



Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Selectmen

Date: October 11, 2017 – Business Meeting
Time: 6:03 p.m.
Place: Conference Room A, Memorial Town Hall, Spencer, MA
Present: Vice Chair Woodbury, Clerk Monette, Members Stevens and Hicks, and Interim Administrator Ross were present. Chairman Pepe participated remotely

At 6:00 p.m. Vice Chair Woodbury called the meeting to order and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Announcement

Any members that are participating remotely in accordance with Regulation 940, CMR 29.10 of the Open Meeting Law

Dr. Hicks announced that in accordance with Regulation 940, CMR 29.10 of the Open Meeting Law Chairman Pepe will be participating remotely.

Meeting Minutes

Dr. Hicks pointed out a change in September 18th minutes to correct the last name of Dan Reeve and also noted that Frank White is the TASC Chair. There was the misuse of the word “their” in the September 25th minutes.

He suggested having people print their name on a sign-in sheet prior to speaking.

A motion to approve the minutes of the Business Meetings of September 18th and September 25th, 2017 as amended (Hicks/Monette) passed with a roll call vote: Stevens-yes, Hicks-yes, Woodbury-yes, Monette-yes, Pepe-yes

Mr. Ross noted that all votes must be made by roll call with remote participation.

Communications:

Halloween Hours Trick-or-Treat Announcement

Police Chief Darrin set Trick-or-Treat hours from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. on October 31st.

Citizen Input

None

New Business:

Action Item: Vote on the 2017/2018 Winter Parking Ban

Chief Darrin reported that there were no changes to the standard parking ban and asked the Board to approve.

A Motion to approve the 2017/2018 Winter Parking Ban (Hicks/Monette) passed with a roll call vote: Stevens-yes, Hicks-yes, Woodbury-yes, Monette-yes, Pepe-yes

Update from Parks & Rec & Future Visions of the Parks

Parks & Rec members Rob Churchey, Marty German, Tony Toscano and Bill Shemeth were present. Katie LaPrad was also present to present a report she completed on Luther Hill Park (LHP) financial needs.

Mr. Churchey explained that the Committee discussed numbers to open the Park for nine weeks and noted they will be able to extend it to ten weeks through utilization of donation funding. The Abbey donates \$5,000 per year which may be used for 10 weeks of swim lessons.

Ms. LaPrad discussed necessary repairs and capital needs for LHP as well as safety and security and the option of hiring parking lot attendants. She provided funding scenarios that included opening for four days or for seven days and despite the added expense, she recommends a seven day schedule for safety and staffing ability.

Dr. Hicks agrees that seven days is best and asked Mr. Ross to determine if funds will be available from the Solar PILOT revenue.

Mr. Ross noted there may be a shortfall in free cash and if so, the Board will need to set priorities. Free cash it is used to fund Snow and Ice.

Mr. Shemeth said donation funds were used to repair and maintain the boathouse and the proposed security camera system at the beach will be paid through the use of trust fund for LHP.

Mr. German said key items are necessary to make the program work, including two floating docks, bathroom repairs, benches painted, and signage and lifeguard stand installations. He would like tenants to be aware that they have the option to make contributions to support the parks.

Mr. Churchey noted that an 8-10 hours per week position is needed to complete the day to day tasks.

Mr. Stevens asked about distinguishing between operating expenses and maintenance.

Mr. Woodbury noted that if the funding can be sustained, it would be a great for the Town. The Board needs to determine how to continue restoring lost services and to maintain what is currently open. He is concerned there are extra costs not indicated in the report, such as additional equipment.

Mr. Toscano asked the Board to do a presentation to voters to explain the funding scenarios and overall situation with the parks.

Mr. Monette said voters need to be asked if they are willing to support the parks at an estimated cost of \$55,000 per year.

The Board thanked Ms. LaPrad for her work on this report.

Dr. Hicks commended the Commissioners for going above and beyond and suggests preparing for an override to fund the parks if free cash is not available.

Mr. Churchey said recent upgrades to O'Gara Park with help from the Highway Department included field work, repairs, and tree removal.

Dr. Hicks asked if organizations are charged a fee to use the fields. Mr. Churchey said the only charge is for the electricity. Pop Warner and other organizations that use the fields are asked to volunteer to maintain them. Dr. Hicks suggested out of Town organizations be required to pay a fee.

Mr. Monette would like to bring the proposal to the November STM in order to open LHP in June.

Mr. Ross needs to review the budget numbers and put together funding options for discussion at the next meeting.

Mr. Stevens would like to see more volunteers willing to work at parks facilities and in turn create more programs for the community.

Mr. Churchey noted that Prouty Park is in great shape thanks to an Exchange Club grant.

Mr. Tyler mentioned the privatization of lawn maintenance services will help to ensure fields are being maintained and will free up the Highway staff to perform other work, including drainage at a significant savings to the Town.

Mr. Ross has had experience with privatizing lawn services and believes it will result in significant savings to Spencer and suggest it be looked at for FY2019.

Chapter 61A, Section 14: Vote to Exercise Right of First Refusal Lot 1 Hastings Road, Parcel ID R44/36

Mr. Ross reported that the owners of Lot 1, Hastings Road are selling agricultural land currently in Chapter 61A. The Town has the Right of First Refusal to purchase the property which after examination, it was determined it is not in the best interest of the Town to purchase this property and advised the Board to not exercise their Right of First Refusal.

