

**The following meeting was neither audiotaped nor video recorded.**

BOARD OF SELECTMEN AND DEPARTMENT HEADS

Wednesday, August 5, 2015, 10 o'clock a.m.

Town Hall Hearings Room

Meeting called to order at 10:03 am by Chairman Cronin

Pledge of Allegiance is recited.

**Minutes**

Selectman Menges says that the minutes from the last department heads meeting have already been approved at the regular session of the Board of Selectmen.

**New Business**

Waive fees associated with the renovation project of the Winslow Davis House Museum. Selectman Menges moves that they waive the fees associated with the renovation of the Winslow Davis House. Chairman Cronin steps down to second. Motion carries.

**Chairman Cronin says Lucas Fagundes, selectmen's intern, is here to discuss the changes to the Policy manual.** Lucas says there is not much since the last meeting. The changes will be up to the department heads and he will be happy to come back at the deadline to do whatever changes have been submitted.

Chief MacDonald asks about the date for the Special Town Meeting. Selectman Menges says tentatively it will be October 27<sup>th</sup>. It looks like we have the school for that date. Chief asks when the articles have to be in. Selectman Menges says the warrant is open now. He goes on to say that free cash is at a record and it is due to the frugality of each of you and the town collector, who collected some historic back taxes. The result is that free cash is very high. It was certified yesterday in excess of 1,700,000.00. The board has several initiatives that will need to be addressed. The town treasurer has an article submitted in the amount of several hundred dollars for administrative necessities. We also generally make a contribution to OPED, for which we have no figure yet. The Finance Committee is considering a stabilization fund for capital improvements. This is the time to start one. The highway has submitted for a new truck. The Board also has a couple of initiatives. One is the acquisition of a piece of property contiguous with the elementary school that may be used for future expansion. The other is renovations to Van Gyzen Hall. When we have a realistic figure of what they will cost. We will then place an article on the agenda. He says we own this building and we no longer have a tenant. It is not saleable in its' present condition. In order for the town to realize any value from the building as a town hall annex, or whatever, we have to save the value of that town owned property. He goes on to say that we have a responsibility not to turn our back on it.

As far as addition of any personnel to departments, we have three that are in need of additional personnel. The police department, the fire department and the highway department. The highway department, we agree will need to have two additional full time employees to augment the needs of the highway department. We also have a request for the fire department for the third of three men that

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they proposed last year. We also have a request from the police department for the second of two men that was proposed last year.

Selectman Menges states that his position on this is that he wants all personnel issues deferred to the Annual Town Meeting. We expect the deadline for setting the tax rate will be the 23<sup>rd</sup> of October. If that happens, we will not be clear to do any raise and appropriates after that until the annual town meeting.

Fiscal year 2017 may realize a tax deduction. It will be the last for some time. We will be paying bonds for police station. Addition to elementary school. Rises in contracts. If we can realize a tax rate reduction, it will be a stellar accomplishment and the last tax reduction that the townspeople may see for a long time

We have attempted, with regard to the police department, to avoid shorting you one man by asking the school to put money into the treasury to pay for an officer to replace the officer that becomes the SRO officer. And you have money to appoint one more officer this fiscal year. If we get our ducks in a row in June, hopefully we will have new personnel appropriated for an on board for the first of July.

Chief MacDonald says they have paved the bridge. And within a month it will be ready to go. They have guardrails to put up and lights to put up.

Chairman Cronin asked if the other bridge will need to come down by the end of the month. Chief says yes that is what they are saying.

Chief MacDonald says other than that, they have been running radar and if someone makes a complaint we will try to get out there. He adds that cars are flying around town. That's all.

#### **Jocelyn Tavares – Library Director**

Summer is going fast. We have one more big program left. Our summer movie had 120 people last week. We are working on the State Reports that are due each year. We are working on part of State grant. I have talked with Jim regarding the chimney. Jim Aguiar says you may want to put an article on the warrant to get your chimney fixed. Selectman Menges asks if there is a figure, and Jim Aguiar says no, that he will work with Jocelyn to determine what is needed.

Selectman Menges says if there is no heat going up the chimney then it may as well be taken down. It will deteriorate, fast. Jim Aguiar says there are ways, that if they make it a faux chimney, to cap it off. But we have determined that we will keep it as a working chimney.

