

BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING
Tuesday, February 3, 2015

A meeting of the Rockport Board of Selectmen was held at 7:00 pm on Tuesday, February 3, 2015 in Conference Room A with four selectpersons, the Town Administrator, and the Asst. Town Administrator; Selectperson Lucas was not present.

7:00 Meeting Called to Order

Pledge of Allegiance and Moment of Silence

Medals of Valor & Commendations for Exceptional Performance to Police Officers: Interim Police Chief J. Mulligan presented commendations to Officers M. Schmink, R. Tibert, M. Marino, D. Mahoney, A. Ludovicz, and C. Keating regarding a predator that was trying to connect with a child in Rockport in December. He said these officers interceded and the predator was lured into Rockport and apprehended. He also read a letter accompanying Medals of Valor for Lt. Schmink and Officer Mahoney for their service in Watertown, Massachusetts in April of 2014 regarding the marathon bomber.

Medals of Valor and Commendations for Exceptional Performance to Police Officers

Approval of Minutes of January 13, 2015: Selectperson Battistelli moved that the Board of Selectmen approve the minutes of January 13, 2015, seconded by Selectperson Murphy, Vote: 4-0.

Approval of 1/13/15 Minutes Motion Approved

7:30 Selectmen Briefing

Police Department Update: Interim Chief Mulligan presented the progress that has been made since he has been in the position (12/1/14).

Selectmen Briefing:

Police Department Update by Interim Police Chief James Mulligan

- Senior Center – officers served dinner,
- High School – officers served Christmas meals,
- Rite Aid is educating senior citizens about being scammed,
- Community Policing/wellness checks. Between 8am and 10am, those senior citizens that have chosen to register for this program, call the police department. If the call isn't received, an officer visits the home to be sure everything is alright. He said Roger Lesch is a dedicated, hard-working individual, and a credit to the town. He said vulnerable populations are the young and senior citizens,
- The Police Department hosts internships with Rockport High School students and college interns,
- He spent the month of November, 2014 reviewing policies and procedures,
- He consults and evaluates police departments and gives the Rockport building an A+,
- He said Rockport is an accredited police dept., only 34 in the state are accredited out of over 300 communities, this is the highest standard,
- He is enforcing the chain of command; this has been well received,
- He said he reads the 24 hr. logs, not only for content but for how it is written,
- Anyone stopped by an officer now receives a written warning; previously it may not have been documented. He said it doesn't affect their insurance and doesn't penalize them in any way, but he said they should know why they were stopped and there should be a record of it,
- He attends roll call whenever he is in the building,
- Officers go on patrol immediately following roll call for two hours; high visibility reduces crime,
- Positive partnerships with the Town Administrator and Asst. Town Administrator,

- Disciplines staff in private and recognizes/acknowledges a job well done,
- Culture is important – pride, peer pressure.

Selectperson Sheedy said she is happy about the officers being more visible but hopes that they could be more friendly and approachable.

Selectmen & Town Administrator Updates and Selectmen Liaison Reports:

