

Selectmen's minutes of meeting Feb. 8, 2016

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

Called to order at 7:00 p.m.

Bobby provided highway dept updates. There are no vehicle or equipment breakdowns, everything is in good shape. They did break pistons on plows. John Burrows asked about how many trucks are out in this current snow event. Bob responded only two trucks. John Skrip received calls complaining about Tolland Mountain and New Hartford Rd. as they were very slippery. Dolores reviewed the work done in the past two years on North and South Beech Plain Rd. She asked why we were using the largest trucks on these dirt roads. She explained that the dirt roads hadn't frozen yet this winter and that the large trucks were scraping off the crown of the roads and filling in the ditches and creating large ruts in the road ruining the work done on these roads. Michael Morrison did not agree. Jeff Gray instructed Bobby to keep the large trucks off the dirt roads and to use small trucks only until the roads have frozen. Dolores also discussed the potholes on Cold Spring Road. Alice discussed with Bob that her calls to him are not being answered.

Bogart Muller reviewed the mowing and maintenance that he has been doing for the town. He clarified that his bid of \$17,000 is actually the cost for 2 years, it is not \$17,000 per year. He also submitted documentation for the process of mowing all the sites. He submitted a list of equipment needed to properly do the work. We will look into re bidding if it's necessary.

Police Michael Morrison in to introduce Jacob Gonska as interim police officer in the absence of Adam Gonska. Motion by John, second by Jeff to appoint Jacob Gonska, passed unanimously, he was then sworn in by Town Clerk Dolores Harasyko.

Teresa in to review the FY2016 budgets. Budgets are in good shape due to the mild winter. We are already over on the Kinder Morgan legal fees, we may be over by approx. \$11,000. Teresa discussed resigning as treasurer effective July 1, 2016 but will let us know her decision. Alice is looking into a bylaw change that would make the treasurer and tax collector appointed positions and adding a town accountant job. Teresa feels strongly that the positions remain elected not appointed. Alice feels being elected can be a popularity contest and may not get the best skilled person. The finance committee agrees with the changes. Gary asked if the Berkshire Regional Planning Bills were all paid, they are. Discussed the Staples account, should be all set in 10 days.

Dolores reviewed the FY17 budgets. Discussed the Historical Comm. budget which has gone up 25%. We will ask Ron Bernard to come to the next meeting to explain. The school budget has increased by 4.1%, \$15,000 is for capitol improvements. The finance committee has asked them to cut 2%. Jeff commented on the school budget hearing, he was disappointed that Kathy Jacobs asked for the 2% decrease after John Skrip explained

that the increase is due to the increase in health care which is uncontrollable due to their union contract.

Alice is setting up interviews for the town administrator job for next Tuesday at 4:00 p.m. Jeff explained that he feels work sessions are not working out the way they should be. He feels they are turning into a regular meeting except the public is not allowed to comment or ask questions. Kathy Burrows asked how the town administrator job will be funded since there is no money left in that account. Alice said there will be a special town meeting to address this.

John Burrows presented a EMPG Grant to purchase a mobile laptop computer for the police department. Grant reviewed and signed.

Alice discussed the potential special town meeting on March 10, 2016. Articles could be to vote the appointed treasurer and tax collector positions, change in the annual town warrant mailing, vote to dispose of town property, budget for the town administrator, vote for additional money for Kinder Morgan legal fees.

Alice presented an engineering contract from Foresight Engineering for the Route 57 bridge. We cannot sign it until we get the Strap Grant contract. Jeff wants confirmation that Steve Mack is state approved and qualified. Alice will follow up on this. Motion by Jeff, second by John, passed unanimously to accept and sign the contract.

John asked for approval to send a letter of support to turn over the maintenance and repair work for Route 57 to the State.

John presented a draft for solar energy development companies.

John attended a meeting in Pittsfield with Mass DOT regarding a grant for a highway proposal to make it convenient for anyone to walk around Sandisfield.

At 8:30 a motion was made to enter into Executive Session for the express purpose of discussing contract negotiations and to adjourn immediately after. Roll call vote; Alice, yes, Jeff, yes, John, yes.

Meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

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Alice Boyd

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Jeff Gray

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John Skrip