

Board of Selectmen Meeting:
William Belden Training Room
Chairman:

Edmund Jaworski

3-6-2019 @ 5:30pm
Approved: April 30, 2019

Present: Selectman Edmund Jaworski, Selectman Brian Moriarty, Selectman Cindy Doty, Marlene Michonski, Town Administrator

Selectman Jaworski opened the meeting at 5:30 pm.

Announcements –

Cable Manager, John Novak was thanked for taping the meeting. Selectman Jaworski said the Finance Committee was expected to come in at 6:30. Selectman Jaworski reminded viewers to set clocks ahead this weekend.

No one spoke at public forum

Selectman Doty moved to approve the Selectmen's meeting minutes of Feb. 19, 2019, Feb. 12, 2019, Nov. 28, 2018, Nov. 13, 2018 & June 25, 2018. Selectman Jaworski declined to vote on the minutes of Feb. 19, 2019 as he was not present for the meeting. Selectman Moriarty seconded. All minutes were approved.

Posted Business

Police Chief Mike Dekoschak introduced, Whately Chief James Sevigne Jr., a certified firearms instructor. Chief Dekoschak explained that Hatfield co-trains with Whately, so he can train our department as well as his own. Selectman Jaworski thanked Chief Sevigne for coming forward and moved to appoint Chief Sevigne as Hatfield Training Officer. Selectman Moriarty seconded. The motion was approved.

HR Policy Review

Ms. Michonski discussed edits to Section 16 under Health Insurance. These were reviewed by Treasurer/Collector. There were no recommended changes to the retirement system section. Selectman Moriarty asked why the employee must make the choice within 30 days of hire and cannot make changes. Ms. Palmisano explained it is the insurance company we are with, though sometimes there is an open enrollment for certain products. Ms. Strzegowski suggested adding a section for a flexible spending option coming up. The Town contribution of not less than 50% was discussed. Ms. Michonski said the town is obligated to pay 50%. Selectman Moriarty explained there could be a change that it might go up, but it can't go down. Selectman Moriarty moved to accept the policy as presented. Selectman Doty seconded. The motion was approved.

Section 18 Workers Compensation

Ms. Michonski said MIIA has revised their report form and calls it a Supervisor's Report of Accident Form. She has reviewed this with MIIA. Selectman Jaworski moved to accept changes made to Workers Compensation under Section 18. Selectman Doty seconded.

SoLect Energy Lease Agreement

Ms. Michonski said this was reviewed by town counsel who thinks it should be signed by the Board of Selectmen, the School Committee and Secretary of Education. The School Committee approved the agreement last night. Ms. Michonski said town counsel suggested minor changes which the school committee has approved. The PILOT agreement was briefly discussed. Selectman Doty asked if Selectman Moriarty can sign as a school committee member and a selectman. Selectman Moriarty said it is not a conflict of interest. Selectman Jaworski moved to accept agreement based on the School Committee acceptance, and legal counsel's ok. Selectman Doty seconded. The motion was approved.

Annual Town Meeting Warrant

The Board discussed a possible warrant article increase of the Board of Selectmen from 3 to 5 members. Selectman Jaworski said personally, he is not in favor of this article to go forward to Annual Town Meeting at this time. Selectman Moriarty said we were charged at last town meeting to find out about going from 3 to 5 and we should report back. He disagrees this will increase the cost to the town selectboard members would be able to have subcommittees doing the legwork. Selectman Jaworski said the study did say 3 member boards worked fine, but didn't give any information about additional burdens on staff.

Selectman Doty said she feels Annual Town Meeting decided twice already and doesn't like to keep bringing certain items up. Selectman Moriarty noted that the Town said yes to finding out more information. This is about a commitment to bring forth the information that the study group found.

Mr. Joseph Lavalley commented, but not in his capacity as town moderator, that Annual Town Meeting, gave the Board permission to explore going from a 3 to 5-member Board. He said a committee went to 1 town and made a phone call to Hadley and found there was more expense. He noted a lack of communication in the town saying department heads and others affected have not been included in the conversation and thinks it's unfair to ask people to vote on something they asked Board to explore and suggested looking at a town manager or stronger administrative assistant.

