

Selectmen's minutes of meeting Nov. 19, 2018

Members present: Mark Newman, Brian O'Rourke, Fred Ventresco,
Dolores Harasyko, Admin. Asst.

Members absent: George Riley

Called to order at 7:00 p.m.

Reviewed and signed minutes of meeting

Discussed preliminary FY2020 budget topics.

Dolores asked the selectmen if they were taking a raise for fy2020, they responded that they were not, they are level funding. She is working on their budgets to have them ready for review for the Nov. 28 work session.

Fred asked about raises for other town employees. The selectmen responded that they will get the COLA 2%. Brian reviewed the implementation of a stair step bonus based on performance for all employees. Each employee will be evaluated and based on performance will be eligible for a bonus.

Fred reviewed the history of the health insurance and how it has been budgeted for in the past. Last year they made the benefit part of the salary line item for each employee. The Town Accountant brought it to his attention that this is improper, it is not a salary. We will go back to having a separate line item for Employee Benefits. It will not be part of the employee's budget.

Highway Department updates:

Mark provided updates. They made it through the first snow storm of the season. They guys did a great job. They are pre treating the roads and it worked out very well. Dirt roads are still soft as there is no frost in the ground. Mark is looking into rubber plow blades for the dirt roads. All the town buildings were plowed and sanded. Former road superintendent Ed Riiska commended the highway department for their work on this storm.

The new highway garage building is moving along rapidly. Discussed having an open house when it is complete. One new truck has been delivered and is being outfitted for plowing. The second truck is on it's way.

Larry Dwyer speaking on behalf of Tom O'Gara sent thanks and commended the highway department for their work on Shade and Sullivan Road. They brought in 400 tons of gravel and graded the road.

The Rugg Bridge approach has been paved.

Discussed the road superintendent interviews, we have 2 this week and will have 2 next week.

Discussed the qualifications that the board is looking for in a superintendent, they responded that they want someone with construction experience, supervisory experience, common sense, and strong leadership abilities, they want a team leader.

Selectmen's updates:

Brian reviewed the Five Town Coalition meeting. Smitty Pignatelli was very helpful and gave some suggestions. They like that we are working together with 4 other towns to get something done with Route 57. They are meeting with Berkshire Regional Planning to determine how many miles of road are in Berkshire County. Discussed the traffic impact the new casino in Springfield will have on Route 57. Brian pointed out that the poor conditions of Route 57 effect the ambulance service. They are unable to travel at a higher rate of speed due to the condition of the road, it also makes it difficult to work on a patient in the ambulance.

Smitty mentioned that the DCR will be updating the bathrooms at York Lake for next year and they will be opened all season.

Barbara Cormier asked about the culvert on Dodd Road, Fred has not heard from the homeowner. If he does not respond the town will replace the culvert and bill the homeowner. Discussed the camper violations, Brian responded that they are having one more meeting with the Board of Health and the Building Inspector.

Town Administrator updates:

Fred reviewed the one bid we received for plowing. The bid is from C. W. Nelson for \$85.00 per hour, \$90.00 per hour with sanding. We will rebid to see if there is more interest and perhaps a better price.

Fred, on behalf of the Finance Committee is questioning if the plowing is even budgeted for. Dolores responded that it comes under Snow and Ice for snow removal. Snow and Ice is the only budget line you can legally go over since you cannot predict the weather.

Discussed the winter weather and delayed openings. The selectmen prefer to follow the school closing policy. If the schools are closed then the town buildings will be closed. The selectmen want employees to be safe and use common sense.

Fred received a call from the Yanner Park committee, we will place them on next week's agenda.

Fred reviewed the pest control contract. They presented a new offer of \$750 down and \$250.00 per building for the year. The selectmen accepted the agreement and Fred signed the contract.

Discussed future agenda items:

Yanner Park

Discuss the public salt and sand usage at the highway garage

Reviewed and signed warrants

Reviewed mail

Nina Carr asked about Broadband. She read 2 articles recently in the Berkshire Eagle. Brian responded that all Wired West is offering to do is to charge a fee to manage a system, not to build it.

Meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Mark Newman

Brian O'Rourke

George Riley