



Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Selectmen

Date: February 11, 2019 – Business Meeting
Time: 6:00 p.m.
Place: McCourt Social Hall, Memorial Town Hall, Spencer, MA
Present: Chairman Woodbury, Vice Chair Hicks, Clerk Berthiaume,
Member Pepe, Member Monette and Administrator Gregory

Chairman Woodbury called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance

A moment of silence was observed to honor William A. Laventure, World War II Veteran and longtime Spencer resident who passed away on February 5th at the age of 99.

Announcement

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

None

Meeting Minutes

Vote to approve the Meeting Minutes of January 14th & January 28th, 2019

A motion to approve the minutes of January 14th and January 28th (Hicks/Berthiaume) passed 5/0.

Communications

Gary announced Meritorious Service Award Nominations are available on the Town Website and are due to the Administrator's Office by February 25, 2019.

Citizen Input

Kurt Nordquist, Gayle Dr., suggested the Town convert current streetlights to LED fixtures. U & F Superintendent Bill Krukowski said it is part of the FY2020 capital budget request; 30% of the cost to convert LED streetlights will be covered by a State grant.

Carl Kwitkowski, Meadow Rd., asked what percentage of the Town budget is for the School District. Administrator Gregory said the District's FY2020 request amounts to 93% of net new revenue received by the Town.

New Business

6:00 pm – Public Hearing Public Hearing - 6:00 pm - Funding Project Discussion for the FY 2019 CDBG Application for Improvements on Cherry-Wall-Lloyd Dyer Street

Chairman Woodbury called the hearing to order at 6:11 pm.

Ted Harvey from Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) and Corey Brodeur from Leonard Engineering were present to review the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) application for a proposed infrastructure improvement project on Cherry-Wall-Lloyd Dyer Street which is an area identified as a priority in the Spencer Community Development Strategy. Mr. Harvey reported that the Town received an \$800,000 grant in FY2018 for housing rehab and design work for this location. Mr. Brodeur is currently working on the design and indicated all three of streets need roadway, sidewalk, and sewer improvements. Mr. Harvey indicated the project is expected to commence in the spring or early summer of 2020.

Dr. Hicks asked about the cost to the Town. Mr. Brodeur said a portion would be paid from the Town's Chapter 90 funds.

Mr. Gregory noted that a sewer easement has been accepted by homeowners in the area.

Chairman Woodbury asked about the width of the road. Mr. Brodeur believes it's 19.5 feet.

Chris Woodbury, Briar Cliff Lane suggested designating a one-way from Mechanic Street up to Wall Street.

Kurt Nordquist, Gail Dr., asked what is being done to resolve the issue with the Depot Building being too close to the roadway. Superintendent Krukowski said Leonard Engineering will address the issues during the design phase.

There were no other comments from the public. The hearing closed at 6:19 pm. All were in favor.

Act on the Reappointment of Patricia A. Woods to the Board of Registrars for a term to expire March of 2022

A motion to reappoint Patricia A. Woods to the Board of Registrars for a term to expire March, 2022 (Hicks/Monette) passed 5/0.

Action Item: Vote to Open the Annual Town Meeting Warrant

A motion to open the May 2nd Annual Town Meeting Warrant (Pepe/Hicks) passed 5/0.

Questions for Legislative Delegation on March 11, 2019

Tom advised the Board to submit any specific questions by February 25th.

Discussion: Leadership Hall Nominations

Gary noted that Leadership Hall is an important designation and is not intended to be an annual award. It is designed to recognize individuals whose contributions and leadership have stood out in the community.

Dr. Hicks asked the Administrator to obtain an opinion from Town Counsel on whether or not the vote for the Meritorious Award can be made by paper ballot as indicated in the Meritorious Service Award policy.

Old Business

Update on Opportunity Zone Program – Town Planner Paul Dell'Aquila

Mr. Dell'Aquila reported that the Town received the FY2019 Downtown Initiative Technical Assistance Award which provides up to the \$15,000 of consulting services and will assist with creating additional parking on Mechanic Street. Mr. Gregory pointed out that the award was received due to Mr. Dell'Aquila's efforts.

Mr. Dell'Aquila reported that the Opportunity Zone Program is a new program and as such, the process is developing at the State level. It's a federal tax program whereby private capital gains will be placed into Opportunity Zone Funds. Individuals may benefit by investing in a designated Opportunity Zone which provides incentives for long term investments, or by the creation of an Opportunity Zone Fund which selects projects for investing. Benefits can be combined with other tax credits or grant funds. Towns do not play a direct role, aside from informing investors of the program.

Town Administrator's Report

Review FY2020 Initial Budget

Mr. Gregory reviewed the FY2020 Budget. He reported that \$5.6 million in Bonds will be issued for Phase 2 of the Comprehensive Roads Project and the FY2020 Budget will be adjusted to account for the debt payments. Projected revenue is currently \$21,112,511.

Dr. Hicks noted that the District transferred prior debt in the amount of \$150,000 from their operating budget to their capital budget and suggested the Town pay a onetime expense from free cash to cover it.

Administrator Gregory indicated that using free cash to pay the District's debt service will amount to \$141,000; known deficits at this time are estimated at \$350,000, which leaves \$470,974 in free cash to fund the Town's capital. If free cash is further reduced by the \$141,000, it leaves only \$329,974 in free cash and will have a significant impact.

Chairman Woodbury has concerns with the Governor's Budget and believes the amount to the Town may actually be lower.

Mr. Gregory pointed out a variance of \$240,000 between the District's request and the ability to fund the request. At this time, the Town's only new requests are for an additional Police Officer and to restore Town Hall operating hours. If those are eliminated, the variance is still \$150,000.

Dr. Hicks suggested an override may be needed.

Administrator Gregory said there are variables in health insurance and general insurance which may come in lower than anticipated. Further discussion will take place at the next meeting.

Board Liaison Reports

Dr. Hicks reported that the Solar Bylaw Review Committee will hold a public hearing on February 21st.

Mr. Monette said he and Dr. Hicks recently attended a FLEXcon event and noted that they expressed interest in giving back to the Town.

Citizen Input

Bill Shemeth asked the Board to consider Hank Grenier for Leadership Hall induction. Mr. Grenier served the community for many years.

Mr. Shemeth suggests opening the Town Hall for night hours and avoid reducing floating hours.

Kurt Nordquist asked how the Bond borrowing for the roads project works. Mr. Gregory explained that the Town will owe the debt on the loan for a twenty-year period and the funds received must be spent within a two-year period.

Board Member and Staff Comments

Dr. Hicks would like to purchase a framed portrait of the former David Prouty High School, Town Hall, Library, and Massasoit Hotel to dedicate to Mary Madden and have it hung in the Library in honor of her years of service as a DPHS teacher. The Board will discuss at next meeting.

Ms. Berthiaume would like to reopen discussion on Reliable Bud/White Ash Grove and said it's important for the Board to get this right. The Board will discuss at the next meeting. Mr. Gregory asked if the Board wishes to reconsider their original vote to issue a letter of non-opposition. Mr. Pepe said he would like to have a discussion.

The meeting adjourned 7:25 p.m. All were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Savoie
Executive Assistant

Referenced documents:
Meritorious Nomination Forms
FY2020 Budget Documents