



Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Selectmen

Date: December 16, 2019 – Business Meeting
Time: 6:00 p.m.
Place: McCourt Social Hall, Memorial Town Hall, Spencer, MA
Present: Vice Chair Monette, Clerk Berthiaume,
Members Hicks and Woodbury, and Administrator Gregory
Chairman Pepe was absent

Vice-chair Monette 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

None

Minutes:

Vote to approve the Meeting Minutes of November 4th and November 18th, 2019

A motion to approve the minutes of November 4th and November 18th (Woodbury/Hicks) passed 5/0.

Communications:

Letter of Appreciation for Spencer-East Brookfield School Resource Officer Todd LaPorte

Mr. Monette read a letter the Board received from Kara Westerman, Director of Student Services for the SEBRSD commending Officer Todd LaPorte for his work and support as the School Resource Officer.

Notice of Charter License Expiration on 1/29/2023

Mr. Gregory reported that the Department of Telecommunications and Cable sent a notice regarding the Charter Communications license, which expires in 2023. 1/29/23. Mary Braney will work with the Spencer Cable Access to form a renewal committee which will be appointed by the Board.

Citizen Input

Town Clerk Laura Torti thanked Dr. Hicks for speaking on behalf of Operation Undercover at the Special Town Meeting.

Rose Hale, 4 Crestview Drive said she's been involved with the Senior Center for eight years and credits her excellent health to her participation in the exercise programs and hopes they are not impacted by the sprinkler system issues.

New Business:

Review & Act on the Application of Josephine Sullivan for a Junk Dealer's License to sell Vintage Goods and Plants at 5 Mechanic Street

Josephina Sullivan was present to apply for Junk Dealer's License to sell Vintage Goods and Plants at 5 Mechanic Street. She is hoping to open on December 19th.

A Motion to approve the request of Josephine Sullivan for a Junk Dealer's License at 5 Mechanic Street (Hicks/Berthiaume) passed 5/0.

Badge Pinning Ceremony for Lieutenant Michael Befford

Chief Darrin reported that Police Sergeant Befford was promoted to the Lieutenant position on December 1, 2019. Lieutenant Befford has been with the Spencer Police Department for twenty-two years and in law enforcement for thirty-four. Members of the Police Department, family, and friends were present for the Badge Pinning Ceremony. His badge was pinned by his wife, Jackie Befford. Representative Donnie Berthiaume presented him with a Citation recognizing his advancement to Lieutenant. The Citation was signed by Representative Berthiaume and Durant.

Stantec Presentation on the Downtown Design Guidelines

Town Planner Paul Dell'Aquila reported that several public meetings were held to obtain feedback on parking in the downtown area. And Stantec representatives Jason Schrieber and Amelia Casey performed a parking analysis and will present their recommendations at this time.

Ms. Casey reported pointed out that their goals included documenting existing parking conditions and identifying areas for improvement. Highlights from their report include the following:

- There are few public parking facilities
- Off street parking is never over 30% utilized
- Despite a total of 1,168 parking spaces in downtown, 85% are reserved for resident and customer use and 15% are unregulated
- Parking locations are unclear and undesignated - the public is unsure if they can park in those areas
- Promote shared parking agreements
- Parking demand concentrates along Mechanic Street
- Overall there is an excess parking supply of 550 spaces.

Mr. Schrieber suggested that Town promote shared parking agreements and utilize private lots as part of the public system.

Review & Act on Proposed Changes to Departmental Permit Fees

Town Clerk Laura Torti asked the Board to authorize the addition of a \$20.00 fee for marriage licenses requiring corrections. She noted that with the increase in one-day

solemnizer's performing marriages, there have been more errors, which can be time consuming to correct.

A motion to approve the request of the Town Clerk to set a \$25.00 fee for corrections to a marriage license (Hicks/Berthiaume) passed 4/0.

Town Planner Paul Dell'Aquila asked the Board to consider changes to the ODIS fee schedule. He noted that Conservation Agent George Russell did research with comparable communities and would like to bring the fees for Spencer up to date.

A motion to approve the fee changes for Inspectional Services (Conservation) as presented (Woodbury /Berthiaume) passed 4/0.

Review & Act on 2020 Community Comparisons

Administrator Gregory noted that among the list of ten comparable communities, Spencer has the third lowest average property tax bill at \$3,530, which includes phases I and II of the Roads Bonds borrow.

A motion to adopt the 2020 Community Comparisons (Woodbury/Hicks) passed 4/0.

Policy Introduction: Inclement Weather Policy for Municipal Buildings

The Town currently does not have an Inclement Weather Policy. Mr. Gregory said after reviewing policies from area communities, he would like to establish a policy for Spencer which authorizes him to consult with the U & F Superintendent to determine if a closure or change in operating hours is warranted. Employees scheduled to work will be compensated for hours lost due to closure. It is expected this will be a rare occurrence. Dr. Hicks would like any change in hours to be advertised for the public. Mr. Gregory said a notice will be placed on the Website and local radio stations when possible.

The Board will vote on the policy at the next meeting.

Review and Act on Building Inspector/Zoning Enforcement Officer Appointment: Duane G. Amos

Mr. Gregory appointed Duane Amos as the Building Inspector/Zoning Enforcement Officer noting he has over twenty-two years of experience in the field. He asked the Board to ratify this appointment. Dr. Hicks asked if language could be incorporated in the contract preventing the Building Inspector from conducting personal business in Town. Mr. Gregory will research and respond back.

A motion to ratify the appointment of Duane Amos as Building Inspector/Zoning Enforcement Officer for the Town of Spencer with an effective date of January 6, 2020 (Hicks/Berthiaume) passed 4/0.

Town Administrator's Report

Review & Act on Town Administrator Goals

Mr. Gregory reviewed his goals with Chairman Pepe and submitted his final goals to the Board which include work on the FY2021 Budget Preparation and Rebuilding; Continued Downtown Revitalization; Regionalization Opportunities; and Public Works / Facilities Projects.

A motion to approve the goals as presented (Hicks/Woodbury) passed 4/0.

Administrator Gregory noted that the Board voted at the November 18th meeting to open a Special Town Meeting Warrant to secure funds for an engineering design study to install a sprinkler system at the Maples Street School/Senior Center building. Since the project value is greater than \$300,000, MGL requires an RFQ for an architectural design. The Board could sign a Warrant on January 13th for a Special Town Meeting to be held on February 13th for the design fee, and by April, bids for the construction phase will be available in time for Town Meeting to vote on whether to appropriate the funds. He noted that the only funding source is from stabilization since free cash is needed for capital expenditures.

Citizen Input

COA Chair, Christine Mancini asked to be kept updated on the process for the sprinkler system at the Senior Center.

Matt Defosse, 7 Pauls Drive, pointed out that the SBAC report represented the viewpoints of the Committee as a whole. He asked the Administrator to obtain Town Counsel's opinion on the impact of solar development driving the need for an Assistant Town Planner and Clerk in the future. Mr. Gregory said he sees no basis for this request.

Al Atchue, Meadow Road, thanked Ms. Berthiaume and the Celebrations Committee for their work on the Christmas Parade, which was a great success.

Board Member and Staff Comments

Ms. Berthiaume thanked everyone for their work in crafting another successful Christmas Parade of Lights. It was a great time for all.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:29 pm. All were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Savoie
Executive Assistant

Referenced documents: