

MINUTES
BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING

Monday May 2, 2011
6:00 p.m.

The meeting of the Board of Selectmen was held at 6:20 p.m. in Sharon High School Room 602 with Chairman Walter "Joe" Roach, Selectman, Selectman Richard A. Powell, Selectman William A. Heitin and Town Administrator Benjamin Puritz

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Roach said that the approval of the minutes of April 26, 2011 would be held until the next meeting.

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FIRE CHIEF STATUS

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There was discussion about re opening the Fire Chief Search process. Town Administrator Puritz apprised the Board that finalists Brakebill and Laracy had both withdrawn. He also said that all members of the Fire Chief Screening Committee were willing to continue their service in that capacity. Chairman Roach then commented that he was supportive of the reposting of the position as the applicant pool was limited by the fact that there was a strong residency requirement. He said that the Board was apprised that otherwise qualified applicants did not apply because of the residency requirements. There was then a discussion about a modification of the residency requirement which would change the language from "required" to "preferred". There were a number of the Fire Fighters in attendance and they suggested that the residency preference be further defined to a 15 minute response time in that they felt Chief Officer should be present at major incidents. The Board of Selectmen commented that they wanted to keep the broader criteria in order to maximize the Town's flexibility.

VOTED: (Powell/Heitin) Voted unanimously to reopen the Fire Chief Search process.

Jim Davenport President of the Fire Fighters Union said he felt that there should be further clarification in terms of the status of the two finalists. Chairman Roach then advised the attendees that candidate James Brakebill had withdrawn due to family obligations regarding his blind mother-in-law. Chairman Roach commented that Candidate Laracy was disappointed with aspects of the search process and took exception to the Town's reopening of the search process and had decided to withdraw. Captain Murphy offered the services of the Fire Department for consultation regarding operational matters and Captain MacLean suggested that the Town use a high level of diligence in future searches and expressed his belief that candidates should be familiar with Massachusetts Fire Codes. Fire Fighter Martin asked for information regarding the costs associated with the search and questioned any additional expenditure in that regard. Selectman Heitin said any subsequent search costs would be at a lower level than the initial search. Selectman Powell commented in response to comments from the Fire Department that the search has become politicized. He said that there were no politics involved and explained that the Town had conducted a proper search with the constitution of a screening committee in accordance of the by-laws and engagement of a highly qualified professional search company.

VOTED: (Roach/Powell) Voted unanimously to approve Article 14 of the town Meeting Warrant which refers to Capital Outlay requests.

Selectman Roach said that he was not supporting Article 3 which relates to School Busing fees.

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VOTED: (Roach/Powell) Voted unanimously to adjourn to Town Meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 6:50 p.m.

Roach: Aye

Powell: Aye

Heitin: Aye