Selectman Menges says there are a lot of figures out there. We need to gather and see where we are going. Van Gyzen Hall, the chimney at the library, the bid for pump rebuilding, etc.

Jocelyn adds that she would be happy to use Van Gyzen hall as an alternate site for programs. Selectman Menges says if there is anyone from the library that would like to attend the meeting for Van Gyzen that would be great.

#### **Mary Hathaway-Treasurer/Collector**

I do have my OPED figure ready. I want to talk with the Finance Committee to see what they will recommend. I will be away next week for school. That's it.

**Jen Luiz-Town Accountant**

Following up on OPED, it's important when we go for bonding, it is important to show that we are trying to catch up on it, so if a good chunk could go into that it would help us. She asks if we can move up the town meeting. She says I know a lot of budgets are not fully funded. Selectman Menges says we could now that we have free cash certified.

Sue mentions that the date October 27, 2105, is already in the computer. If this is going to change, I need to know as soon as possible. Special town election cannot conflict with it. I need to get information out to the people.

Selectman Menges says when we are ready, Governor Baker will know the date.

Sue says I need to know so people can register to vote for that Special Town Meeting.

Chairman Cronin says the more money we put in to OPED is better. Jen says yes, better for our bond rate to borrow for the police station. Jen says yes, to show that we are serious about it. Right now, we are three hundred thousand under the levy limit. That would be a tax break right there. The finance committee mentioned wanting to raise and appropriate as far as budgets are concerned. Instead of two meetings it is cheaper to do one. That's all.

**Mike Maguy-Deputy Chief**

Summer as been good so far. Selectman Menges says we understand there was only one response to the advertisement for the pumps? Did it go into the Central Register? Mike says yes, I would assume it did.

Selectman Menges says we have to bestow many thanks to police and fire for the great effort with the Pan Mass challenge on the first of August.

Mike says we also had a house fire last week. Selectmen Menges asks about the homeowner. Jim Aguiar says that he is still in the hospital. He burnt his hands pretty badly. This is unfortunate since he is a computer programmer.

Chairman Cronin says he is glad to see Mike.

**Sue Medeiros-Town Clerk**

Special town election. I did not budget for this. She asks Jen if this can that be free cash or raise and appropriate. Jen says it will need to be an article either way. Sue says but the board says no raising and appropriate. Jen says it will depend on whether or not the tax rate is actually set on the Department of Revenue's time frame. Sue says I will write that up and give it to the board

Selectman Menges asks about the status of the recall bill. Sue says it is currently in the House and will soon move to the Senate. They usually recess in August for a couple of weeks. I have call in to David. I have to be ready if anybody comes in for paperwork. The last day to pick up papers is tomorrow. Two weeks to submit and then ballots will be printed. Six took out papers, and two returned. Mary asks who? Sue says Brett Zagafos and Melissa St.Laurent.

**Cathal O'Brien-Superintendent, Dighton Water District**

10 service renewals are in process on Main Street. We are going to try to do the service renewals prior to the town paving, so we don't have any breaks after paving. Maintenance and painting being done.

Two new tank mixers, one in at Elm Street, one being put in behind Araujo Farms on Williams Street. Staff training for plant being done. Since I been on we have had two retire. We will try to spread or staff out. Do more with less people  
Selectman Menges says you would like to have more people call to set up appointments to change their meter to digital meters, is that something you would like us to announce. He says yes, he will get that information to the board.

#### **Tom Ferry-Highway Superintendent**

Says we are executing Chapter 90 money. Leveling Cedar Street today and installing a culvert at the same time. Also, tomorrow paving Richmond and then tennis courts. And now we have storm cleanup to get to, and hope in the very near future to address the drainage problem in North Dighton. We still have quite few more jobs to complete this summer. We do have a time frame to complete. Should I initiate this or will you. Chairman Cronin says we will sit down.

Nothing more

Chairman Cronin asks about Cedar Street. Tom says we are just leveling now and look forward to paving in the fall.

Selectman Menges says when you are up in North Dighton, can you address my concern about the corner of Pearl Street. Brian Brown has indicated he will paint the crosswalks for nothing.

