

Town of Huntington Selectboard (SB) Meeting

Date: Monday, March 09, 2009 – 7:00p.m.

Location: Town Office, Lower Level

Approved
Minutes

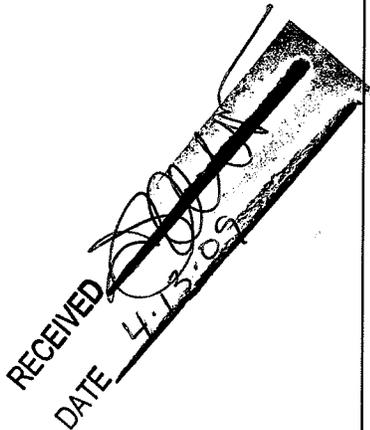
Attending:

Board Members: Ed Booth (Chair), Jim Christiansen, Wayne Curley, Jim Hildebran Joe Segale (Vice Chair)

Absent Members: n/a

Others Present: Doug Graver, Pam Hart, Duncan Keir, Roman Livak, Dan Stoddard (Town Treasurer), Ed Wildman (Town Administrator)

Recorder: Barbara Elliott

Topics	Discussion	Action
Call to Order	Dan Stoddard (Assistant Town Clerk) called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. and gave the oath office for Selectboard members to Jim Christiansen, Jim Hildebran, and Wayne Curley. (Note: As Assistant Town Clerk, Dan filled in for Town Clerk Heidi Racht, who was out of town.)	
Reorganization	<p><u>Election of Selectboard Chair</u> Joe Segale nominated and Jim Hildebran seconded Edmund Booth for Selectboard Chair. Approved unanimously.</p> <p><u>Election of Selectboard Vice-Chair</u> Jim Hildebran nominated and Ed Booth seconded Joe Segale as Selectboard Vice-Chair. Approved unanimously.</p> <p><u>Appointment of Clerk of the Selectboard</u> Wayne Curley moved and Jim Hildebran seconded the appointment of Barbara Elliott as Clerk of the Selectboard. Approved unanimously.</p> <p><u>Adopt Rules of Procedure</u> Wayne Curely moved and Joe Segale seconded adoption of the Rules of Procedure for conducting Selectboard Meetings. Approved unanimously.</p> <p><u>Adopt Conflict of Interest Policy</u> Jim Hildebran moved and Jim Christiansen seconded adoption of the Conflict of Interest Policy. Approved unanimously.</p> <p><u>Regular Meeting Schedule</u> Joe Segale moved and Wayne Curley seconded adoption of a regular meeting schedule of the first and third Mondays of each month. Approved unanimously.</p> <p><u>Selectboard Meeting Agenda Format</u> Consensus of the members to amend the meeting agenda format to have Warrant and Minutes first, followed by Public Comment, Road Foreman, and Town Administrator reports.</p>	