Selectman Doty said she asked if they were going to do a survey and they said no. Selectman Moriarty said the size of the town doesn't matter and he doesn't know why the Board of Selectmen is different than the Planning Board and other boards.

Water Abatement Request – presented by Mr. Genovese

Selectman Jaworski moved to approve abatement for \$56.07 for 77 Depot Road. Selectman Moriarty seconded. Ms. Strzegowski explained the interest noted on the application as due to the length of time it took to address the item during the transition from the previous treasurer/collector. The motion was approved.

Ambulance Service – Fire Chief Stephen Gaughan

Chief Gaughan said the ambulance brings in more than it expends. He gave an update of the ambulance department. Selectman Jaworski commended the chief for backups and coverage though there are still gaps. Chief Gaughan said he gave Selectman Jaworski a tour of the ambulance which is 17 years old, which has old technology and structure. The State said it looks good for a 17 year old ambulance. Ambulance licenses are inspected every year. The Chief described other programs such as CPR in the school. EMT's are recertified every 2 years.

Selectman Doty said the mechanic says the ambulance is perfect. Chief Gaughan said there's a diesel leak and sending it out to Marcotte Ford will be a \$6,000.00 bill. Selectman Doty was concerned with response time and the difficulty getting volunteers saying no small towns around here have their own ambulance. She said Northampton answered 51% of the calls. Chief Gaughan briefly explained mutual aid and said there's always room for improvement. Selectman Moriarty asked if the numbers Selectman Doty referred to was information they all got, then asked about the numbers received from other towns.

Selectman Moriarty then read aloud a letter signed by Selectman Doty inferring she had been asked by the Chairman to gather information. Selectman Jaworski said there was a miscommunication. Selectman Moriarty said the ambulance came up and Selectman Doty took it upon herself to do this. He said this is a violation of open meeting law, a perfect example of the necessity of going from a 3 to a 5 member Board. Selectman Doty attempted to speak. Selectman Jaworski called for a 5 minute break at 6:30.

Finance Committee – Diane Brzozowski, Betsy Rider, Darryl Williams, Paul Fisher

Selectman Jaworski turned the meeting over to Mr. Williams at 6:40pm.

Ms. Brzozowski moved to accept the Finance Committee minutes of January 14. Mr. Fisher seconded. The motion was approved.

Mr. Fisher moved to accept the Finance Committee minutes of January 29. Ms. Rider seconded. The motion was approved.

Eliza Langhans, Library Director

Ms. Langhans described plans to replace certain area flooring in the library with carpet tiles. She explained renovation plans were withdrawn because of lack of support. The building is not handicapped accessible so they're trying to make the best out of what they have now. Selectman Moriarty suggested they work with facilities.

School Department - John Robert, Superintendent

Mr. Robert read a narrative letter regarding requested school related safety items such as cameras, motion detectors, and alarms for \$139,536.00. Additionally, \$90,000. Is requested for a fire control system as the Fire Chief says the current system is antiquated with an incidence of past failure. A working fire alarm system is a mandate. Replacement of Smith Academy door locks and intercom system are also requested.

The need for paving of both school parking lots was discussed with the Finance Committee and Mr. Genovese. Mr. Robert has a 1st draft of the operating budget which was discussed. He said special ed costs are driving the budget more than any other factor. Out of district placement is required for 4 students.

Mr. Robert spoke about special education in the school and the number of students placed out. He said our overall spec-ed numbers are about average for the state.

Fire Department - Chief Stephen Gaughan –

The Chief reported that the current ambulance has 2500 hours and some electrical issues. It was bought through the ambulance trust in 2003. He is asking for \$305,000 for a new ambulance. Mr. Williams asked Mr. Genovese about vehicle lease. He said a 7 year lease to own arrangement is possible for a big item like the ambulance. This may be a viable option as it is about 15 years before we talk about replacement. The lease price would also include the radios, and other items.

Paramedic equipment for \$13,000.00 is requested. Chief Gaughan said there is \$40,000.00 in ambulance surplus. Also, the Jaws of Life can't be serviced anymore. New technology is battery powered, more mobile, and more efficient. Selectman Moriarty said this has also been on the list for a while. The Board thanked the Chief.