Sue asks if the board is doing hazardous waste day this year. Selectman Menges says no.

Sue says she doesn't recommend waiting too long because it becomes a great expense.

Chairman Cronin says tentatively every couple of years. Tom Ferry says he thinks we explored regionalizing it possibly with Freetown. He says with a better educated public, you will have less hazardous waste.

Selectman Menges asks who is looking into the regionalization and says that we will follow up on that tonight.

#### **Stacey Ferry-Animal Control Officer**

Says she has a lot of investigations going on. Trying to catch feral cats. I had a cat shot in the head on Monday night. There is talk with some of the local ACO's, that we might want to do a regional animal shelter. Somerset, Swansea, Dighton and Rehoboth. In the next couple of weeks we will meet with SRPEDD. To see what grants are available for that or if it is even possible. Chairman Cronin asks if there is one town that has a complete updated shelter between the four towns. Stacey says no, we are all in the same boat. We are in the talking stages. Chairman Cronin asks who she talked with at SRPEDD. Ross Perry? Stacey says yes.

#### **Jim Aguiar-Building Commissioner**

Has a couple of things this morning. First, thank you Dean for your suggestion that I stay in, in Nancy's absence. And that worked out well as I have found some deficiencies that we will work on to make things more streamlined.

Secondly, everyone knows how busy the office is. We had eight new permits come in for all standalone lots in Town last week. This is still going strong and no signs of letting up. I have been trying to keep the office ahead of this. For the last couple of years I have tried to start archiving. It is time to invest in the office in the way of archiving. I will be preparing a warrant article. It will be extensive.

Everyone seems to be working on their house in the community. This is something to be proud of. Everyone tells me to slow down the building. I have no control over that. Dighton has lots of land, water and sewer available and farms that are becoming available. I see this continuing for years to come. We are adding roads. We are adding to the population. Most are families that are coming in. We are at the cusp of needing to make changes. I think we are all moving in that direction and I commend everyone for that.

Chief MacDonald asks what the population is right now.

Sue says population was 7,582 about one month ago. Sue says it's hard to keep track. I cannot take the off the census until I get it in writing from them that they have actually moved out of town.

Selectman Menges says concerning archiving. There is a considerable expense to archiving. To do it electronically and he is not in favor of electronic permitting.

He says Sue had in the past, talked about electronic archiving with Rehoboth. Sue says yes, they mentioned if two towns went in together, they would get a discount. Not sure if that ever happened. Selectman Menges says if you or someone in the town clerk's office would be a point of contact for town government. We should start transitioning the new records to electronic archiving. As soon as we have someone that could be an anchor for the town government. Every day that goes by we are still building up old records and we should be archiving this. I think modern archiving needs to be begun yesterday. It will save if we could do it with another town. Sue says I don't know how far Rehoboth got with that. I will call them. Mary says it was expensive too. Jen suggests that may be historical records can be done though the CPC, where they are historical records. Sue says she can look into that. Selectman Menges says we need to lay out a plan for archiving and that we should look into doing with all the departments.

Jim Aguiar says, for instance, the gentleman that was waiting for me to obtain a permit copy. Right now, there are three steps. First I have to go to the computer to look it up. Then, I go into the file cabinet and then, if it is old, I would need to go downstairs and get it and then I would have to copy it. I am proposing that all of this information be public and tied to map geo. He would be able to go into his computer and get it himself. Anybody can do it on their smartphone, or computer. This consumes so much of our time.

Chairman Cronin says we charge for the copies correct. Jen says it is only the cost of the paper so it is not a revenue for the department.

It is a useful tool for me also. If I am out and need to know if they have a valid permit. I can look it up myself.

Selectman Menges says in order to maintain that system in conjunction with Map Geo, there will be a step of manual labor. Not until we go to online permitting, will we realize the savings. We will still have to do manual filing. Whereas if the permitting is online it is automatic. Jim Aguiar says that he doesn't ever want to get away from handshaking and helping the public to fill out the permits. I think this town likes the fact that they can come in and see me and Nancy. I am not comfortable with how I manage both of the permitting processes. But I would rather make the information available in real time to the outside world and then I will work into the online permitting part of it.

