

Minutes of the Town Board Meeting held at Town Hall on July 2, 2012 at 7:30PM

Present: John Burke, Supervisor
Timothy Arone, Frank Palermo, Marilyn Prestia and James Skoufis, Councilpersons
Absent: None
Also Present: Robert Weyant, Highway Superintendent; Joseph McKay, Attorney for the Town;
Dorothy Morris and Nancy Simpson, Library Board; Maria Hunter, Village Planning
Board; Arthur Abbott, Lieutenant; Neil Crouse, Village Trustee; Kevin Watson, Sergeant;
Chris Caruso, Scott Sheehan, Eric Johnson, Brian Rudden, Michael Farahvashi and Eric
Harden, Police Officers

I. Administrative Business:

a. Acceptance of Minutes:

Motion was offered by Councilman Palermo, seconded by Councilman Skoufis, to accept the minutes of the regular meeting held June 21, 2012.

ADOPTED AYES 5 Burke, Arone, Palermo, Prestia, Skoufis
NOES 0

b. Approval of Abstract:

Motion was offered by Councilman Arone, seconded by Councilwoman Prestia, to approve Abstract 14 containing Vouchers 20121369 – 20121453 and totaling \$115,321.64.

ADOPTED AYES 5 Burke, Arone, Palermo, Prestia, Skoufis
NOES 0

c. Return of Road Opening Permit – Cuthcart:

Motion was offered by Supervisor Burke, seconded by Councilman Palermo, to return the \$500 road opening permit posted by Phil/Rorey Cuthcart, as recommended by Superintendent Weyant.

ADOPTED AYES 5 Burke, Arone, Palermo, Prestia, Skoufis
NOES 0

II. Old Business: *There was no old business to discuss.*

III. New Business:

a. Authorize Supervisor to Sign Contract – Refuse Collection 2013-2014:

Motion was offered by Supervisor Burke, seconded by Councilman Palermo, to authorize the Supervisor to sign a contract with County Waste, Inc., for the collection of refuse and recycling for the 2013-2014 years at a cost of \$20.19 per unit per month. Supervisor Burke noted that this is savings of \$3.22 per unit per month to the residents in the refuse district, which is \$38.64 per year for a single-family home.

ADOPTED AYES 5 Burke, Arone, Palermo, Prestia, Skoufis
NOES 0

Supervisor Burke thanked the Board and Councilman Palermo for negotiating with County Waste which resulted in this significant savings. Councilman Palermo noted that even though the cost to the taxpayers has reduced there will be no reduction in services.

b. Appointment of Police Chief:

Supervisor Burke explained the process that was followed by the Board, which began in February with the Orange County Department of Human Resources (Civil Service). He explained Mr.

Vasquez's work experience and qualifications for the position. He also explained his education background/experience. He stressed the process was long and followed according to the Civil Service requirements and that it is the Board's responsibility to appoint who they feel is the best person for the job and the Department. Councilman Skoufis stated he feels that each member of the Board was committed to the process and that each candidate was granted equal chances and opportunity to prove their ability to serve the position. He noted that the Civil Service process is very strict and very complicated. Though he did support an internal candidate during the process, he feels Mr. Vasquez has the full support of the board. He understands that residents may not be happy with the decision made by the Board. Councilman Arone thanked all the candidates that interviewed for the position noting that it was a long process.

Motion was then offered by Supervisor Burke, seconded by Councilman Palermo, to appoint Richard Vasquez as Police Chief and to authorize the Supervisor and members of the Town Board to sign a one year, 52 week probationary contract with Mr. Vasquez commencing July 2, 2012

ADOPTED BY ROLL CALL AS FOLLOWS:

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| Supervisor Burke | AYES |
| Councilman Arone | AYES |
| Councilman Palermo | AYES |
| Councilwoman Prestia | AYES |
| Councilman Skoufis | AYES |

Town Clerk Potvin then administered the Oath of Office to Chief Vasquez. Chief Vasquez then stated that he is honored and humbled to be selected as the next Chief of Woodbury. He thanked God, the Town Board, and his family and friends. He assured all that he will be a visible and accessible Chief. He stressed that he welcomes concerns and suggestions, noting that collaborative efforts are necessary to be successful. He will work with integrity and will be held accountable to the Police Officers and they will be held accountable to him.