A motion to not exercise the Right of First Refusal and have the Chair execute the proper documents so indicating (Hick/Monette) passed with a roll call vote: Stevens-yes, Hicks-yes, Woodbury-yes, Monette-yes, Pepe-yes

Discussion: Sidewalk Snow Removal Bylaw for Downtown

Dr. Hicks offered his apologies to former Town Administrator Adam Gaudette for an article that appeared in the Telegram and Gazette where Dr. Hicks misspoke by indicating that Mr. Gaudette reviewed the downtown sidewalk plans when in fact he had not.

Mr. Woodbury noted that based on layout of the light poles with the cement base, the access of the sidewalk has narrowed in many sections.

Mr. Tyler said ADA requirements have been met, however he noted that the width of the original sidewalk made it difficult when using the snow plow machine and now with the

new narrower areas, they will be unable to use the machine. In addition, during lengthy storm events there is a delay in clearing the sidewalks. He requested that the Board establish a sidewalk ordinance that requires businesses to remove the snow on the sidewalks in front of their buildings. The Highway Department would pick up the snow from the shoulder of the road.

Mr. Woodbury said any ordinance needs to be well defined to ensure it's carried out properly.

Mr. Monette prefers it be defined for the business section and Dr. Hicks agreed. Buildings that are landlord owned will need to be addressed. Mr. Tyler will discuss with the Highway and provide a suggested route to Mr. Ross. The Board will decide whether or not to add to the Town Meeting Warrant.

Old Business:

Approve TA Job Description and Position Advertisement

A motion to accept the TA Position Advertisement as written (Monette/Hicks) passed with a roll call vote: Stevens-yes, Hicks-yes, Woodbury-yes, Monette-yes, Pepe-yes

The ad will be placed in The Beacon prior to the October 19th deadline. Mr. Ross will place in the ICMA publication.

There was discussion on removing some of the language in the Physical, Motor and Visual Skills portion of the job description. Mr. Ross noted that requirements listed are minimal or standard. A sentence could be added stating that reasonable accommodations will be made for those covered under the ADA.

A motion to amend the TA Job Description to add "reasonable accommodations will be made for those covered under the ADA" at the end of the description (Hicks/Monette) passed with a roll call vote: Stevens-yes, Hicks-yes, Woodbury-yes, Monette-yes, Pepe-yes

Review & Discuss Surveyor Proposal for Browning Pond

Mr. Ross reported that he and Mr. Woodbury met with members of the Boy Scouts to discuss the Browning Pond gate. The Scouts are willing to work with the Town and the next step will be a meeting with Mr. Ross, Mr. Woodbury, and a representative of the Fish and Game Club to work out a comprise and avoid having to spend additional funds.

Dr. Hicks wants this complete prior to the STM to ensure an article can be placed on the Warrant if necessary.

Mr. Monette wants to ensure there is a legal process to prevent future issues. Mr. Ross said Town Counsel would draft a legal record of any agreement.

Town Administrator's Report

Administrator Ross Reported:

- He and Paul Dell'Aquila met with representatives of the State Economic Development Office regarding the Sugden Building and they encouraged the Town to apply a grant of up to \$50,000 in an effort to preserve the building.
- The painting in the rotunda of Town Hall was completed last week.
- A special act from 2004 creates a Betterment Fund for Spencer and allows the cost of future betterment projects to be paid from that Fund.
- The “meet and greet” at the Library went very well and he commends Cheryl Donahue for organizing the event.
- A meeting with the SEBRSDC will take place on October 18, 2017 at 7:00 pm in the Innovation Lab at DPHS with the Selectmen and the Finance Committees of Spencer and East Brookfield. The purpose is to discuss the school budget and net school spending.

Board Liaison Reports

Mr. Monette asked residents to volunteer whenever possible to provide assistance to the Parks & Rec.

Citizen Input

Chris Woodbury asked about the status of regionalizing LHP with the Town of Leicester. Mr. Ross will discuss with the new Leicester Town Administrator. Mr. C. Woodbury noted that he serves on the Economic Development Committee and questioned the practicality of requiring businesses to shovel the front of their own buildings.

Mr. Shemeth said the FinCom Focus Groups were well attended and a survey will be available for residents to complete in the near future. He asked about the status of a policy for the Meritorious Service Award. Mr. Ross indicated that it is on the list with many priorities and will be worked on as time allows.

Mr. Al Atchue, Meadow Road, asked about signs remaining on poles after the yard sale has been complete. He also asked about the bump out in the road from Main St. to Mechanic St. Mr. Tyler explained that the State determined that the road was too wide for pedestrian safety and narrowed it down.

Mr. Kwiatkowski, Meadow Road, asked why the Highway Department cleaned Whitco's basement. Mr. Woodbury explained that during construction old coal shoots were found and needed to be blocked. It was on the Town owned portion of land.

Board Member and Staff Comments

Mr. Ross announced that there will not be a meeting on October 16th. The next meeting will be held on October 23rd.

Mr. Pepe wants to plan a future workshop to discuss a blight bylaw. The meeting was adjourned at 8:49 pm. All were in favor by roll call.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Savoie
Administrative Assistant

Referenced Materials

2018-2018 Winter Parking Ban
Chapter 61A, Lot 1, Hastings Road Right of First Refusal
Report of Spencer Parks & Rec Capital Requests
Report of LHP Financial Planning Needs & Re-opening Recommendations Report