



Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Selectmen

Date: March 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, Members Pepe (participating remotely), and Administrator Gregory
Mr. Monette was absent

Chairman Woodbury called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. 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 Selectmen Pepe will be participating remotely in accordance with Regulation 940, CMR 29.10 of the Open Meeting Law

Meeting Minutes

Vote to approve the Meeting Minutes of February 25, 2019

A motion to approve the minutes of February 25, 2019 (Hicks/Berthiaume) passed with a roll call vote: Berthiaume-yes, Hicks-yes, Woodbury-yes, Pepe-yes

Communications

None

Citizen Input

William Shemeth, 6 Dale Street, came forward to offer his thanks to Senator Gobi for her outstanding leadership in obtaining funding for the parks.

Mary Braney, 15 Pine Acres, said signage for Thompson Pond Road closure work was barely legible and asked for improved signage in the future. Chairman Woodbury said larger signage will be installed in the future.

Matt Defosse, 7 Pauls Drive, provided a packet on commercial solar development in Spencer to Senator Gobi and State Representatives Berthiaume and Durant.

New Business

Discussion: Annual Meeting with the Legislative Delegation: Updates from Senator Gobi, Representative Berthiaume, and Representative Durant - Discussion on the FY2020 State Budget Outlook and Chapter 70 School Funding

Chairman Woodbury welcomed Senator Gobi and State Representatives Berthiaume and Durant.

Senator Gobi congratulated Administrator Gregory on his recent election to the Community Outreach Board of the Health Foundation of Central Massachusetts.

Senator Gobi presented highlights on the Governor's FY2020 budget and reported that the

Chapter 70 Education Funding Formula needs to be updated, it hasn't changed since 1993. The Promise Act Bill has been filed to address funding issues, though she's not convinced it will provide relief for rural districts, and instead will benefit urban areas. For example, the Formula provides \$600 per student in Worcester and only \$20 per student in Spencer-E. Brookfield. The Charter School Formula needs to be revisited as well; they are not held to the same funding requirements as the public schools and are actually funded at a twice the rate.

Senator Gobi and Representative Berthiaume both serve on the Ways and Means Committee. Representative Berthiaume has been hearing education funding concerns from all communities in his District and is working with the Ways and Means to address the concerns. He pointed out a some items in the Promise Act will provide relief relative to special education funding and reductions in employee healthcare benefits.

Representative Durant noted that State revenue has been trending down and at this time is \$300 million away from benchmark, nevertheless it is early in the process.

Dr. Hicks was encouraged to see revenue for February on the rise and noted that the change in the SEBRSD budget, when you include bay path, most likely exceeds the Town's new revenue.

Senator Gobi talked about a rural school caucus which is working on a funding formula to increase aid to rural districts and review opportunities for shared services.

Mr. Pepe expressed concern over various issues surrounding recreational marijuana with no clear answers from the State. He questioned why Host Agreements benefits are at a lower rate on the medicinal side than they are on the recreational side. Mr. Woodbury said that's because recreational can sell from both categories while medical can only sell medicinal. Senator Gobi acknowledged it is still a work in progress and clarification is needed. The Cannabis Control Commission is working to address various concerns, including public safety and not knowing how to test for use of marijuana.

The Board thanked Senator Gobi and State Representatives Berthiaume and Durant for their time.

Economic Development Committee – Proposal for a Summer Street Festival on Mechanic & Wall Street

Paul Dell'Aquila and John Stevens from the Economic Development Committee (EDC) were present with Victoria Mariano, owner of the Bull Mansion in Worcester. Selectmen Pepe is also a member of the EDC.

Mr. Dell'Aquila said the EDC is planning to hold a street festival and work to stimulate additional development in Spencer. The main areas involved will be Mechanic Street, Wall Street and Main Street.

John Stevens noted that the EDC had a vision to celebrate the downtown area a few years ago and this festival is a continuation of that spirit. The goal is to emphasize Spencer talent and showcase the creative economy.

Victoria Mariano will assist the EDC in coordinating this event and work with a team of professionals to cover each topic. The plan is to contact each business owner located within the street blocks and include them in the festival which is scheduled to take place on August 24th from 12-6 pm.

Chairman Woodbury said the Board is in support of the proposed festival and authorized the group to move forward. A technical review meeting will be held with Town Staff in the near future.

