

Selectmen's minutes of meeting March 23, 2015

Members present: Patrick Barrett, Jeffrey Gray, Lisa Blackmer, Steve Harasyko
Dolores Harasyko

Called to order at 7:10 p.m.

Steve provided highway department updates. They are pot hole patching. We will be receiving and additional \$49,000 in Chapter 90 Pot Hole Repair funding. Terry Ignace complained about the condition of Route 183 and would like the road reclaimed. Steve explained that there is simply no money available to do this unless you raise taxes. Steve explained that there are 80 miles of roads in town and he only gets enough Chapter 90 money to work on 2 miles a year. He has been saving for 2 years to finish New Hartford Road. Terry Ignace complained about the pot hole patching they are doing. Steve explained that the hot mix is not available until the plants open which is April 13. Therefore he has to use cold mix. They are putting it down as fast as possible. Steve pointed out the bridges that need extensive work in town. The cost of the repairs falls on to the town.

Lisa presented Chapter 90 Mass DOT paperwork for New Hartford Road. Paperwork reviewed and signed.

Narain Schroeder and Dominic Konstam in to present Mr. Konstams current and future conservation easement plans. The easement from 2012 is on property that is hilly with steep roads, it is on an inaccessible road. Discussed the former Green property that he now owns. This property is off the table for now as far as a conservation easement. He will probably re address this in 10 years. It is in a chapter program now. In a few years he would like to put the property with Hanging Mountain in an easement. Addressed the tax issue, all properties are in chapter 61 forestry but they are keeping 25 to 50 acres out with the houses or as future building lots. Patrick would like to see a balance which would include new houses. Mr. Konstam did seek out the advice from a surveyor and their professional opinion is that only half of the property is developable. Patrick reiterated that the state will not give us any funds for preserving lands such as re-installing the stumpage fees. Jeff asked Mr. Konstam and his family if they understood the long term effects of the easements. They permanently remove land form ever being built on. They all understand and want to go forward with the easement. Motion by Patrick, second by Jeff to approve the easement on the 73 acres on Clark Rd. Dominic stated that he would not be back for anymore easements for at least 3 years.

Treasurer Teresa DellaGiustina invited representatives Joann Marzullo and Jenna Marzullo Stockwell from Veridian to make a presentation for reduced electric rates. It is an all opt in. They have grown to cover 15 states. Eversource will still maintain the lines. The only thing Veridian offers is the purchase of the kilowatt usage. Veridian is a third party resource to provide the energy. They offer a 12 month or 3 year contract at \$11.49 per kilowatt. They also offer free solar products. Their commitment is renewable energy. They are willing to review the town buildings and give us a report on what we could

save. Discussed the energy aggregate process in which the entire town would be enrolled and individual households would have to opt out. John Burrows asked for clarification on his electric bill. He signed on with Dominion 4 years ago and they have since changed to NRG. He would like a rate comparison chart, he is paying \$10.50 per kilowatt. Lisa asked if they are a publicly traded company, they responded that they are. They do have a pro rated penalty to cancel. It is \$150 to pull out of the program but it is pro rated over the length of the contract. Patrick asked if the aggregate is being put on the annual town warrant. Lisa responded that it is not at this time. Patrick directed Lisa to research other companies and come back with a comparison chart for opt in and opt out programs. The Selectmen thanked Teresa and the Veridian reps.

Motion by Jeff, second by Patrick to appoint John Burrows as interim Constable until the May election.

Reviewed the FY2016 warrants. Reduced the Loader Tires line item from \$18,000 to \$9,500. We are also changing the accounts affected by gas and diesel. We will create a fuel account line item and reduce the affected budgets by the gas and diesel charges.

Discussed changing the location of the Annual Town Meeting to the Fire Station #2 in order to accommodate the anticipated large turnout for Wired West. Patrick has contacted Fire Chief Ralph Morrison for permission. Permission granted.

Motion by Patrick, second by Jeff to relocate the Annual Town Meeting to the Fire Station #2 on Route 57.

Kathy Jacobs asked about prop 2 1/2 . Dolores explained again that the DOR was unavailable last week to work on the numbers. Dolores has sent them all the budget numbers and they are working on it this week.

Lisa provided the weekly town administrator updates. She reviewed the energy audit, New Hartford Rd., reviewed accident claims, working with Jeff on the Town Hall Annex roof, looking into grants for COA life and cemetery items. She met with state reps regarding Mass Hwy DOT, pilot and chapter programs, prevailing wage, open meeting law review, transportation money, sped circuit breaker and new culvert laws.

Lisa would like permission to attend the following meetings:

March 30 for a Pipeline Working Group, March 31 for Housing & Economic Development, April 9 for STAM, and April 8 for Western Regional Homeland Security training. Patrick would like Lisa to get clarification on Article 97 regarding the pipeline at the March 30 meeting. Narain Schoeder explained the history of Article 97.

Lisa feels that Kinder Morgan will just go to the FERC process and override Article 97. Patrick feels strongly that the people of this town have put a lot of faith in Article 97 and he wants to make sure it is as strong as they say. Lisa will follow up on this at the March 30 meeting. Lisa explained the housing and economic development meeting. Patrick discussed his concerns that she will be out of the office for four days attending these meetings during the busiest time of the year. John Burrows will be attending the April 8 meeting as Emergency Management Director so that meeting will be represented by Sandisfield. Lisa feels that she needs to be at the pipeline and STAM meetings. Lisa also

requested Thursday, March 26, 2015 as a vacation day and would adjust meetings accordingly. Patrick responded that he wants Lisa to use her judgment as to whether she can get all her work done and attend meetings. Patrick asked her for a cost benefit analysis for attending these meetings. Kathy Jacobs asked Lisa if she would change her message on her answering machine when she is out of the office. Lisa will.

Minutes reviewed and signed.

Patrick reviewed a letter received from Tolland regarding Wired West. There are 15 towns that are going to petition the State to ask for more money to reduce the bond amount. Patrick will forward his information to Lisa and Jean Atwater Williams.

Dolores read aloud a letter of appreciation from the school bus driver regarding how much she appreciated the terrific job our Highway Dept. has done with the roads this winter.

Mail reviewed

Warrants reviewed and signed

Minutes of meetings reviewed and signed

Meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Patrick Barrett

Jeffrey Gray