



Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Selectmen

Date: June 22, 2020
Time: 6:00 p.m.
Place: Audioconference Broadcasted Live from McCourt Social Hall
Memorial Town Hall, Spencer, MA
Present: Administrator Gregory
Dialing in: Vice-chair Monette, Clerk Berthiaume, Members Hicks and
Woodbury. Chairman Pepe was absent.
Health Agent Lisa Daoust, Police Chief Darrin, U & F Superintendent
Krukowski, Finance Committee Chair Braney, Moderator Shemeth, and
Architect Bernie Goba, Goba & Associates

Vice-chair Monette called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and announced the meeting is being conducted remotely.

Review and Act on Coronavirus / COVID-19 Response

Health Agent Daoust reported:

- A reverse 911 went out last week. The total number of confirmed COVID-19 cases in Spencer is currently 45 with 3 active cases.
- Powder Mill Park will be opening this week. A company has been hired to clean the equipment weekly.

Dr. Hicks and Mr. Woodbury have not receiving the reverse 911 call. Ms. Daoust advised that they sign-up again.

Police Chief Darrin reported:

- The Department noticed a marked increase in activity and traffic with the Governor's re-opening plan.
- The Police Department staffs continue to remain healthy.

Review and Act on to Authorize the Town Administrator to Award Contract for Senior Center Code Compliant Project to Diversified Construction Services Subject to Annual Town Meeting Appropriation

Mr. Gregory reported that the original bid for the Senior Center Code Compliant Project was cancelled in May due to an e-bidding issue and the project was re-bid. The lowest bid for fire protection came in at \$226,200 and the electrical came in at \$98,255. The lowest general contractor bid was from Diversified Construction Services and came in at \$146,545, for a total bid price of \$465,000. After allowances, credits, and a 10% contingency, the final contract price came in at \$436,100.

Since the Planning Board voted table a discussion on whether to support an appropriation of \$37,500 towards the Master Plan⁷, Mr. Gregory recommends removing the Article from the Warrant to free up cash and allow the Board to vote to fully fund the Senior Center project from free cash. The Town must execute a contract within thirty days or rebid the project.

A motion to authorize the Town Administrator to Award the Senior Center Code Compliant Project to Diversified Construction Services, subject to Annual Town Meeting Appropriation and to fund from free cash (Woodbury/Hicks) passed with a roll call vote 3/1: Berthiaume-no Hicks-yes, Monette-yes, Woodbury-yes.

Review and Act to Close & Sign the Annual Town Meeting Warrant

Mr. Gregory reviewed the Annual Town Meeting Warrant. Discussion items include:

Article 1 – Senior Center Code Compliance Project seeks appropriation for \$436,100 and will be adjusted to use 100% from free cash.

Ms. Berthiaume noted her concerns on the approval for this project and believes it should wait until the Fall Special Town Meeting considering the State may be looking at a budget deficit in the range of \$8 million dollars. This will have a major impact on aid to the Town.

Article 28 – seeks appropriation for \$340,715.00 for various capital equipment and improvements. Mr. Gregory pointed out that Board may consider deferring some or all these items, except for the Assessor's Revaluation. Although the others are needed, they can be deferred to preserve cash on hand.

Dr. Hicks was concerned over not funding the Fire Department's request for extraction tools and the Police Department's request for a cruiser since both are important to public safety. Chief Darrin said they could wait on the cruiser until there is a better understanding on finances and to retain personnel.

There was discussion on removing some items from Article 28 and Mr. Gregory indicated that adjustments may be made on the Town Meeting Floor. Moderator Shemeth noted that amendments may be made to remove any item from the Article.

Ms. Berthiaume pointed out that if this Article is fully funded, there will not be enough reserves available to prevent deep budget reductions. Mr. Gregory noted that if the budget is dramatically reduced, he will advise the Board to use free cash and stabilization to prevent furloughs and layoffs. Mr. Berthiaume noted free cash may only be used in an emergency. Mr. Berthiaume said her preference is to wait to fund until the State has final budget numbers. She is concerned with the potential loss of personnel.

A motion to amend Article 28 leaving in the Assessor Revaluation and the Fire Department Extraction Tools only (Woodbury/Berthiaume) passed with a roll call vote: Berthiaume-yes, Hicks-yes, Monette-yes, Woodbury-yes.

Article 30 – seeks appropriation for \$75,000 for renewing the Town's Master Plan. Since the Planning Board voted to table this item at their June 18th meeting, Mr. Gregory advised the Board to remove this Article from Warrant.

A motion to remove Article 30 from the Warrant (Hicks/Berthiaume) passed with a roll call vote: Berthiaume-yes, Hicks-yes, Monette-yes, Woodbury-yes.

A motion to close and sign the Annual Town Meeting Warrant as amended (Hicks/Woodbury) passed with a roll call vote: Berthiaume-yes, Hicks-yes, Monette-yes, Woodbury-yes.

Review and Act to Approve the Award of the Comprehensive Roads Project Bonds

Mr. Gregory reported that Town received an astounding interest rate of 1.63% for the \$6.96 million dollar bond premium for Phase 3 of the Comprehensive Roads Project. The term will be over a twenty-year period. Once approved, the Board will need to sign the bond notes.

A motion to Approve the Award of the Comprehensive Roads Project Bonds (Woodbury/Hicks) passed with a roll call vote: Berthiaume-yes, Hicks-yes, Monette-yes, Woodbury-yes.

Review and Act to Send Joint Letter from the Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee to Federal Delegation Requesting Financial Assistance for FY2021

A motion to send a joint letter from the Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee to the Federal Delegation Requesting Financial Assistance for FY2021 (Hicks/ Woodbury) passed with a roll call vote: Berthiaume–yes, Hicks-yes, Monette-yes, Woodbury-yes.

Town Administrator's Report

The Annual Town Meeting will take place at the DPHS Gym on June 30th at 7 pm.

Mr. Gregory reported that towns are beginning to fully phase in employees returning to work and some are open to the public. He will have a plan in July to allow employees to safely return to workplace. After that, the decision will be made on a date to open to the public.

Review Summer Meeting Schedule

The Board will meet on July 13th, August 17th, and September 14th. Additional meetings will be scheduled if needed.

Citizens Input

None

Board Member and Staff Comments

Dr. Hicks plans to write letter to Congressman Neal requesting support for the federal bailout and would like the approval of the Board. The Board agreed.

Citizens Input will be at the beginning and end of each agenda moving forward.

Chariman Pepe called in at 7:20 pm and informed the Board that he had a work-related issue to deal with and was unable to participate in the meeting.

A motion to adjourn (Hicks/Berthiaume) passed with a roll call vote: Berthiaume—yes, Hicks—yes, Monette—yes, Woodbury—yes., Pepe—yes.

The meeting adjourned at 7:21 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Savoie
Executive Assistant

Referenced documents: ATM Warrant