Review & Act to Amend Previous Vote to Prohibit Events at the Spencer Fairgrounds

Mr. Gregory advised the Board to rescind the vote on February 25th that prohibits all events at the Fairgrounds and revote on the Entertainment License application of Casey Pichette of SKB Glass.

A motion to rescind the previous vote to prohibit events at the Spencer Fairgrounds (Hicks/Berthiaume) passed with a roll call vote: Berthiaume-yes, Hicks-yes, Woodbury-yes, Pepe-yes.

Act on the Entertainment License Application of Casey Pichette of SKB Glass Art, LLC

A motion to deny the Entertainment License Application of Casey Pichette of SKB Glass Art, LLC (Hicks/Berthiaume) passed with a roll call vote: Berthiaume-yes, Hicks-yes, Woodbury-yes, Pepe-yes.

Review & Act on the Request of Mary, Queen of the Rosary for a One Day Alcohol License on March 16, 2019

A motion to approve the Request of Mary, Queen of the Rosary for a One Day Alcohol License on March 16, 2019 (Hicks/Berthiaume) passed with a roll call vote: Berthiaume-yes, Hicks-yes, Woodbury-yes, Pepe-yes.

Old Business

Review & Act on Meritorious Service Award Recipient

Chairman Woodbury reported that two nominations were submitted for the Meritorious Service Award: Mr. Kenneth Wheeler and Mr. William Lehtola. Since the award was not presented in 2018, both may be put forward at this time.

A motion to approve Kenneth R. Wheeler and William J. Lehtola as Meritorious Service Award recipients (Hicks/Berthiaume) passed with a roll call vote: Berthiaume-yes, Hicks-yes, Woodbury-yes, Pepe-yes.

The Board received copies of their service records; both have contributed many years of outstanding serving the Town. A plaque will be presented at Town Meeting.

Review & Act on Leadership Hall Nomination

Chairman Woodbury reported that Henry R. Grenier was nominated for induction into Leadership Hall.

A motion to induct Henry R. Grenier into Leadership Hall (Hicks/Berthiaume) passed with a roll call vote: Berthiaume-yes, Hicks-yes, Woodbury-yes, Pepe-yes.

The Board received a copy of Mr. Grenier's service record. Dr. Hicks noted that Mr. Grenier's contributions have earned him a place in Leadership Hall. A special plaque along with his picture will be hung in the Great Hall.

Town Administrator's Report

Review FY2020 Budget & Capital Requests Update

Administrator Gregory reported:

- He had meeting with Superintendent Haughey and progress is being made with the budget gap. Details will be discussed at the next meeting.
- He is waiting on quotes on the general insurance expense and is hoping to see a reduction.
- Bay Path transportation has been reduced by \$26,000, thanks to a favorable bid.
- The Spencer Rescue Squad's list of capital requests have been received and will be forwarded to the Capital Improvements Planning Committee (CIPC).
- He is proposing use of \$600,000 from stabilization to fund the salt shed: the total amount is \$800,000 and \$200,000 has been appropriated.

The Administrator asked the Board to consider bringing an Article to Town Meeting to draw \$600,000 from stabilization for the salt shed. After free cash is certified, an extra \$280,000 from the proceeds of the property auction will go back into stabilization to help offset the reduction.

Chairman Woodbury mentioned the cost of the salt shed may be lower since Bayside Engineering adds a 30% contingency, when realistically 10% is sufficient.

Dr. Hicks suggested going out to bid in order to have the actual number placed on the Warrant. Mr. Gregory indicated it may be more feasible to consider it for the Fall Special Town Meeting; this will allow the appropriate time needed for the bid process to unfold.

Review FY2020 Capital Requests

Administrator Gregory reviewed the list of FY2020 capital requests and presented a 5-year capital plan. The Capital Improvements Planning Committee (CIPC) will meet on February 26th to review the items as they prepare for their ranking process.

Board Liaison Reports

None

Citizen Input

Matt Defosse expressed thanks to the Spencer Cable Access Committee and to Gabe Coolbaugh for videographing the Solar Bylaw Listening Session.

Board Member and Staff Comments

Chairman Woodbury said Appleblossoms has a new owner. He also pointed out that Bill Lehtola serves with him on the Spencer Cable Access Committee, in addition to the other areas.

The meeting adjourned 8:01 p.m. All were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Savoie
Executive Assistant

Referenced documents:

Meritorious Nomination Forms
Entertainment License Application
FY2020 Budget Documents, FY2020 Capital Requests and 5-Year Capital Plan