

Select Board Meeting
January 19, 2022

6:01 pm meeting called to order by Neil Oleson.

Select Board members present: Mike Bedini, Neil Oleson

Select board members absent: Terry Green

Others present: Jim White, Christine Dobbert, Vicki Winchell, Brad Furlon, Josephine Poirot, Elizabeth Henderson, Justin Henderson, Ron Bosley, Ericka Oleson

Mike Bedini made a motion to approve the minutes from the 1/5/22 meeting. Neil Oleson seconded. Unanimous.

Selectmen:

- Justin and Elizabeth Henderson attended the meeting to discuss the necessary steps needed by them to move forward with a self-storage unit for a property they bought on the Mohawk Trail at auction. Neil informed them they would need a Special Permit hearing. Mike suggested they also write up a proposal and submit it to the board. Christine will set a date for the Special Permit hearing and notify the abutters. She did ask how quickly they were looking to start. Justin felt once the weather breaks in the spring, sometime in March.
- Brad Furlon and Josephine Poirot attended the meeting to follow up on their veteran's payment concerns from the previous meeting.
 - Brad did speak with Stephen Roy, the Veterans Agent in North Adams who verified he sends an email to towns monthly for payment. He tries to send it the first week of each month however it is not always possible. For example, when Brad spoke with Stephen on 1/7/22 Stephen did say he was still working on January's payment information.
 - Neil mentioned that payment is not the same monthly therefore they can not pay it without notification from Stephen. Brad did agree that it can change monthly based on various expenses (medical, heating, etc).
 - Brad also verified with Stephen the law states it needs to be paid out by midnight of the last day of each month, at the latest.
 - He did ask if direct deposit was a possibility to which Christine and Ericka both said it is not possible for vendors to be paid through direct deposit.
 - Christine verified the warrant process from start to finish.
 - There was still some confusion regarding Tina (Stephen Roy's administrative assistant) and Christine holding a conversation in December. Christine will get a written letter from Tina regarding it.
 - Christine offered to call Brad and Josephine to let them know when the check is ready to be picked up so they do not have to wait for the mail. Because she will be calling them she will now call all of the town residents who receive this payment so they can choose to pick up or have their check mailed.
- Josephine Poirot questioned when the tax bills would be sent out? Christine replied that all have been mailed out this week.

Selectmen (continued):

- Mike questioned why Dobberts Recycling is able to bring their business trash to the compactor. Dobberts Recycling has brought items to the bulk box that is more suited for a transfer station, which we are not. Neil did inform everyone that historically the town has allowed the businesses to use the compactor. They are paying business tax rates. The other option could be to impose a commercial rate for the compactor sticker. The board asked Christine to write a letter informing Dobberts Recycling that if they are going to continue to do this kind of dumping the owner should consider getting his own container on his property for bulk amounts. Christine asked if this would be an issue for other businesses in town? Would this be a Board of Health issue? She will get a letter ready for the next Board of Health meeting to discuss. The board also asked Christine to remind Dobberts Recycling that they need to have their fence back up by the end of the fiscal year.
- Mike Bedini made a motion to accept the business license for Daniel Dobbert of Dobberts Recycling. Neil Oleson seconded. Unanimous.
- Mike asked who is on the Finance Committee and why they are not involved in the budget process. Christine said they are supposed to be however no one seems to get involved. The members are: Wanda McNary, Donna Estes, Pam White and John Oleson. Christine will send a letter to all members.
- Mike asked what the outcome was with the building inspector when they were looking at properties with excessive unregistered vehicles on it? Christine said the building inspector has not acted. Mike was unhappy with how she does not respond to the boards or residents' calls. Neil suggested they invite her to a meeting to address the issues. Christine will reach out to invite her.
- Mike asked Christine about the town website and if they can find someone to work on it to spruce it up. Christine will check with McCann Technical School to see if they have a student who would be interested in working with her to build a new site.
- Brad Furlon asked the board to clarify what the procedure or stipulations are for the road crew to go out and plow. Did the board decide when they could go out to plow and salt/sand? Was there concerns regarding overtime? The board informed him that decision is at the sole discretion of the Highway Superintendent and that overtime is of no concern in the process, only the safety of those traveling our roads. Brad felt that the last storm (1/17/22) was treacherous and no one was out plowing while there was a lot of snow on the roads. Neil stated Jim had repeatedly checked the conditions throughout the night/early morning hours. The storm just hit hard and faster than they expected. Brad also noted the speed at which Bear Swamp employee's travel down Whitcomb Hill Road and River Road, no matter what the road conditions are. They are a danger to others and one almost drove head-on into his wife's vehicle while she was heading to work. Christine will contact Bear Swamp regarding their employee's. Brad also pointed out that this concern was in no way a reflection of the work Jim has been doing as he has been doing a tremendous job.
- Ron Bosley inquired as to whether the town ever got the stove for the Senior Center. Christine informed him they are still discussing it.

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Jim White, Highway Department Supervisor:

- Cleaning ice and snow from the storms
- Truck #1 had a bad rim that was refurbished.
- Greasing and washing the trucks
- Serpentine belt on Truck #10
- Jim took the license plate of a vehicle that was loading an entire pickup truck of sand at the town sand pile. He spoke with the resident to inform him that although the sand pile is for town residents, it should not be abused and used to fill a complete pickup truck full. Jim will keep an eye on the use of the sand.

Christine Dobbert, Town Administrator:

- Christine discussed a letter that was found on the Town of Hawley's website regarding Broadband. Hawley is encouraging its residents to allow equipment be placed on their homes even if it is not operation so that WiValley/Otelco can reach 95% participation rate for their town. Neil suggested the town look into fiber again since things are changing, to see if the prices have changed at all from when they first researched it.
- Tax bills were sent out.
- Schedule A and the Balance Sheet have both been submitted to the state.
- Assessors have gone back to Mayflower Evaluations, who want a two-year contract. The rates would be \$16,500 for FY23 and \$11,200 for FY24. Christine will put these amounts on the budget request forms.
- The highway is considering replacing Truck #6. She is informing the board and will place the costs on the budget request forms. The preliminary estimated cost is \$80,000-\$91,000. The vehicle would be used year-round.

7:40 pm Mike Bedini made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Neil Oleson seconded. Unanimous.