it may be beneficial to have more information available to residents concerning the functions of Town Government as well as a source to find answers to Frequently Asked Questions. He suggested that perhaps a Citizen's Handbook would be an effective way to assist residents.

SELECTMAN GOALS:

The Town Administrator briefly reviewed the Draft Action Plan that she had prepared for implementing the 5 BOS goals for FY13:

1. Government Study: Input will be needed by all stakeholders
2. Planning/Economic Development: The Town Administrator explained that although the original goal was stated as Planning and grant writing, she had taken the liberty of adding Economic Development, particularly the Ambassador to Ambassador Program, under this goal. The Board agreed. The Board was urged to become more focused upon the potential position: Will it be a Planner and/or a Grant Writer? Full or part-time? More discussion will be needed.
3. Vault: On track. Funding to be requested at Special Town Meeting, in November.
4. Chairman Sushchuk discussed the goal of paperless meetings. He requested that the cost be defined for the process and reviewed by the Finance Committee in preparation for the Special Town meeting or Annual Town Meeting.
5. Policy Strategy Meetings: On track. First meeting set for September 4, 2012.

TOWN ADMIN. FOLLOW-UP/ ANNOUNCEMENT

- Town Administrator reminded the Board and town residents of the elevated water ban between the hours of 9 am - 5pm.
- MWRA will be cutting trees this fall at the North Dike on Rte 110.
- Citizens want to be more informed so the Town Administrator has developed a blog that residents can subscribe to.
- A developer has approached the Town to negotiate a Pay in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) payment for the solar project on Wiles Road.

BUSINESS AND

CORRESPONDENCE

- Bill Tuttle of the DPW was awarded a 5000.00 grant for a work zone safety trailer.
- New fencing around the Town Common is progressing. Members commended Bill Tuttle for his efforts.
- **VOTE:** The Selectmen voted to execute the Hardscrabble Road Purchase and Sales Agreement. Selectman Furmaniuk made a motion to purchase the Hardscrabble land for \$145,000.00. Selectman Patacchiola seconded the motion. Selectman Sushchuk – Aye. Selectman Furmaniuk – Aye. Selectman Patacchiola – Aye. Purchase and Sales agreements were signed by all 3 selectmen to be sent to Town Counsel.
- **VOTE:** Selectman Sushchuk moved that the one day liquor licenses for the Eight Point Sportsmen's Club (Aug. 4th 1- 8 pm and Aug. 19th 5 – 10pm) Selectman Furmaniuk seconded the motion. Selectman Sushchuk – Aye. Selectman Furmaniuk – Aye. Selectman Patacchiola – Aye.
- **VOTE:** Selectman Patacchiola made a motion to approve a benefit of \$857.94 to a recent Neighbor to Neighbor Applicant. Selectman Sushchuk seconded the motion. Selectman Sushchuk – Aye. Selectman Furmaniuk – Aye. Selectman Patacchiola – Aye.
- Jim McGovern spent an hour in Sterling with Selectmen Furmaniuk and Patacchiola, this past week. Mr. McGovern is a candidate for Congress.

APPOINTMENTS

VOTE: Selectman Furmaniuk made a motion to appoint Norman Clemence, as the Assistant Building Inspector. Selectman Patacchiola seconded the motion. Selectman Sushchuk – Aye. Selectman Furmaniuk – Aye. Selectman Patacchiola – Aye.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting adjourned at 9:55 PM.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED

BRIAN J. PATACCHIOLA
CLERK