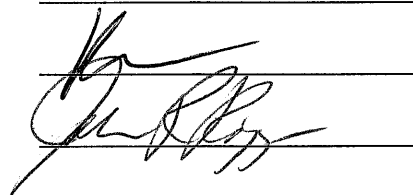


**BUCKLAND BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING MINUTES
March 10, 2015, 6:30 p.m.
Buckland Town Hall**

Cheryl L. Dukes

Kevin P. Fox

John R. Riggan



Attendees: Cheryl L. Dukes, Kevin Fox, Rob Riggan, Karen Blom, Ben Bosco (*Shelburne Falls Independent News*), Diane Broncaccio (*The Recorder*), Glenn Cardinal, Andrea Llamas, James Sullivan (Falls Cable), Martha Thurber, Dean Willmore, Boy Scout Troop 10

Kevin opened the meeting at 6:30 p.m..

2. Documents to Sign

a. **Selectmen Meeting Minutes: January 28, 2015, February 10, 2015, February 16, 2015** – Rob moved we sign the Meeting Minutes; Cheryl seconded. **VOTED** unanimously in favor.

b. **Easement – 1 Ashfield Street** – Kevin moved we sign the Easement for 1 Ashfield Street as approved at the Buckland Special Town Meeting; Cheryl seconded. **VOTED** unanimously in favor.

c. **Application for Use of Town Hall – Franklin County Assessor’s Association** – Rob moved to sign the Application for Use of Town Hall by the Franklin County Assessor’s Association and waive the fee; Kevin seconded. **VOTED** unanimously in favor.

d. **Franklin County Regional Emergency Management Planning Committee Endorsement** – Andrea said every town in America has an Emergency Management Planning Committee. We belong to the Franklin County Regional Emergency Planning Committee. Herb Guyette is the Emergency Management Director, and Cheryl attends the meetings, too. Rob moved we sign the Endorsement; Cheryl seconded. **VOTED** unanimously in favor. Andrea will give it to Herb Guyette to complete.

3. Agenda Items

b. **Solid Waste District – 2016-2018 Hauling Bids** – Andrea said this is the new three-year bid that just came in. Rob moved to approve the hauling bids; Cheryl seconded. **VOTED** unanimously in favor.

c. **Arms Library – Master Plan** – Cheryl said we thought it would be a good idea for Buckland to come up with a Master Plan. The Finance Committee will talk to the Buckland Public Library about this. They felt it would be good for the Arms Library, too. Rob said we want them to talk about what they have to do in the next three-five years. Cheryl said tie in capital plans, as well. Cheryl will talk to the Shelburne Board that we have had this conversation. Include it with their budgeting process. What are the costs overall. Rob felt Cheryl’s idea of writing a letter was good. Cheryl said she will do so after the conversation.

1. Appointments

7:15 p.m., Amber Willmore-Harley, Parking Ticket Appeal – Next meeting.

6:45 p.m. – School Committee Representatives – Martha Thurber handed out a Total Proposed Fiscal Year 2016 MTRSD budget sheet - \$18.4million was approved by the School Committee. The District needs more money than the minimum. Buckland's assessment is up \$74,276. There were real concerns about the Towns being able to pay the assessments. Martha said we spent a lot of time waiting for the Long-Term Planning Committee report; look at this as a district. We are working to implement their suggestions. We will allow the towns to work together and reorganize and consolidate. It is a process. What is the best educational program. Come up with options to present to the District. We are working at reining in operating expenses. We have been diligent in keeping costs down. Looking at the revenue side as well as the operating side.

Glenn said see what we can do without further deterioration of the buildings. Cheryl said what is the Superintendent's plan or vision? Martha said we want a complete Level One District. Plans are in place for each school. A tremendous amount of planning and analysis for district improvement plan. Level One is tied to MCAS results and increase in improvement. Hit 80 out of 100. BSE and Heath are Level One schools. Colrain is Level Two; the High School is almost Level One. The Middle School is Two. The goal is a district people want to come to. These plans are in place. Rob said the sense I get is staff increases even though the school population is down. Martha said I would think it is attributable to Special Education. We have to provide what we have to provide. Glenn said if you were to decrease staff by 33% that would be catastrophic. Rob said the cost of operation has come up significantly. Martha said I will look into that. The Central Office went down two years in a row. Rob said we are looking at an override for operation expenses. Why can't we wait a year for the Pre-K? The Superintendent says we have to do it this year. Martha said this came from the Long-Term Planning Committee. All of the other towns are enormously in favor of Pre-K. We hope to get thirty kids from Cummington worked into the numbers. Kevin said we need to help ourselves. Martha said Regional Transportation is a whole 'nother animal. Kevin said the key I think is to do some consolidation. Eight years later, we are still talking about it.

