

Selectmen's minutes of meeting April 6, 2015

Members present: Patrick Barrett, Jeff Gray, Lisa Blackmer, Dolores Harasyko

Called to order at 7:05 p.m.

Mark Cappadona and Denise Allard from Colonial Power Group in to present information on municipal energy aggregation. Every meter in town will be involved with an opt out option. You can come and go from the program. The Selectmen have to pass the plan and then it is put on the annual town warrant for the town to vote. If a resident is already using an alternate source for energy they are not obligated to join. Rita Kasky asked about a fee to change companies. There will be a mailing to every household in order to opt out. In their company there are no fees to opt in or out. Eversource is the pole and wire company and will still be responsible for the service. Kathy Jacobs feels it is intrusive from a libertarian standpoint that the town will decide on the company for every household. Mark explained the opt out cards go out 30 days before it takes effect. Dolores asked for clarification on the process of voting. The first step is the town vote, then the selectmen vote on the plan, then there is a 5 month wait. The 30 day opt out card will go out 30 days before the rate is locked in. Dolores said the board would have to decide tonight to place this on the annual town warrant. Patrick would like to see this happen as it protects the community against scams and will provide the town with a safe way to get lower rates. We will have a public information meeting before the town meeting. Patrick suggested holding an info meeting at the all boards meeting on May 11, 2015.

Motion by Patrick, second by Jeff to add the Municipal Energy Aggregation article to the annual town warrant.

The selectmen thanked the assessors for helping with the overlay account.

Patrick thanked Dolores for all her hard work on the budget. He also thanked Ed McCormick for all he has done as town council in protecting the towns best interest.

Motion by Patrick to accept the fy2016 warrant and budget as presented adding the energy aggregation added, second by Jeff.

Patrick clarified the article regarding the pipeline in the Sandisfield Times was grossly incorrect. He read a statement that he submitted to Simon Winchester in its entirety. The statement was chopped up and taken out of context and gave an inaccurate and disturbing account of events. Patrick expressed that the article painted a view that the selectmen violated Mass Open Meeting Laws. Patrick reiterated that he has a higher integrity. He explained that the meetings held were business meetings and did not include a quorum of the board. They did not violate any open meeting law. Shoddy journalism was displayed. He would like to know who the source of the erroneous information regarding a cancelled meeting was from. The meeting was to be with one selectmen, Ben Downing and Smitty Pignatelli. The previous meetings were cancelled due to conflicts with Ben and Smitty's schedule. The last meeting was cancelled because of an emergency medical situation with Patrick's daughter. He suggested having the meeting at his house since it was not a

public meeting anyway. Ben and Smitty were not comfortable holding a meeting at a residence so the meeting had to be cancelled. Rita Kasky responded that she had heard that there was going to be a meeting between Smitty and the selectmen and that she wanted to attend. She asked if there is a meeting does it have to be posted. Patrick responded that if there is a quorum absolutely it has to be posted. Patrick feels that the Times has damaged the reputation of the Selectboard and Lisa. It leads people to think the selectmen have done something wrong and they have not. They have posted all their meetings as required by the open meeting law. Bogart and Rita were told by individuals whose names they would not divulge to be at this meeting tonight and that it was not an open meeting. Patrick would like an apology from the Times, it is the honorable thing to do. The common denominator of all the miss quoted articles in the past has been the same author of the articles which included articles about Konstam and Hubbard. The selectmen have always put the best interest of the town first. Jeff reiterated that the selectmen have opposed the pipeline right along but have to protect the town at the same time. Patrick explained that the perception of the selectmen's job is very different than the actual job. Ron Bernard is concerned that the perception of the gift is a goodwill offer from Kinder Morgan. Ron is concerned that this is a bribe to allow the pipeline to go through. Patrick said the federal government will be the deciding factor as to whether or not there is a need for the pipeline. Ron feels we should not accept any goodwill gifts from Kinder Morgan. The selectmen reiterated that they were advised to discuss with Kinder Morgan. Ron doesn't feel the Board of Health, Conservation or Planning boards have done enough. Kathy Jacobs asked if the selectmen have been negotiating for a new highway garage building. Pat asked Kathy if she had heard anything he just said. Dolores reviewed the legal posting regarding the Times article written by Rita Kasky. Patrick asked Rita for an apology, she responded that she will not apologize. She does not feel she is wrong, she got her information from the Times reporters summaries. Dolores explained that the meetings were indeed posted. Dolores presented the minutes from Dec. 29, 2014 in which a motion was made to continue the hearing until Feb. 27, 2015 at 7pm at the Old Town Hall. She then reviewed the open meeting laws on posting requirements and the fact that the website is not the towns approved posting site. The website cannot be the legal posting place as not all residents have internet or high speed internet available to them. The board at the Town Hall Annex is the State approved bulletin board for all legal postings.

Lisa provided updates. She attended 2 pipeline meetings, clearing house review committee meeting, worked on Athena Health Care, New Hartford Rd., received a DLT Grant for technical assistance. Followed up with Alice Boyd on additional funding for Wired West.

Mail reviewed  
Warrants reviewed and signed  
Meeting adjourned at 9:08 p.m.

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Patrick Barrett

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Jeff Gray