Selectman Menges says before you submit the figure for your special article for archiving, I think you and Sue should have a conversation, and estimate how much we could save by sharing the services of a contractor with another town. Jim says this will also help the Assessors. He says they can query any entries between two specific dates. Everything that was entered will come up. Jim Aguiar would like to

combine the BOH and building department files. I want to make one file jacket for each address. The AG's office has told me that there is no getting away from the paper archiving. I have to do it.

### **Don Hirschy-Veteran's Agent**

Rehoboth has hired their new veteran's agent. One has been hired in Seekonk as well. I will meet with both. We had a cruising night on July 25<sup>th</sup>. Those events are always well attended. I have been doing visits to homes.

I have been presented a 48 star flag from Byron Haskins. His brother in law gave it to me. I have had it mounted and I would like to have an unveiling and have it mounted in town hall lobby. I also have a rubbing, from Glenn Jennings from the Vietnam Wall that was brought in by Wayne Robinson of Rolling Thunder, which is something I would also like to install in the lobby of town hall as well.

The flag is now at half staff. I am notified by Boston as to when to lower and raise the flag. For me, I only have to lower the flag at the town administrative building. Other members in town have notified me that they would like also participate. In the future I will notify all if these people that were there. Flags such as police and fire when to fly their flags at half staff and when to put them back up again.

My training in Leominster will be with regard to the valor act I would like to thank all the town departments for all the help that I receive. Selectman Menges says thank you. You do a lot more than you report.

### **Alice Souza-Elderly Affairs Director**

Working on State Reports. Everything is going good. I had to get a new refrigerator. We need some carpentry work going. We had a problem with air conditioning. We are working I this. I would like to have the outside painted and the inside done if we could get the inmates to do that. She mentions as the population grows, so do the elderly. I think we are at 20% now.

Chairman Cronin asks Alice how often she paints. Alice says the inside has not been done since we have been up there. Alice says the outside was done 3-4 years ago. We would have to close to do the inside. We do close between Christmas and New Year's. That may be a good time to do it, but I also do my heavy cleaning at that time, so we would have to work it out so we don't have any clients at that time. We might need painting done after the refrigerator is in, because there is a cabinet that needs to come down. Jim Aguiar says we have to address the roof around the foyer before the winter comes in. I will make sure to contact the contractor.

Alice says that is all.

Jim Aguiar says he has a question about how to obtain the funding to fix the roof. It will be a couple of thousand dollars. It was not the contractor's fault. We should have made it part of the scope. Chairman Cronin says it still comes down to getting a price. Jim says no more than a few thousand dollars. Selectman Menges says we need to keep a tickler file to contact contractors when in need of them.

Jim asks about the two positions for the highway as stated with carpentry skills. Jim Aguiar says it would be very beneficial if we could do some of these things ourselves.

Alice says I am still waiting for someone to come and take down a shelf so my refrigerator will fit.

Chairman Cronin assures her that all of these smaller issues will be taken care of. Jim Aguiar says if the board is so inclined, I have contractor that I could contact. Chairman Cronin says prices, prices, prices.

Chairman Cronin asks if there is anything else.

## Reports on the Status of the Questionnaires

We have them all in from all members of the clerical union. This is part of the wage study that is going to take place. Sue, if you would sit with the board and Joe McArdle and compare the old questionnaires to the new questionnaires and determine where duties are increased and assign grade increases where applicable. Sue asks when it will start. Selectman Menges says possibly a week from Tuesday. Possibly August 18, 2015.

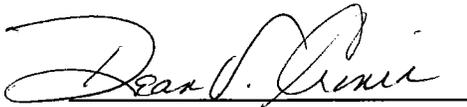
We need to get this done. Selectman Menges says that we have a couple of requests for wage increases from individual departments that we have said no to, until we complete the wage study.

Chairman Cronin says thank you to everyone for the free cash

Meeting adjourned at 11:24 am by Chairman Cronin.

Respectfully submitted,

**Karin Brady**  
**Administrative Assistant**  
**Board of Selectmen**



**DEAN V. CRONIN**  
**Chairman**  
**Board of Selectmen**



**PATRICK W. MENGES**  
**Clerk**  
**Board of Selectmen**