- Selectperson Murphy said he is concerned about Jerden's Lane and High Street with the snow banks, he inquired if High Street and Jerden's Lane could be made one-way on a temporary basis while the snow is obstructing driver's visibility.
- Selectperson Murphy said he accompanied Bill Aspesi from the DPW while he was plowing in town.
- Chairperson Wilkinson said she attended the Emergency Management meeting, she said it was very impressive. She wanted to extend a thank you to the DPW and police department during the storm; she said Town Hall ran smoothly as well.
- M. Vieira said the fire and ambulances were ready to go during the storm. The Town Administrator said the schools and town hall no longer use telephone trees; just one call is necessary with the new system.
- M. Vieira spoke about the Legion of Honors Ceremony last week; he said the auditorium was standing room only; the band and chorus were in attendance. Adam Ludovicz, Veteran's Agent, handled this with Adam Curcuru, the Veteran's Agent from Gloucester.
- M. Vieira said Rockport is investigating a Veteran's District that would allow Rockport to collaborate with Gloucester and Manchester to share services.
- The Asst. Town Administrator spoke about the Mass. Municipal Conference, he said it is always a networking opportunity, Gov. Baker and the Lt. Governor were in attendance.
- Town Accountant, Glenn Wheeler, is settling in and attending trainings learning about municipal accounting.
- Code Red is a success
- Approximately eighty surveys were received from residents on the Police Chief Citizen survey. The responses indicated that the highest qualities should be: integrity and honesty, excellent communication, cooperative, balanced approach, immersing in community, tackling big issues and attending to special populations. The biggest challenges identified were: getting patrol officers out of their cars to interact with citizens, interacting with youth and teenagers. Residents recommendations were: strengthen collaboration with other department, further community policing. Many wanted a local chief and many wanted a chief from outside the community. Overall the feedback indicated someone fair and consistent with good communication skills should be sought.
- Police Chief Screening Committee will be receiving resumes and the survey responses. Three meetings have been held. The committee reduced the seventy one resumes down to fifteen. The fifteen candidates were sent narrative questions and thirteen candidates submitted responses to the questions. The group has been reduced down to nine. BadgeQuest is notifying the finalists to invite them to the Assessment Center. The Assessment Center is a one day, (7:30 am to 6:30 pm) process. Chief Mulligan said this is a significant process. The committee will select who they would like to interview, then they will recommend between three to five finalists to come before the Board of Selectmen.

Public Comment: T. Arsenian, 95 Granite St., inquired of the Police Chief if the calls residents make to the police station can be anonymous; he questioned what is entered in the police log. He said some residents hesitate to contact the police in fear of retaliation. Chief Mulligan said anonymous complaints are investigated and no one needs to worry about their

name going in the log. He spoke about the Helicopter landing at 129 Granite and said the neighbors were assured that everything possible was being done. He recommended a by-law change. He spoke about the Tool Company, Chapter 91 license, and said he doesn't believe this is being followed vigilantly. He said Ben Lynch/DEP told Z. Seppala that The Landing Inc., filed within the 21 days, an administrative appeal is scheduled for May and in February there will be pre-trial conference. He said Rockport can either go to court with this or see the public rights' lost. He said the town wasn't informed about the appeal. He commented on Rockport Music receiving permission to use Millbrook Meadow for an event in June, and said on the license application there was no mention of alcohol permission. Chairperson Wilkinson said there was no application; Rockport Music sent a letter requesting to use the Meadow. T. Arsenian said he believes the town should charge these groups to use town property. Chairperson Wilkinson said she disagrees with T. Arsenian on charging Rockport Music for the use of Millbrook Meadow. Selectperson Battistelli said the Millbrook Meadow Committee may be drafting a policy for those groups or individuals that want to use the Meadow. She said she doesn't know if the issue of charging to use the Meadow will be in the policy. Selectperson Sheedy said she believes there is a distinction between for-profit and non-profit organizations.

8:00 Action List

Action List:

Appointment of Dr. Jimenez to the Board of Health: Selectperson Sheedy moved that the Board appoint Dr. Sydney Jimenez as a member of the Board of Health for a three year term to expire on June 30, 2018, Selectperson Murphy seconded, Vote: 4-0.

Appointment of
Dr. Jimenez to the
Board of Health
Motion Approved

Appointment of Joanne Wile to the Historic District and Historical Commission: Selectperson Murphy moved that the Board appoint Joanne Wile as a member of the Historic District and Historical Commissions for a three year term to expire on June 30, 2018, seconded by Selectperson Sheedy, Vote: 3-0; Selectperson Battistelli abstained.

Appointment of
Joanne Wile to
Historic District
and Historic
Commission
Motion Approved

Permission to Hire Three Reserve Police Officers: Selectperson Murphy moved that the Board of Selectmen grant permission to Chief Mulligan to hire three reserve police officers, seconded by Selectperson Battistelli, Vote: 4-0.

Permission to
Hire 3 Reserve
Police Officers
Motion Approved

Permission to Hire Two On-Call Civilian Dispatchers: Selectperson Battistelli moved that the Board of Selectmen grant permission to Chief Mulligan to hire two on call civilian dispatchers, seconded by Selectperson Murphy, Vote: 4-0. Chief Mulligan said they are trying to expand the dispatching unit's use of civilians rather than police officers, he said it is less expensive and allows police officers to do their jobs.

