

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING
MONDAY, DECEMBER 21, 2009
7:00 PM AT THE TOWN OFFICE BUILDING**

PRESENT: Selectmen David W. Barry (presiding), James E. Thompson, and Patrick J. Brady, and Pamela E. Beall, selectmen's secretary.

I. APPOINTMENTS

Tax Delinquent Licensing Hearing

Chairman Barry opened a public hearing on a tax delinquency, which may be subject to non-renewal of certain business licenses. The party at issue is Maureen Knowlton, proprietor of Boston Grille, a food establishment at 2133 Boston Road. Treasurer Thomas Sullivan was present and noted that the amount of \$331.01 was more than one-year overdue for personal property tax. Chief Nothe was also present and reported that there were some fire safety issues earlier this month, the business was open, but financially stressed. Ms. Beall noted that the proprietor is also marked up on the "pending" license list, as no renewal application and fee for 2010 has been received as yet. Selectmen discussed possible outcomes.

MOTION: To send a certified notice of non-renewal to proprietor Maureen Knowlton, pending the payment of the overdue taxes or an acceptable agreement with the Tax Collector for the amount due. (THOMPSON, BRADY) Approved 3-0.

Fire Department Hiring

Chief Nothe and Captain Bourcier addressed the board and described the procedure for screening applicants for the position of firefighter/EMT. He noted that eight persons were chosen for preliminary screening (of 56 candidates). After the first round, the HR Coordinator and Town Administrator were invited to review the field and were in agreement with the choices. At the close of the initial screening, the review board chose two candidates to be interviewed by selectmen.

Firefighter Candidate: Zachary Brown

Mr. Brown spoke of the steps he has taken on a career path in fire services, which began in Wilbraham with a high school internship with the WFD. He has been attending college in Kentucky, where he just graduated and where he has been working as a paramedic. He responded to all questions from the board and spoke of his board interest in emergency management.

Firefighter Candidate: Matthew Walch

Mr. Walch spoke of his dedication to the fire services, which began at age 16 with the Monson Fire Department. He has trained at the Massachusetts Fire Academy, as well as continuing course work at STCC. He recently earned intermediate status EMT. He reported on his many duties in the Monson Fire Department where he is one of only three full-time firefighters. He is very useful in operation of apparatus, including pumper trucks. He is a skillful mechanic and takes care of a variety of equipment.

Chief Nothe summarized and noted that both candidates seem a little nervous and perhaps did not show all their qualities in this brief interview. He recommended that Mr. Walch would be a strong candidate for employment in Wilbraham, where his experience with vehicles, equipment

and command structure would be useful to the department. He also noted that he would welcome Mr. Brown as on-call firefighter.

MOTION: To appoint Matthew Walch to the Wilbraham Fire Department at a date to be determined by the Fire Chief, pending completion of all pre-employment requirements. (THOMPSON, BRADY) Approved 3-0.

II. CITIZEN'S OPEN FORUM

Charles Bennett asked about **Foskett Hall** and if there is any planning being done for the on-going use of the building. Mr. Barry reported that there is no active planning at this time.

III. TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Mr. Weitz reported that **budget development** continues, with many uncertainties. If school aid (Chapter 70) is reduced further there will be a big impact. School transportation funding is also at rock bottom. All state projections are very soft. He expects to have a budget proposal in early January to the Board of Selectmen, then to the Finance Committee. The retirement benefits liability study group has been very diligent, meeting weekly. That group may have some recommendations in January.

IV. SELECTMEN'S UPDATES

David W. Barry

Mr. Barry reported that there has been some discussion about the **next regional selectmen's group meeting**. Mr. Weitz is polling the other towns for a date.

V. OLD BUSINESS

Appointments to Boards and Committees

In reviewing the list of citizen volunteers and board vacancies, Mr. Brady suggested that Mr. Weitz call Joe Kelly to try to narrow his interests in anticipation of scheduling an interview.

Investment Policy

MOTION: To accept the Investment Policy as presented by Town Treasurer Tom Sullivan on December 14, 2009. (THOMPSON, BRADY) Approved 3-0.

Optional Meals Tax

Selectmen discussed the optional meals tax. Selectmen agreed to hold an informal hearing on the subject and invite restaurateurs and businesses to comment. A tentative date was set for January 11.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

Senior Tax-Work Program 2010-2011

MOTION: To request the sum of \$ 14,250 be added to the FY 2011 Overlay Reserve Fund for the purpose of hiring 19 positions in the Senior Tax Work Off Program at \$750 each for the period of January 1, 2010 to November 30, 2011. (THOMPSON, BRADY) Approved 3-0.

Senior Center Social Services Coordinator

MOTION: To authorize the recruiting for, and hiring of, a replacement part-time (17.5 hours) Senior Center Social Services Coordinator to fill a vacancy occurring on January 15, 2010.(THOMPSON, BRADY) Approved 3-0.

VII. LICENSING, OTHER APPROVALS

License Renewals

MOTION: To approve renewal of licenses as listed on documents titled *2009 Renewals*:

- Food Establishment (all types),
- Common Victualer,
- Retail Tobacco Sales,
- Local Entertainment,
- Sunday Entertainment,
- Auto Sales Class One and Two,
- Amusement Devices (games),
- Amusement Devices (juke box),
- Billiard Tables,
- Public and Semi-Public Swimming Pools,
- Motels,
- Tanning Facilities and Equipment,
- Retail Sales of Milk and Cream,
- Frozen Dessert Manufacturing, and
- Pasteurization,

said licenses expiring December 31, 2010. (THOMPSON, BRADY) Approved 3-0.

License Pending

MOTION: To approve licenses for the following businesses, to be marked “pending,” to be issued upon receipt of a signed renewal application and fees for 2010:

- Boston Grille,
- Johnsens Catering,
- Wilbraham Pizzeria,
- Ultimate Tanning Resort,
- Sugar DL’s Baked Goods, and
- Christ the King Lutheran Church.

If no renewal application is received, selectmen authorize an expiration notice to be sent, advising businesses that operations requiring a license must cease December 31, 2009 at 11:59 PM. (THOMPSON, BRADY) Approved 3-0.

Entertainment: New Year’s Eve

MOTION: To grant a one-time entertainment permit to Belas, Inc., d/b/a Abruzzo at 2589 Boston Road for live entertainment, subject to the same conditions as granted in the annual entertainment license for the same venue, for one-time event on New Year’s Eve. (THOMPSON, BRADY) Approved 3-0.

VIII. MINUTES

MOTION: To approve the minutes of November 23, as submitted. (THOMPSON, BRADY) APPROVED 3-0.

IX. OTHER CORRESPONDENCE, SIGNATURES

A list of documents signed at this meeting follows as Attachment A

X. EXECUTIVE SESSION

MOTION: To go into executive session for the purpose of discussing strategy with respect to **litigation**, because discussion in open session may have a detrimental affect on the town's position, and that the board return to open session to **adjourn.** (THOMPSON, BRADY)
APPROVED 3-0.

The executive session commenced at 8:20 PM.

Having no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:40 PM.

Town Administrator

David W. Barry, Chairman

James E. Thompson

Patrick J. Brady

ATTACHMENT A

The following documents were signed at the selectmen's meeting on December 21, 2009:

1. Alcohol beverage license certificate, Frankie B's Billiards and Sports Bar (transfer)
2. Sunday license certificates, for 6 licensees
3. ABCC Renewal Certification 2010
4. Letter to State Ethics Commission, appointment of liaison Robert A. Weitz

XI.