

BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MINUTES OF MEETING
LONGFELLOW MUNICIPAL CENTER

MAY 25, 2000

The meeting opened at 6:35 p.m. in open session.

Members present: Chairman Leslie Davis, Selectmen Barber, Gikas, Czarn and Dan. also present, Alden Jeffs, Executive Secretary, Attorney Theresa Dowdy, Town Counsel, Police Chief Timothy P. Ryan and his Attorney Michael Akerson. Several interested spectators were also in attendance.

At 6:38 p.m., the Chairman explained that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss the format and content of Chief Ryan's report of the May 11, 2000 incident. The Chairman indicated the Board had scheduled the meeting as Executive Session, but Chief Ryan had the option of Open or Executive Session; the Chief chose Open Session, so the Chairman proceeded to explain the procedure. Attorney Akerson interrupted to state that he wished to be heard. The Board members voted to allow Attorney Akerson to speak on his client's behalf at the end of the Board's questioning. The Chairman read a prelude which state he would ask prepared questions, then the Board members would individually have the opportunity to ask questions. All questions related to the format and content of the report.

The Board questioned why the Chief did not prepare his report based on individual reports from the various officers, but rather had all officers sign his report. The Board also wanted to know how the Chief had authority to request that various Firefighters sign a report prepared by him and expressed concerns that some of the officers who signed the report had no knowledge of some of the events contained in the report. The Board was concerned that the information contained in the report regarding the citizen first reporting the incident was not complete and inconsistent. Further, the Board expressed issues over the Chief not requesting that the first officer sent to the scene search beyond where, in the Chief's opinion, the person was located. Finally, the Board wanted to know why the ambulance was not dispatched in the first instance and why the Chief did not seek further information from the citizen who first reported the incident.

The Board was not satisfied with the Chief's response and voted that they were not satisfied with the report. Motion not to accept report . . . Selectman Barber -no etc.

The Chief's attorney addressed the Board and suggested that the Boards' questioning should not be made part of an executive session. He also inferred that the citizen who reported the incident is known to the police.


Selectman Barber suggested that if someone is allegedly "known" to police, then it makes that person more credible, since he went out of his way to be in a place (police station) where he did not want to be. Attorney Dowdy explained that because the

Chief's appointing authority is a multi-member board, compliance with the open Meeting law is required if the Board wishes to discuss concerns with the Chief.

The Board directed the Chief and Mr. Jeffs to receive copies of the tape of the Incident, and individual reports from the Police and Fire Department. The Board then moved to continue their deliberations regarding the format and content of the Chief's report after review of the reports and tape.


Motion by Selectman Barber, seconded by Dean and unanimously voted to adjourn at 7:24 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Alden W. Jeffs, acting as recorder

APPROVED:


Leslie Davis, Chairman


Jennifer Dean, Vice-Chairman


C. Althea Czara


Lincoln E. Barber III


Kenneth Gikas