DPW - Mr. Phill Genovese, Director

Mr. Genovese talked about plans to pave Main Street, corner of Maple to 145 Main for the 350th event in June 2020 for \$265,000.00 using Chpt. 90 money. This would be in addition to other items. Additionally, he plans to do Dwight St in sections, then Gore Avenue. Drainage and seal work is to be done on Straits Road. The Police Chief and Fire Chief request keeping the road open. Mr. Genovese said it is an accepted town road as paperwork was never filed to abandon it.

The Inflow and infiltration study needs to get funded this year. We are on notice and we will get fined for non-compliance.

The lift station can go into FY21. Upgrade to the Maple Street pump station is on the masterplan. There is a Massworks grant debrief tomorrow.

A leak detection study to find where unaccountable water is coming from was discussed. A water main break at the log cabin was discussed. Mr. Genovese said this is a heavily traveled route and the pipes pulled out were from 1951 and 1896. Also, DEP suggested emergency connections to Northampton.

Mr. Genovese said regarding the Straits Road water main connection 10 houses are asking for the extension, so they can get on the system. Mr. Williams said this is not a Finance Committee decision. There is an owner contribution for tie-in fees. Selectman Moriarty said it's a conversation worth having with the residents. Mr. Genovese mentioned a study for water rate cost analysis.

In response to a question from Selectman Doty, Mr. Genovese said there is a master plan for water, but he wondered if they are ever going to do those projects. If there was ever any extra money it would go to route 5 for the sewer. Resident Mike Cahill suggested a large borrowing, assuming a 20-year debt burden to get infrastructure projects done.

Mr. Genovese said we have a town hall generator but it won't operate the elevator. He said he would work with whoever would be doing the generator. He said also, there is a need for another \$45,000 for trusses to support the pole barn because the structure is leaning, and can't just be reroofed. Money is requested for the Fire station porch. There is a safety concern as the ceiling came down. The Prospect Court Bridge was briefly discussed. There is \$143,000.00 left in community preservation funding but bids were triple. The reimbursable grant is a spring application and would need a Special Town Meeting for the funding.

Finance Committee-

A finance reserve transfer of \$351.20 to the insurance account was made on motion of Ms. Rider, seconded by Mr. Fisher on a request of Ms. Michonski for a MIIA invoice.

Ms. Rider also passed out information for health reimbursement accounts administered by a 3rd party. Mr. Williams asked Ms. Michonski about discussion with Baystate Accounting. A conference call is set for Friday morning.

Mr. Genovese noted a claim of \$17,000.00 was submitted in regards the town hall power surge. The town's insurance has a \$1,000.00 deductible.

Selectman Jaworski asked to take another short break at 8:20 and the meeting reconvened at 8:25.

Selectman Jaworski said article 1 is to bring the building to ADA compliance which is the elevator, fire suppression, 1 ramp and conforming steps. Article 2 was to reclaim the COA kitchen space and move the building inspector's office. Phase 1 was approved so this should be moved ahead and do the ADA required things and then we do the COA study to find out what we really need in that space and form a committee to see what needs to be done for the whole building.

Selectman Doty said at the COA meeting there were questions about the ramps and she thought people didn't understand about them. There is to be one ramp to go up and the entrance at the back is to have steps conforming to depth requirements. The Board expressed eagerness to get the bids out.

Selectman Jaworski moved to move ahead and get that done. Selectman Moriarty seconded.

There was discussion between the Finance Committee and Selectmen regarding \$325,00.00 in debt exclusion funds for the potential Council on Aging space renovation. A study needs to be done before moving forward. Mr. Genovese said a study wasn't done because approval of a downstairs ramp may have affected the council's opinion. A committee might be put together to do a feasibility study. There is also confusion around the cable studio. For future building projects representatives from cable tv, historical and Council on Aging should be present.

FRTA Update-

Selectman Doty reported that she, Ms. Michonski, and 2 representatives had a conference call regarding stops on Route 5 southbound side. Business owners are not happy, so two new locations will be proposed.

Selectman Jaworski will look at Annual Town Meeting articles. Ms. Michonski said we will need to have a Special Town Meeting to bring up current shortfalls, such as unanticipated special education costs unless we will be able to fund them at the end of the year.

Selectman Moriarty moved to adjourn. Selectman Jaworski seconded. The motion was approved. The meeting ended at 8:40pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Ki J. Eno
Executive Assistant