

Selectmen's minutes of meeting Nov. 21, 2016

Members present: Alice Boyd, Jeff Gray, John Skrip, Willie Morales, Bob O'Brien
Dolores Harasyko

Called to order at 7:00

It is with deep respect that we acknowledge the Mahican Tribe, the pathfinders of our community.

We recognized Tollands loss of their Highway Dept. building due to fire. Bob stated that our highway department is helping by plowing Route 57.

Bob provided highway department updates. They are finishing up last minute patches, continue to work on Town Hill Rd. Alice asked about the Transfer Station signs which she asked for on Sept. 9, Bob responded that they are in but are large and need to be properly mounted and will be done by Saturday.

The Dodge is still out of service, There are 4 trucks running at this time. John said he had calls that Bobs highway dept. phone is not working. Bob said he will get it fixed. Jeff said he plowed Stump Rd. . Nick DellaGiustina expressed his concerns that the highway department is not driving all the way through to the end of his road. They are only plowing the paved part and not going to the end of Clark Rd. They had trees down blocking their road and they couldn't get out. Nick had no response and had to call the power company himself, he then got his own equipment and cut the trees to open the road. Kathy Jacobs asked if we would continue to support the Tolland highway department throughout the winter. Alice responded we will but we have to take care of Sandisfield first.

John asked if the finance committee could have regular meetings. Kathy responded that they meet as needed. The next one is scheduled for Dec. 10, 2016.

Kathy explained reviewed the Master Planning Committee responsibilities. They need to start meeting again.

John Shannon from Network Engineer in to review their IT proposal. They service several Berkshire towns and have worked to bring them all into compliance. He reviewed some of our problems. Discussed email compliance issues. Alice asked about needing someone to come in to handle sporadic problems. John responded that they cover calls 24/7. It is all inclusive. They will be able to bring us all into compliance. The wiring in the town hall annex is not good. Willie asked about the payment, offered monthly, quarterly or annually. John responded the equipment needs would be paid upfront, service payment is up to the town. Cost is based on number of PC's and software needs. They have been in business for 20 years. Kathy J. asked where the server would be located, John responded they would like to use a rack mount probably downstairs. They are unable to reduce their proposal. John is very familiar with the programs used by the

treasurers office. Willie said we have enough funds in the Tech Upgrade account, Article 69 to support this. Willie presented another quote. We will review and place on the next agenda.

Pat Barrett present. He explained that when he was Selectmen they hired Jordan Arnold who was a good long term employee, Bill Perry worked under 3 road supers and Steve Harasyko whom was a very experienced road super. He wants to know why they all left employment and wants to know what the current board did to try to keep them. Alice responded that they all resigned without prodding from this board. Bobby said that Jordan left to work with his father driving trucks. Patrick is concerned that we are heading into winter with only 3 large trucks and 2 small trucks. Discussed the age of the vehicles, Patrick responded that we will end up with only one big truck in service. Bob said we have contractors lined up. Alice confirmed that we did advertise for contractors but that no one responded. Since we fulfilled our due diligence we will be able to hire contractors. Patrick asked about the rationale for not replace 2 highway dept. employees. He doesn't understand scaling back. Bob explained that he has Dawn to do 99% of his paperwork which allows him to work in the field. He feels he has a reliable crew and it is enough. They are getting everything done that needs to be done. Patrick feels we need a 5 man crew to consistently take care of the 90 miles of roads. Patrick asked if we are buying a new truck, Alice responded that will be up to the voters at the town meeting, nothing is in place at this time. Patrick is concerned that our equipment is aging, one has a cracked frame, one is always being repaired. Willie reviewed the financial impact of buying a new truck. Willie wants to work on a capitol plan. Patrick asked if anyone looked into privatizing, he looked into it a few years ago and it was very costly. Alice said they have and are not privatizing. John said that the union contract is up in June and they are looking into the highway crew taking on more tasks. He feels privatizing is out of the question as it is too expensive. Alice said we need to work on long term plans.

Willie reviewed the personnel manual. He thanked the staff for working with him to develop the manual. Motion by John, second by Jeff to adopt the personnel manual, passed unanimously.

Willie followed up on payment for the assistant building inspector, \$140.00 will cover it.

We will place the special town meeting on a future agenda.

Motion by Jeff, second by John, passed unanimously to approve annual liquor renewals. The establishments all passed Board of Health and Fire safety inspections.

Willie presented Town Administrator updates. He explained that we are having financial budget review meetings every week. The review team consists of the Town Administrator, Treasurer, Town Accountant and Town Clerk. Willie explained that there is no rental agreement in place between the Fire Dept and the town for the two fire department buildings.

Selectmen's updates.

Alice has attended many meetings regarding broadband. We will be able to go out bid immediately because we have a MLP in place.

We can move forward without bonding although we are approved for the bonding through State House notes. She continues to work on Energy Aggregation. We have a signed contract for a lower rate than anyone is currently paying in town.

John continues to work with Miller Petroleum on the gas reading system. We cannot upgrade for less than \$3,500. He is suggesting placing this on the next years town meeting warrant. Treasurer Terry does not recommend putting more money into a system when we do not currently allocate to the departments that use the gas and diesel. She does not want to see the system on someone's personal computer, all agreed.

Discussed the cost of snow storms.

John continues to work on the Recreation Committee.

Discussed the website, Dolores has been posting to the website but it is not recognizing the postings. She asked Alice to observe her process. Willie is working on correcting the problem.

Future agenda items: Board of Health, vote on the IT contract, Master Plan, BRPC, special town meeting and Yanner Park expenses.

Alice received an email from the Chair of our Conservation Committee referencing the highway department dumping at Yanner Park. Bob said they have been dumping fill only. They did temporarily store some old bridge rails and 2x4's which have since been removed.

Bob would like to take the building down and leave the materials there for a later clean up, Willie said If they take the building down it has to be removed right away for safety reasons.

Meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Alice Boyd

Jeff Gray

John Skrip