



Minutes of the Board of Selectmen

Date: September 12, 2022
Time: 6:00 p.m.
Place: McCourt Social Hall
Present: Vice-Chair Howard, Clerk Grigg, Selectman Hicks, Pepe and Administrator Bridges
Absent: Chairman Woodbury

Call the Meeting to Order

At 6:00 pm Vice-chair Howard called the Selectmen's 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

None

Meeting Minutes:

Review & Act on the Meeting Minutes of July 14, August 15 and August 22, 2022

A motion to approve the minutes of July 14, August 15, & August 22, 2022 (Hicks/Pepe) passed 4/0.

Citizens Input

Carl Kwitakowski, Meadow Road: was concerned that there is not enough money to maintain a new school building. Dr. Hicks: the SEBRSD receives a set amount each year from the Spencer and E. Brookfield and there has not been enough funds to cover the cost to hire the additional custodians necessary to properly maintain the building and grounds; the hope is to make that happen going forward.

Communications

Mr. Bridges: 25% of the plans for the N. Spencer Bridge project are complete, therefore MassDot will hold a virtual public hearing and will be televised on SCA. Details of the hearing: MassDOT Virtual Public Hearing to be held on 9/15/22 at 6:30 pm on the N. Spencer Road Bridge Replacement Project (to participate go to www.spencerma.gov or directly www.mass.gov/massdot-highway-design-public-hearings)

New Business

Public Hearing 6:00 PM: Review & Act on an Alcohol Beverages License Application from Ciarah Ross for an All-alcoholic Beverages Pouring License for Connect Restaurant, 13 Mechanic Street

Ciarah Ross was present and requested an all-alcoholic beverage pouring license for Connect Restaurant located at 13 Mechanic Street.

A motion to open the public hearing at 6:07 pm (Hicks/Pepe) passed 4/0.

Dr. Hicks mentioned that he and his wife enjoyed a great meal at the restaurant recently.

There were no other comments from the Board or the public. All paperwork is in order.

A motion to close the public hearing at 6:10 pm (Hicks/Pepe) passed 4/0.

A motion to approve the Alcohol Beverages License Application from Ciarah Ross for an All-alcoholic Beverages Pouring License for Connect Restaurant, 13 Mechanic Street (Hicks/Grigg) passed 4/0

Review and Possible Action on Request from Cornerstone Bank for a 1-day Wine and Malt License and Entertainment License on September 18, 2022 at the Spencer Fairgrounds

Bridget LeBel and Arthur Breault representing Cornerstone Bank were present to request a 1-day wine and malt license and an entertainment license for a Friends & Family Day event.

A motion to approve the 1-day Wine and Malt License and Entertainment License Application of Cornerstone Bank for the event on September 18, 2022 (Grigg/Hicks) passed 4/0

Consideration and Possible Action on Waiving the Demolition Permit Fees for the Building Removal at O’Gara Park

A motion to waive the demolition permit fees for the O’Gara Park building removal. (Grigg/Hicks) passed 4/0

Consideration and Possible Action on the removal of the Paved Surfaces during the Demolition of the Lake Street School

Dr. Hicks stated that the back parking lot pavement should be removed, however he would like to keep the other paved parking area. Mr. Bridges advised that none of the existing pavement is in good shape and suggested replacing that area with gravel. U & F Superintendent William Cundiff advised putting the removal of all pavement in bid document and evaluate further after the bids are received.

A motion to include an alternative in the bid packet to remove all asphalt, but also to preserve a bank of parking spaces (Grigg/Hicks) passed 4/0.

Receive, Discuss & Possible Action on the Report of the Pine Grove Cemetery Committee

Dr. Hicks recused himself as a Pine Grove Cemetery plot owner.

Selectman Grigg reported that after the Town voted to acquire the Pine Grove Cemetery, the Pine Grove Cemetery Advisory Committee was created and charged with developing a plan to investigate the feasibility of acquiring the Cemetery. As Chairman, he worked together with the Committee to focus on the will of the voters, which was to acquire the Cemetery. The Committee determined that establishing a Cemetery Department would be the most practical means of operating and would include maintenance of the parks as well. There are four options for acquisition of the Cemetery: gift, eminent domain, dissolution, or gift after bankruptcy.

Mr. Bridges pointed out that either way, the Town may eventually be responsible for the Pine Grove Cemetery and the bankruptcy route would allow the Town to acquire it without having to restore the perpetual care account. He further noted that a future workshop to review the report in detail would be the most efficient way to move forward.

A motion to receive the Report of the Pine Grove Cemetery Committee and to review the Report at a workshop during the budget season (Grigg/Pepe) passed 4/0.

Refer Solar Zoning Bylaw Amendments to the Spencer Planning Board for a Public Hearing in Accordance with MGL Chapter 40 A §5

Administrator Bridges advised the Board to refer the Solar Zoning Bylaw amendments to the Planning Board to allow them to hold the public hearing and after the hearing, they will return the final recommendation to the Selectmen.

Dr. Hicks commended the Planning Board for requiring a cash bond for solar projects noting it is crucial to protect the Town from having to pay for decommissioning.

Mr. Grigg asked about the process for small scale ground mounted solar. Town Planner Lauren Vivier indicated that small scale arrays for private homes will be permitted through the Zoning Board of Appeals and that Planning Board will not be involved in that process.

A motion to refer the Solar Zoning Bylaw Amendments to the Spencer Planning Board for a Public Hearing (Grigg/Hicks) passed 4/0

Covid-19

Update on Coronavirus / COVID Cases

Administrator Bridges reported that there were eleven new Covid-19 cases from August 29-through September 5th and eight new cases the week prior. 67% of Spencer residents have been fully vaccinated.

Town Administrator's Report

Review September 14, 2022 Special Town Meeting Calendar

Mr. Bridges announced that the STM will be held on September 14th at 7 pm at the DPHS.

The calendar leading up to the September 14th STM was reviewed.

Review & Possible Action to Open the November 10, 2022 Special Town Meeting Warrant

A motion to open the November 10, 2022 Special Town Meeting Warrant (Hicks/Pepe) passed 4/0.

Review November 10, 2022 Special Town Meeting Calendar

The calendar leading up to the November 10th STM was reviewed.

Contracts for Consideration and Approval

Contract for Improvement to Smithville Road and Pleasant Street

A motion to approve the contract with J H Lynch and Sons (Hicks/Pepe) passed 4/0.

Contract for Engineering Services for Mill and Valley Streets

A motion to approve the contract with Fuss & O'Neil (Hicks/Grigg) passed 4/0.

Citizens Input

Rob Churchey, 36 Greenville St. and member of the Parks & Rec Commission stated that the Commission is in support of the proposal of the Pine Grove Cemetery Committee and noted if approved, it will provide much needed assistance with maintaining the parks.

Kurt Nordquist, Gale Dr. called in to say that he suggests the Pine Grove Cemetery file for bankruptcy and noted that sections of Valley Street are ledge.

Board Member and Staff Comments

Mr. Grigg: asked the Administrator to check on the status of the Wastewater Treatment Plant report.

The meeting adjourned at 6:55 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Savoie
Executive Assistant

Referenced documents: Alcohol license application for Connect Restaurant; 1-day alcohol and entertainment license application for Cornerstone Bank; Report of the Pine Grove Cemetery Committee; Solar ZBL amendments; Contracts with J H Lynch and Fuss & O'Neil.