Dena said we cannot bring our budget in under the levy limit. One reason is the school, one is the Town. Our failure to deal with the Highway Garage issue is a \$60,000 rent and significant energy costs, coming in close to \$100,000. The equipment is out of the elements, thank goodness. I don't see any way to bring in the budget; have to take away the paving project. Kevin said is there any data about retention rate if we have a preschool? Is it currently working? Martha said 73%. Dean said going from PreK to K – a very high percentage. Kevin said the point where kids leave is after grade 6. Dena said look at retention pre-k level 1 and post level 1. Kevin said regarding bringing Rowe in, Rowe would have veto power over everything. Martha said the Rowe regime has changed. Rowe has agreed to toss that. We are asking towns to put through two amendments to the Regional Agreement.

Kevin asked Glenn if he had any WiredWest updates. Glenn said he attended an MBI meeting in Westborough. Purpose of the meeting was for vendors as potential providers and to share information. Comcast and MBI are establishing an action plan. Sharing mapping and costs to serve. Pilot towns are Conway, Buckland, and Shelburne to establish a plan to get the job done. On a positive note, area of town access (i.e., Apple Valley) – swing back in and serve the town as you are accessed in. It can be done; it comes down to cost. Andrea said string on poles but don't have an agreement with the town. Make the agreement going forward. Glenn said focus – Comcast willing to work and share information. My goal is that everything is equitable. Glenn will keep us updated.

Boy Scout Troop 10 prepared to leave the meeting at 7:54 p.m. Kevin said, Boy Scouts, take two things away from this meeting: We can agree to disagree and still remain civil. The second thing is it is probably because we are on camera!

Five minute recess at 7:54 p.m.. Glenn Cardinal, and Boy Scout Troop 10 and their leaders left at 7:54 p.m.. Kevin recognized our School Committee as Volunteer Recognition, Item 7.

Back in session at 7:57 p.m..

4. **Town Administrator Updates** – b. Annual Town Meeting/Election Warrant and Posting – Kevin said recent history - override is done after Annual Town Meeting. Andrea said Janice needs about six weeks to get the ballots, machine programmed. Tech School election is probably the second week in June. Tech School will pay for that election. It is their ballot. Dena said the debt exclusion is on the borrowing for the schools. Kevin said we will still be right up to the levy limit. Dena said debt exclusion is to the benefit of the taxpayers. The expense we would have had for the garage has been eating up in other ways. We need to communicate the information to the residents. I think we should take out poor Bray Road, that's \$50,000. Karen said and deal with the garage.

Karen Blom and Dena Willmore left the meeting at 8:23 p.m..

3. **2016 Budget/COLA**- Discussion about COLA. Kevin said 2 – 2.5% over the past few years. For two years, it was zero. Rob said the police as a group that did not move in the classification process. Kevin said we have always given everyone the same COLA across the board. Rob said regarding adjustment of salaries in the rest of the department, Jim felt his department was neglected by the process; some sort of salary adjustment. Cheryl said he did not participate in that part of the discussion. Kevin said the Police Department would like us to reconsider the salaries. Rob moved he would propose a 2% increase above any COLA; there was no second. Board will consider the COLA.

d. **Town Highway Facility – Mayhew Property Engineering Study Proposals** – Andrea got in touch with Weston & Sampson. Invite to our next meeting.

e. **Recreation Area Staffing** – Andrea said there is a proposal from the Recreation Committee to hire Cindy Schwartz as the Rec Supervisor. She did the job (unpaid) last year. We could advertise but we have a returning person. She has a lot of experience and ran it last year. Kevin said they would have to do a disclosure to the Attorney General's Office. Participate in a discussion about wages. Kevin said run it by Town Counsel and ask her to our next meeting. Rob moved to approve the pool pass rates as established; Cheryl seconded. **VOTED** unanimously in favor. Regarding raises for Rec staff, hold off until we decide on the COLA. Cheryl said she disagrees with Kevin's point about a \$1.00 raise for seasonal part-time employees.

4. a. FEMA Update: Andrea said we should hear soon. I call every week. We should hear what our final numbers are.

5. **Items Not Anticipated by Chair 48 Hours in Advance of Meeting** – None.

6. **Public Comment** – None.

8. **Announcements** – License your dogs. Pancake Breakfast Fundraiser for Library Saturday, March 21, 2015, at the Buckland Public Hall. Rabies Clinic March 28, 2015 at Shelburne Falls Veterinary Clinic.

At 8:59 p.m., Rob moved to adjourn; Cheryl seconded. **VOTED** unanimously in favor. Meeting adjourned at 8:59 p.m..