

**Board of Selectmen  
Special Meeting  
Wednesday January 30, 2008  
5:15PM  
Court Room**

**1. Call to order**

Meeting brought to order by Catherine Osten, First Selectman at 5:15PM. Present was Selectman Edward Meadows, Absent Selectman Kevin Generous. Also present: Linda Puetz, Tracy Medling and Claire Glaude.

**2. To discuss going to a Town Meeting regarding the Resolution for return of \$22,500 to line item 6060 for the Town Grant Writer.**

Motion made by E. Meadows, seconded by C. Osten to discuss going to a Town Meeting re: the resolution for return of \$22,500 to line item 6060 for the Town Grant Writer.

Referendum procedures were discussed: C. Glaude stated 2 options: 24 hours before petition or Selectmen can call a Special town Meeting adjourning to referendum. Referendum to be held not less than 7 days or no more than 14 days after Special Town Meeting

C. Osten spoke with R. Cody Town Attorney forwarding all question and e-mails from K. Generous' request regarding the process for petition; Town Attorney indicated there was nothing wrong with the petition and the process.

C. Osten stated 89 peopled signed a petition with their concerns to reinstate the Grant Writer, stating they have the right for the Board to consider their interest. Grant Writer has brought a considerable amount into the Town; she states it is not about an individual person but about grants financially, owing the town this discussion once more. C. Osten and E. Meadow both agree to support the resolution to go to a referendum because 89 people have the right to be heard.

- Motion made by C. Osten, seconded by E. Meadows to call a Town Meeting for the purpose of conducting and acting upon a motion to appropriate \$22,500 to line item 6060 for the Town Grant Writer to be held on February 14, 2008 at 7:00PM. Town Attorney will draft appropriate resolution.
- Motion made by C. Osten, seconded by E. Meadows to amend the motion to call a Town Meeting on February 14, 2008 at 7:00PM to be adjourned to a referendum on February 21, 2008 appropriating \$22,500 to line item 6060 for the Town Grant Writer. C. Osten read letter submitted by K. Generous for the record. Unanimously voted.

**Statement by Selectmen Kevin Generous  
At Special Meeting, January 30, 2008 which he cannot attend**

The First Selectmen scheduled this special meeting at a day and time when she knew I could not attend. This was after I had provided her, on good faith, with specific times when I could—and could not—attend this and other special meetings.

Because I believe this meeting will call a town meeting without first resolving several important legal questions that must be addressed, I requested that she find another day or time this week or next that was mutually acceptable to all members. Incredibly, she claims this was

“not possible.” There is no evidence provided by the First Selectman to indicate the meeting subject is so urgent that a meeting could not be scheduled at a time when all elected members may be present, or at our regularly scheduled meeting. This is an abuse of her authority as first selectman.

Three weeks ago I raised legitimate questions about this board’s authority and responsibility to act on a petition. There was no consensus on what constituted “action” on the petition, nor does it follow that we must automatically do what the petition asked us to do if it conflicts with our other statutory responsibilities. The First Selectman interpreted this petition to read that new money must be added into the current budget passed by voters last September on the fifth attempt, and she proceeded toward this end. This is not what the petition language says. The petition language was vague, and the board’s responsibility to act on something so vague was unclear. The First Selectman accepted my specific written questions with the understanding that town counsel would provide written responses prior to proceeding with any town meeting on this petition. To date, written answers to these questions have not been provided. This board is no closer to answering these questions than it was on January 9<sup>th</sup>.

On January 9<sup>th</sup>, this board forwarded the petition to the Board of Finance. Forwarding a petition is not part of the statutory process for adding money back into a town-approved budget. There is a legal, statutory process for adding money back into an approved budget, if this was the intent of the petition. This board has not followed that statutory process. This board has not established—nor voted—that an emergency or special need exists to request such funds outside a regular budget cycle. Neither has evidence of this need been provided by the First Selectman for evaluation and deliberation by this board.

It is inappropriate for this board to call a town meeting to request additional spending for a full-time grant writer when we have not followed correct statutory process, nor deliberated, nor voted, to define an actual emergency. The statutes have not been followed. The First Selectman acknowledged as much at the Board of Finance meeting nearly 2 weeks ago.

This board has a responsibility to follow all the statutes regarding this issue, not just selectively choosing which to follow and which to bypass when convenient; to address in good faith all Selectmen concerns about the appropriateness of the process being followed, and to ensure that we have fulfilled all our statutory responsibilities.

It is unfortunate that the First Selectman feels it is more important to act quickly than to act correctly.

### **3. Adjournment**

- Motion made by E. Meadows, seconded by C. Osten to adjourn meeting. Unanimously voted.

Respectfully submitted by,

Catherine A. Osten  
First Selectman