IV. Public Comment:

Maria Hunter thanked former Chief Kwiatkowski for his 38½ years of service to the Town and feels that each member of the Board should acknowledge his service. She then informed Chief Vasquez that the annual Woodbury Firecracker Festival will be held on July 7 and she listed the events planned for that day. She also listed all the organizations and businesses that make the Woodbury Firecracker Festival possible, including all volunteers on the committee and fire department. Supervisor Burke stated that when Chief Kwiatkowski's letter of resignation was read and accepted he was thanked and acknowledged for his service to the community while serving the country and while on the Police Department. The Board has also acknowledged his efforts continually during his service, as well as the efforts of his predecessor Theodore Jones.

Robin Crouse thanked Chief Kwiatkowski for his service. She then requested each Board member to state the reason for their selection of Chief Vasquez for the position of Police Chief. Supervisor Burke stated this meeting is a celebration of the appointment of a new Police Chief. This question will not be answered this evening but can be asked at a future meeting where it will be answered fully. He noted the Board understands that not everyone will be pleased with the decision made but they feel it is the right decision for the Town and the Police Department. Mrs. Crouse stated she will indeed ask the question again at the next meeting. She then stated she has always been told by former Police Chief Kwiatkowski and members of the Police Department that we "take care of our own" and feels it is a shame that the Town Board did not do so.

Jonathan Swiller welcomed Chief Vasquez and thanked former Chief Kwiatkowski and Chief Jones for creating such an astonishing department. He noted Woodbury has one of the most extraordinarily professional Police Department's.

Theodore Jones, former Police Chief, congratulated Chief Vasquez on his appointment. He noted that he agrees Chief Vasquez may be qualified for the position but he feels the process was handled incorrectly by the Town Board. Since a promotional test is offered, he feels that implied that the Board would be promoting from within. Two existing employees passed this test, one currently a Sergeant and one currently a Lieutenant, both qualified to be Police Chief. He does not feel that the Board made the right decision using the open competitive list after offering the promotional test. He noted that everyone strives for advancement and now the Board has shown that it is not something that an existing employee should look forward to. He feels that the Police Department should not be under the dictatorship of the Town Board or subject to politics.

Supervisor Burke reminded the public that there is a public hearing scheduled to be held on July 5 at 7:30PM at the IBEW Union Hall on the petition for annexation that was submitted by Zigmond Brach and the Village of Kiryas Joel.

Mark O'Brien stated he agreed with the comments made by Mr. Jones and that the Board made a mistake in their ability to choose a valid candidate.

Carina Vasquez stated she does not feel that the Board made a mistake appointing her father as Police Chief. She noted her father works hard and that the community will not be disappointed. Mr. Vasquez's nephew also noted that he is loyal and believes the Board made the right decision.

Councilman Skoufis, Councilman Palermo and Councilwoman Prestia each thanked former Police Chief Kwiatkowski for his service to the community. Councilman Arone stated he agrees that politics do not belong in the Police Department and that the Board will not be dictating any police procedures or how the Department is managed, other than budget related issues.

V. Adjournment:

With no further comments received or business to discuss, a motion was offered by Councilman Palermo, seconded by Councilman Arone, to adjourn the meeting at 8:10PM.

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| ADOPTED | AYES | 5 | Burke, Arone, Palermo, Prestia, Skoufis |
| | NOES | 0 | |

Desiree Potvin, Town Clerk

The Board met with Attorney McKay after adjournment to seek legal advice (as permitted pursuant to the New York State Committee for Open Government Advisory Opinion 2968 and 3012) which concluded at 9:25PM.