

**SELECTMEN'S MEETING  
MONDAY, January 26, 2009  
UPSTAIRS MEETING ROOM**

**Tape #03-09**

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Meeting was opened at 7:00 PM in the Upstairs Meeting Room. Present were Selectpersons Allen Ross, Patricia Pruitt; Patricia Allen, Town Administrator, Frank Abbondanzio; Administrative Secretary Wendy Bogusz; Hugh Massey, WHAI

**Approve minutes of January 5 and January 12, 2009**

*Pruitt makes the motion to approve the minutes of January 5, 2009 with correction. Seconded by Allen, approved unanimously. Allen – Aye, Pruitt – Aye, Ross – Aye.*

*Pruitt makes the motion to approve the minutes of January 12, 2009 with corrections. Seconded by Allen, approved unanimously. Allen – Aye, Pruitt – Aye, Ross – Aye.*

**Robert Trombley, WPCF Superintendent**

**Pine Trees along Greenfield Road**

Trombley: When the WPCF was built back in the 80's a number of plantings were put in to try and cover the plant and provide a visual barrier. Over the years the trees have gotten bigger and because they are running parallel to Greenfield Road they have the tendency to block out the sun from to the east side causing the ice and snow to stay longer on the road and be more of an issue. The homeowners across the street from the plant sent a letter about the trees that have grown over the road. I have talked to Mark Stevens, tree warden and Tom Bergeron and Dan Laroche and there don't seem to be any major issues to take the trees down. I would like to have 17 trees removed and the cost would be \$1,600; I have this money available in my budget for ground maintenance.

Allen stated how there is always a lot of ice in that area.

Don McKay states how dangerous the area is due to the ice build up

Abbondanzio: The only issue I had was the stabilization of that bank leaving the roots in place and eventually replacing them with other plantings at a later date.

Trombley: Dan Laroche originally had concerns about that and he has talked to the Chair of the Con Com and they don't have any problems at this point. The trees will be cut level with the ground and we will plant low lying plants at a later date.

*Pruitt makes the motion to advise the tree warden to proceed with taking down the 17 pine trees at the WPCF so as to make the road clear for sunlight and safety reasons. Seconded by Allen, approved unanimously. Allen – Aye, Pruitt – Aye, Ross - Aye*

**Personnel**

Trombley: The lead operator has handed in his retirement papers and Feb. 17 will be his last day. I would like to post for an operator in house for 3 days per the union contract, before going to the outside.

Allen thanks Mr. Andrews for his years of service; knowledge and expertise that has helped keep the plant moving along.

We are down to one pager, which will save us \$5,000 - \$6,000 a year. We have 2 people working 6:00 AM – 2:00 PM, and 2 people working 7:00 AM to 3:00 PM, which gives us 9 hours of coverage during the day.

*Pruitt makes the motion to allow Bob to post the position of grade 3 operator in training. Seconded by Allen, approved unanimously. Pruitt – Aye, Allen – Aye, Ross – Aye*

**Update on CSO Project**

Trombley: Penta Corp. is back beginning work on the CSO code compliance issues and are starting to build a room around the sludge storage tanks and the operations building. Paul Gilbert is checking with Rep. Olvers office on available funding.

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**Brook Hastings, Treasurer Class of 2011, Josh Hammon, President, Student Council; Lisa Jackson, Class Historian 2009 TFHS Student Updates**

- They have done a lot of fundraising and community service for the Salvation Army, they did 102 hours of bell ringing at Food City and raised over \$2,000; in return they received \$510 for helping.
- They did adopt a family for 3 families (15 people), delivering the presents the Friday before Christmas.
- Recycling at school and would like the school added to the towns recycling route if possible. Discussion held about recycling within the school. They will have to talk to Tom Bergeron on this.
- Students are available for community service projects in the next coming months.
- Students are being registered to vote in the government classes when they are eligible.
- Unity Day will be coming up in April/May when all the classes come together to get to know each other, they have a barbecue, talent show and a bunch of outside activities; and the Selectmen are invited to participate.
- The government class is going to Elliot County, Kentucky in March for 4 days and working with an association called Frontier Housing which builds houses for low income families.
- Hammons gives sports team update and would love for more people to come to the games.

The Board enjoys the updates being provided by the Student Council.

**Town Administrators Report**

**Cell Phone Stipend request**

*Pruitt makes the motion to grant Richard Clough a \$25.00 per month stipend for his cell phone. Seconded by Allen, approved unanimously. Allen – Aye, Pruitt – Aye, Ross - Aye*

**Request for 1 day liquor license by the Shea Theater**

*Pruitt makes the motion to approve the 1 day liquor license for the Shea Theater for February 7 and March 7, 2009 and the fee is to be waived pending start/end time being provided and who the responsible/contact person will be. Seconded by Allen, approved unanimously. Pruitt – Aye, Allen – Aye, Ross - Aye*

**Request to use Peskeompskut Park**

*Pruitt makes the motion to approve the use of Peskeompskut Park by the Shea Theater on July 11, 2009 for Tines & Tunes II event with the provision they meet with Chief Zukowski for further information. Seconded by Allen, approved unanimously. Allen – Aye, Pruitt – Aye, Ross - Aye*

