

**BOARD OF  
SELECTMEN  
MEETING  
MINUTES**

**February 2, 2016**

Town Hall

Chairman Kenneth Picard; Selectman Robert J. Fleming; Selectman James Brochu; Town Manager, Blythe C. Robinson; Executive Assistant, Sandra Hakala

1 The meeting was called to order at 6:00pm. Chairman Picard opened the meeting and after the  
2 pledge of allegiance reviewed the agenda.

3  
4 **MINUTES**

5  
6 ***Motion #1:*** Motion made by Selectman Brochu to approve the January 19, 2016

7  
8 Second: Selectman Fleming, Unanimous Chairman Picard.

9  
10 ***Motion #2:*** Motion made by Selectman Brochu to approve the January 19, 2016 Executive  
11 Session Meeting Minutes.

12  
13 Second: Selectman Fleming, Unanimous Chairman Picard.

14  
15 ***Motion #3:*** Motion made by Selectman Brochu to approve the January 26, 2016 Joint Session  
16 BoS and Library/COA Feasibility Committee Session Meeting Minutes.

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18 Second: Selectman Fleming, Unanimous Chairman Picard.

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20 **MANAGER'S REPORT**

21 The new website project led by Kelly and Sandy culminated in the new platform going live  
22 yesterday. The format is cleaner, more information is available and easier to find, and it is  
23 adaptable to mobile devices. The paperless meeting agenda for the Selectmen is being rolled out  
24 earlier than expected, so that those interested in viewing any or all of the Selectmen's agenda  
25 packet will be able to do so on-line.

26  
27 The Governor released his budget proposal for the next fiscal year and as he outlined at the  
28 MMA conference last week it includes an increase in local aid revenue for Upton and MURSD.  
29 The UGGA grant for the Town goes up \$21,105 to \$511,914, and Chapter 70 aid to the school  
30 district will rise \$44,220. There is also small increase in the PILOT monies to Towns with state  
31 owned land. The Governor had also announced a further \$75 million for vocational technical  
32 schools, but we haven't seen how that will translate for BVT.

33  
34 The State also announced an IT Grant program that opens next week eligible to Community  
35 Compact municipalities. Grants are available up to \$400,000 to strengthen IT programs and  
36 infrastructure. There are two projects in mind that would total about \$37,000 an application will  
37 be developed for.

38  
39 The Planning Board met this week and discussed the proposed Village Center District By-law.  
40 Chris Ryan, the lead planner for the CMPRC was in attendance and reviewed with the Board the  
41 draft district map and a first version of the language of the bylaw. The Board debated various  
42 aspects of the bylaw, and how to approach asking the voters to approve it at Town Meeting (in

43 stages or all at once). The direction appears to be to focus on the more “commercial” ends of the  
44 zone (West Upton and the area from Town Hall to the Gasco Station”). Mr. Ryan will be further  
45 refining the document and the Board will discuss it next on February 23rd. If they are satisfied  
46 with that, they’ll be setting up a public meeting to gather input from interested parties.

47  
48 Ms. Robinson met with the Northbridge Town Manager to discuss the details of sharing a  
49 Conservation Agent. Northbridge is keen to move forward and anticipates drafting an Inter-  
50 municipal Agreement in the next few weeks.

51  
52 **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

53 Discuss FY 2016/2017 Budget  
54 The Board determined that they will meet on separate meeting dates with the DPW, Fire and  
55 Police so the departments can present their budget in detail.

56  
57 Review Draft March 3rd Special Town Meeting Warrant  
58 The Selectmen reviewed a draft warrant for the special town meeting to be held on March 3rd.  
59 Two articles are devoted to providing employees with a further 1% COLA in order to fund the  
60 union contracts, one is a transfer between line items, and the last is the monies needed to match a  
61 state grant to purchase a piece of equipment for the DPW.

62  
63 Update on the Proposed Algonquin Gas Pipeline Expansion  
64 On January 25th there was a public meeting held by the company managing the proposed  
65 pipeline expansion. Selectman Fleming attended the meeting and provided the board with an  
66 update about the project.

67  
68 Spectra Energy is looking to expand the Algonquin Gas Transmission Pipeline, which includes a  
69 a proposed 27-mile spur called the West Boylston Lateral, which would run through several  
70 Massachusetts towns including Upton.

71  
72 The pipeline will likely be installed along a similar line of the existing National Grid high  
73 tension wires that run through four miles of town. Spectra would compensate residents if and  
74 when they need easements onto properties, such as temporary access to assess land, or permanent  
75 use of land for the pipeline construction.