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	<p><u>Appointed Special Signatories</u> Periodically, approval by the Selectboard is required between regular meetings for the purpose of conducting Town business in an efficient manner. Jim Hildebran moved and Wayne Curley seconded the Selectboard Chair, Edmund Booth, and in his absence Vice-Chair Joe Segale, be authorized to sign warrants as necessary and to report the action at the next Selectboard meeting. Approved unanimously.</p>	
Orientation		Selectboard members requested copies of the bridge listings and bridge maps be included as part of the Orientation Packet.
Appointments	<p><u>Appointment Process Recommendation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wayne noted he would like to see a formal procedure for the Selectboard process of filling appointments that would include advertising the openings for a specified amount of time prior to filling vacancies. <p><u>Conservation Commission Appointment</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roman stated that he would like to be appointed to the Conservation Commission. The Selectboard requested he submit this in writing. 	<p><u>Tree Warden Appointment</u> Joe moved to appoint Wally Jenkins as Tree Warden. Seconded by Wayne. Passed unanimously.</p> <p><u>Town Hall Committee</u> Joe moved to appoint Alison Forest and Barbara Felittiwas to the Town Hall Committee. Seconded by Jim H. Passed unanimously.</p> <p><u>Lister Appointment</u> Joe moved to appoint Roman as a Lister. Seconded by Wayne. Passed unanimously.</p>
Budget Reductions	<p><u>Discussion included</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joe suggested the Selectboard work with committees and departments to see what they can cut and what they consider to be absolutely essential. Joe noted the Selectboard should figure out how to get the general public involved in establishing the new budget. Wayne recommended concurrent reviews for potential budget cuts be made by the Selectboard and the individual committees and departments. Dan noted that the magnitude of the budget problem may be compounded by the wording of the budget article—because it may be that the fire truck and plow truck expenses need to be considered as part of the approved budget amount. Ed W noted that the Town attorney has been asked to weigh in on whether this is the case. 1st year payments are: \$35,000 for the fire truck and \$30,000 for the plow truck. Doug Graver stated that it is clear to him that the 2 truck budget expenses need to be considered part of the approved budget amount. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ed W will send an email to all committee chairs and department heads regarding the necessity for coming up with \$65,000 in budget cuts; an outline of guiding principles; and a target response date of April 8th.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Duncan Keir noted that for the entire 32 years he has been voting on Town budgets, separately voted line items have always been add-ons to the approved budget amount—and are not considered part of the operational general fund budget amount approved by voters. • Roman commented that this is the first year the budget article was written as it was, and that he agrees with Doug that the cost of the trucks need to come out of the approved operating budget amount. • Jim H noted that we clearly have a difference of opinion, which is why we are seeking counsel from the Town attorney. • Principles that committees and departments need to use in addressing budget cuts include: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There are no sacred cows 2. Look at what you can live without 3. Look for creative solutions 4. Consider a minimum target of a 5% reduction • Dan noted that the Selectboard needs to address the issue of wages and benefits. • Roman noted that some benefit changes can not be made until January. • It was noted that employees can be asked to pay for a portion of their benefits at any point – it does not need to coincide with the benefit enrollment timeframes. • Wayne stated that he would like the Selectboard to be thoughtful about benefits and wages, and sensitive about how we enter this discussion. • Doug noted that there are anticipated surplus funds in the current fiscal year that could be used to offset the budget expenses—however, Dan noted that this is not the case, as use of surplus funds needs to be voted on by Town residents. • Doug requested the Selectboard ask employees to pay for any portion of their benefits as a last resort. • Wayne stated that the concept of the Town paying 100% for individuals and families is not something that people feel good about; they would like us to look at and change this. • Ed B noted that in his research, this year many towns are requiring employees to pay a portion of their health insurance—but that what has been discussed here is a gradual increase rather than asking employees to cover the expense all at once. • Joe stated support for asking employees to pay at least a portion of their health coverage. • It was noted that next year, the Town will face significant increases as a result of the fire truck bond payment. • Wayne stated he'd like to see us get going on the salt shed. • Joe attended a stimulus meeting: there are block grants for energy programs that may be an opportunity for salt shed funding. • Dan noted that Ed W has been attending every meeting that has been held related to possible funding. 	

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<p>Public Comment</p>	<p><u>Rules of Procedure – Pam Hart:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pam Hart asked if the Selectboard has written procedures other than the State statutes. The Auditors would like to see written and approved procedures on how the Selectboard operates—for example, how appointments are handled. <p><u>Town Meeting Follow up – Duncan Keir:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Duncan stated that in retrospect, he regrets having initiated the 5% budget reduction amendment: it was a knee jerk reaction; he didn't want to see us have to hold a second town meeting; he shouldn't have proposed the reduction because he did not participate in helping set the budget. Duncan expressed his appreciation for the time & effort everyone in the room—all of whom are serving as volunteers. • Two main concerns Duncan has that has caused him to loose trust in the Selectboard are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. When budget amounts are specified by Towns people as “not to exceed” it means that the Selectboard is not authorized to spend more than the stated amount. This has not been the case. 2. The Selectboard should not have set a tax rate that was higher than what had been approved by the Town. • Duncan stated that he would like to work with the Selectboard to address the budget issues and that he plans to make some suggestions for where cuts might be made. <p><u>East Street Bond Funds - Dan Stoddard</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dan reported that we have \$61,000 from the East Street bond in a money market at 0.25%. He reviewed options with the Board that may yield higher interest rates. • Jim C will forward Dan information on some 9-month CDs that are at 2%. 	
<p>Adjournment</p>	<p>The Selectboard meeting adjourned at 8:47 p.m.</p>	<p>Jim H moved to adjourn. Seconded by Wayne. No discussion. Passed unanimously.</p>

Date Unapproved Minutes to Town Clerk: Monday, April 06, 2009
Date Minutes Approved by Selectboard: Monday, April 06, 2009
Date Approved Minutes to Town Clerk: Sunday, April 12, 2009