Ross would like them to meet with the Board prior to the event

**Sign CDBG letters**

*Pruitt makes the motion to designate Frank Abbondanzio as the Town's Environmental Certifying Officer for purposes of the CDBG Grant. Seconded by Allen, approved unanimously. Allen – Aye, Pruitt – Aye, Ross - Aye*

**Request to use Peskeompskut Park**

*Pruitt makes the motion to approve the use of Peskeompskut Park by Parks & Rec. Department for an event on Wednesday July 8, 2009 from 5:30 PM – 8:00 PM. Seconded by Allen, approved unanimously. Allen – Aye, Pruitt – Aye, Ross - Aye*

**Resignation of Council on Aging Director as of June 30, 2009**

Abbondanzio: Bunny Caldwell has announced she will be resigning on June 30, 2009, and has been the COA Director for 12 years. The COA will do the hiring of this position with the final concurrence of the Board.

The Board thanks Bunny for her service and assistance over the past 12 years.

**Deadline for article submission for the Special and Annual Town Meeting Warrant**

**Budget Update**

*Pruitt makes the motion to approve Tuesday March 17, 2009 at 4:00 PM for the submission deadline for non monetary articles for the Annual Town Meeting on May 2, 2009 and the board vote the same date for monetary and*

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*non monetary articles for the Special Town Meeting to be held before the Annual Town Meeting on Saturday, May 2, 2009. Seconded by Allen, approved unanimously. Allen – Aye, Pruitt – Aye, Ross – Aye*

Note: The deadline for monetary article submission is Tuesday, February 17, 2009 at 4:00 PM. This was voted at the joint BOS/Finance Meeting previously

**Budget**

Abbondanzio: I attended the Mass. Mutual Assoc. annual workshop on Friday and received the bad news which has already been in the paper. We won't know the final numbers until this Wednesday when the Governor presents his budget and the Department of Revenue will send out the preliminary cherry sheets Wednesday afternoon. At this point, we know there will be a mid year cut around \$150,000 and an additional cut in FY2010 anywhere from \$100,000 up. The FY2010 cut will depend on whether the state legislature passes legislation that would raise the hotel/motel and restaurant meal tax to generate some revenue that would mitigate that cut to some extent. I have heard that no town will be hit with more than a 10% cut in the second year. In any case it is a minimum of a 1/4 million dollars in cuts. Based on that projection, the Town Accountant has run some numbers and we are looking at a deficit right now, including special articles and including not using any of our reserves, looking at a deficit that is just in excess of a million dollars. We have a lot of work to do to deal with the deficit in the current year, but also a very large deficit next year. President Obama's economic stimulus package is looking to be somewhere around \$830 billion last I heard and we should be hearing soon on just how that will be effecting the town individually. We were asked to come up with a wish list, we came up with 5 projects for that list. One of the good things coming out of the Governor's budget is that Chapter 70 for the schools won't be cut this year, but that is not to say that something else won't be cut. On the municipal side, we got hit very hard, but on the educational side they are trying to prevent those kinds of cuts.

**Updates**

Pruitt reads announcement from Treasurer/Collector regarding Tax bills were mailed today and payments are due on or before February 26, 2009.

**Winrock International – Colle Building Lease**

Abbondanzio: I have a letter from Winrock International, a tenant in the Colle Opera House Building giving their 90 day notice that they will be leaving. I have had a meeting with them and with the Northeast Foundation for Children who have a right of first refusal for the space and they are interested in leasing the space Winrock is in. Lease changes will be coming forward shortly.

**APR Announcement (Assessors Map 39, Lot 35 & Lot 47 and Map 42 Lot 8 on Meadow Road owned by Lena Garbiel)**

I have a letter from the Dept. of Agricultural Resources and Mass. General Laws Chapter 7, section 41 requires that the DAR notify the Board of Selectmen of the States intent to purchase, rent, sell or change the use of one or more acres of real estate in a municipality and here we're dealing with 110 acres of land within the Town of Montague for inclusion in the States agricultural preservation restriction program (APR). The property in question (Assessors Map 39, Lot 35 & Lot 47 and Map 42 Lot 8 on Meadow Road owned by Lena Garbiel) and is privately owned and will remain so if it becomes a participant in the APR. The Conservation Commission has made a decision to use \$15,000 from the Conservation fund towards that. Certainly the State would expect more, but they know we have a limited amount of money available in that pool and there are other APR properties we want. I will forward this on to the Planning Board

**Other**

Mark Cannon asked the Selectboard on their position regarding the tomahawk chop gesture and why nobody is trying to change the name of Turners Falls.

Ross feels it is a subject of concern to a lot of residents on both sides of the issue but to have a full fledged debate on this now without preparation or notification is not the time.

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Short discussion was held about the above issue and how advance notice needs to be given to have a full discussion so people can be notified to be present. The "chop" issue is being handled by the School Committee and the Board has previously stated they support the school in what they are doing.

**Civil Service Forms**

*Pruitt makes the motion to appoint Jesse Green, James Waitkus, Peter Lapachinski and Brian McCarthy to the position of Reserve Officers in the Montague Police Department. Seconded by Allen, approved unanimously. Allen – Aye, Pruitt – Aye, Ross – Aye*

*Pruitt makes the motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:15 PM. Seconded by Allen, approved unanimously. Allen – Aye, Pruitt – Aye, Ross - Aye*