76  
77 Update on the Proposed Library/COA Project  
78 The Board attended last week’s Library/COA Feasibility Committee meeting where that  
79 committee voted to discontinue the planning for a joint facility citing the project is not feasible  
80 because of grant restrictions incorporated in the Mass. Library Board grant.

81  
82 The library has to be freestanding to qualify for the grant, and it cannot be in conjunction with  
83 another building. Selectman Robert Fleming stated they would be forced to build two buildings  
84 with a wall down the middle that technically couldn't touch each other in order to keep the grant  
85 in compliance. The restrictions, he said, affected cost and “became overwhelming and it wasn't  
86 conducive to a good process.”

87

88 The Library Board of Trustees re-established a committee that will work with an architect to  
89 pursue building a standalone library in a location yet to be determined.

90  
91 Discuss Town Manager's Annual Performance Evaluation

92 The Board discussed the Town Managers annual review that was recently completed by them. In  
93 summation they stated "Blythe has truly earned the respect of the Board, her staff, and others  
94 within town departments and surrounding town governments. She is a true asset to the Board and  
95 Town, and we are fortunate to have her as part of our team". Ms. Robinson thanked the  
96 Selectmen for their support and stated she was honored to serve the Town.

97  
98 Approval of Request for a new Street Sign – North Street

99 The Board reviewed an application from the owner of Five Fork Farm on North Street for the  
100 installation of two street signs. He has requested the signs to say either "farm crossing" or  
101 "tractor crossing" to alert drivers to the fact that there is a farm and equipment that goes back and  
102 forth the street quite often. The Police Chief and DPW Director have signed off on the request,  
103 and the estimated cost to install the signs is \$300.

104  
105 **Motion #4:** Motion made by Selectman Fleming to authorize the placement of two signs to alert  
106 drivers that there is a farm and equipment crossing on North Street.

107  
108 Second: Selectman Brochu, Unanimous Chairman Picard.

109  
110 Motion to approve donations to the COA

111 The Board of Selectmen reviewed a letter from COA Director Janice Nowicki notifying us that  
112 the Center received two monetary donations.

113  
114 **Motion #5:** Motion made by Selectman Fleming to graciously accept and thank the  
115 Burns/Rogers family and Shawn and Debra Craig for their generous donations.

116  
117 Second: Selectman Brochu, Unanimous Chairman Picard.

118  
119 Discuss Retaining a Guest Speaker on the Topic of Opiates

120 Selectmen continued their discussion on ways to bring awareness to town about the opiate crisis.  
121 They will work on ways to educate the community and discuss their approach at the next  
122 meeting.

123  
124 Discuss Transition to Paperless Board Meeting Packets

125 The Selectmen's agenda along with supporting documents are now posted on the website. The  
126 Selectmen will receive a paper packet on the 16<sup>th</sup> and were encouraged to review the documents  
127 on line. With the purchase of the tablets the transition to paperless will be completed.

128  
129 At the request of State Rep. David Muradian, the Board of Selectmen will consider capital items  
130 they would like to receive from state budget earmarks in the future.

131  
132 Selectmen Chairman Picard suggested acquiring a street sweeper, potentially one to be shared  
133 with another local community. Chairman Picard said it would be useful because "with

134 stormwater management requirements upping, we are going to have to clean at least twice a  
135 year,” as opposed to it being currently done once a year.

136  
137 Selectmen Brochu suggested that they should also look into items that they currently outsource  
138 because it could lead to an increased “return on investment if we were to purchase an item and  
139 use it internally.” He suggested getting a new dump truck with a clamp shell or clam digger to  
140 do the catch basins.

141  
142 Selectman Robert Fleming agreed and further suggested that they reach out to other departments  
143 to take a rational approach as to what their needs are as well. Ms. Robinson said she has already  
144 received suggestions to replace all of the fire and police defibrillators, which would cost about  
145 \$27,000.

146  
147 **RECOGNITION**  
148 Selectman Fleming recognized Selectman Picard, Selectman Brochu and Danny Brochu for  
149 spending the greater part of their day Saturday switching out all the light bulbs at the fire station  
150 to LED.

151  
152 The town will benefit with substantial savings in energy costs due to their efforts; strengthen the  
153 Town’s Green Community status, and will allow Upton to apply for more grant money.

154  
155 **MEETING LOOK AHEAD TOPICS**  
156 Dual telephone poles

157  
158 **NEW BUSINESS**

159  
160 **ADJOURN MEETING**

161  
162 ***Motion #6:*** At 7:34pm motion was made by Selectman Fleming to adjourn the regular meeting.

163  
164 Second: Selectmen Brochu, Unanimous Chairman Picard.

165  
166  
167 Respectfully submitted,

168  
169  
170 Sandra Hakala  
171 Executive Assistant