Permission to
Hire 2 On-Call
Civilian
Dispatchers
Motion Approved

Selectperson Battistelli moved to add an item to allow us to appoint part time dispatchers to tonight's agenda, Selectperson Murphy seconded, Vote: 4-0.

Motion to Add
Item to Meeting
Agenda
Motion Approved

Select Battistelli moved that the Board of Selectmen appoint Paul Moginot as part time dispatcher to the police department, seconded by Selectperson Murphy. Chief Mulligan said a full time dispatcher is going into the National Guard. He said P. Moginot is a trained medical dispatcher, he can walk a person through a medical emergency; this is a big benefit to the community, Vote: 4-0.

Hire Part Time
Dispatcher to
Police
Department
Motion Approved

Permission to Expend Over Appropriations for Snow & Ice: Selectperson Sheedy moved that the Board grant permission to the Director of Public Works to expend monies over the appropriations for snow and ice removal operations pursuant to General Laws Chapter 44, section 31D, if needed, seconded by Selectperson Battistelli, Vote: 4-0.

Permission to
Expend Over
Appropriations
for Snow and Ice
Motion Approved

Action List:

continued

Place Plowing Private Roads on Ballot
Motion Approved

Place Plowing Private Roads on Ballot: Selectperson Murphy moved that the Board acknowledge acceptance of the citizens petition to ask the voters of Rockport if the Town will accept the provisions of section 6C of chapter 40 of the General Laws which authorizes cities and towns to appropriate money for the removal of snow and ice from private ways that are open to public use, seconded by Selectperson Sheedy, Vote: 4-0. Chairperson Wilkinson said she would like this to be an agenda item on an upcoming meeting because there is confusion on the part of some residents about this issue.

Chairperson Wilkinson said she is concerned about the snow on sidewalks in town, she said this is a major problem. There is a by-law that states that residents are responsible for clearing the sidewalk outside their home. She recommends educating people about this by-law or that the town should provide more resources, both equipment and labor, to the DPW. Selectperson Sheedy said the by-law says “to the extent practicable” for residents clearing the sidewalks; she said we are looking to spend funds on plowing private roads while we have sidewalks that can’t be walked on.

Resolutions of Appreciation for Chief McCarthy and Richard Meringer
Motion Approved

Resolutions of Appreciation for Chief McCarthy and Richard Meringer: Selectperson Murphy moved that the Board of Selectmen vote to adopt the Resolution of Appreciation in honor of Chief John T. McCarthy on behalf of the citizens of Rockport for his 37 years of outstanding service to the Town and the Resolution of Appreciation in honor of Richard J. Meringer on behalf of the citizens of Rockport for his outstanding service to the Town, and that a copy of each be kept as part of our permanent government records, seconded by Selectperson Sheedy, Vote: 4-0.
Other residents deserving recognition were mentioned: Frank Hassler, Beverly Quint, Tina Ketchopulos and John Sparks.

Approval of Operating and Capital Budgets
Motion Approved

Approval of Operating and Capital Budgets: Selectperson Battistelli moved that the Board of Selectmen approve the FY16 Operating Budget as submitted and the FY16 Capital Budget as recommended by the Capital Improvement Plan Committee and refer them to the Finance Committee for further action, seconded by Selectperson Sheedy, Vote: 4-0.
Selectperson Sheedy inquired if DPW Director Parisi investigated the water wages. The Town Administrator said the Finance Committee could be asked to follow up on this. The Town Administrator said we don’t expect health insurance premiums to increase by more than 5%, but since we don’t know about enrollment for the schools, a 9% increase has been projected in that department.

Approval of Finance Plan and Budget Message
Motion Approved

Approval of Finance Plan and Budget Message: Selectperson Sheedy moved that the Board of Selectmen approve the Finance Plan and Budget Message and send it to the Finance Committee, Selectperson Murphy seconded, Vote: 4-0.

8:30 Discussion Items
Placement of Stone Sculpture Gift - postponed

Other Business/Announcements

9:00 Selectperson Sheedy moved to adjourn, seconded by Selectperson Murphy, Vote: 4-0.

Items signed:
John T. McCarthy, Resolution for Appreciation