

Select Board Meeting
April 13, 2022

5:40 pm meeting called to order by Neil Oleson.

Select Board members present: Mike Bedini, Terry I. Green, Neil Oleson

Select board members absent: None

Others present (Executive Session): Vicki Winchell, Jim White, Jon Oleson, Kyle Kuczynski, Doug Miller. Others present (Regular Meeting, all or part of): Vicki Winchell, Diana Worth, Ron White, Brad Furlon, Jake White, Joe Therrien, Jon Oleson, Jim White, Donna Estes, Cindy Bosley, Ron Bosley, Judy Oleson, John Franzoni, Lisa Blackmer, Janet Bartlett, Tim Bartlett, Sue Oleson,


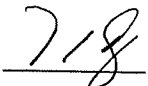
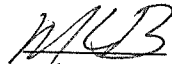
Terry I. Green made a motion to go to Executive Session at 5:40 p.m. Mike Bedini seconded. Unanimous.

Mike Bedini made a motion to dissolve executive session and enter back into regular session at 5:53 p.m. Terry I. Green seconded. Unanimous.

Selectboard:

- Mike Bedini made a motion to approve the common victuals license for Christodora, Inc. Terry I. Green seconded. Unanimous.
- Diana Worth appeared to discuss her interest in the Dog Officer position. Neil explained two people have been doing it as Christine was taking the courses that are needed and Jeremy Dodge has been doing the job. At some point the state had come out with new regulations requiring the dog officer to take 30 hours per year of continuing education classes. Because Jeremy works during the day he could not take a week off of work to do this so Christine would take the classes. Christine was not taking any pay for this, only Jeremy, as he was going out and dealing with the public and the dogs. Christine would however pick up a few dogs during the daytime. Neil asked if Diana was interested in taking over the entire position or part of it? Diana responded she is interested in whatever Christine was doing. Mike brought up that the other person should also be paid for it to which Neil agreed. Mike then asked if there is money in the budget for this. Neil reviewed the budget requests. Dog Officer salary was requested for \$1000 and \$500 for supplies. Neil suggested recommending an extra \$500 for Diana for FY23. Diana would also be reimbursed for any courses that are required. Discussion continued regarding the salary and board agreed to recommend the salary be increased in FY23 to \$2000 per year, \$1000 for Diana and \$1000 for Jeremy.
- Mike Bedini made a motion to appoint Diana Worth to the dog officer position. Terry I. Green seconded. Unanimous.
- Terry I. Green made a motion to approve the minutes from the 3/30/22 and 4/6/22 meetings. Mike Bedini seconded. Unanimous.
- Mike asked if the Treasurer/Collector position has been posted. Neil responded yes.

Select Board Initials

Select Board Meeting
April 13, 2022

Selectboard (Continued):

- Mike Bedini made a motion to accept the proposal from Arigoni Contractors for repairs and painting on the town garage, in the amount of \$30,699.00. Terry I. Green seconded. Unanimous.
- Terry asked if multiple bids were required for that project. Neil responded it was not necessary for anything under \$35,000.00.

At 6:24 p.m. the meeting was moved to the Senior Center to meet jointly with the finance committee.

Terry I. Green made a motion to reopen the meeting at 6:35 p.m. Mike Bedini seconded. Unanimous.

Library Budget Review Revisited:

Neil reviewed the tabled Library budget. The Library requested \$38,400.00. All finance committee and selectboard members agreed, with Terry abstaining.

School Budget Review:

Formal request was never received from the school. Lisa Blackmer handed one out at this meeting to all members to review.

Cindy asked why the superintendent office share increased and what was the higher percentage. John Franzoni explained it went from 18% to 20% due to the increased population at the school. She also asked what the overall superintendents raise was to which John replied it was a 3% increase per his contract that he is currently in year 2 of.

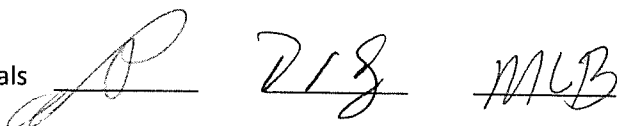
Neil asked how many students there are. John replied there is 103 this year. One reason for the increase is because there was not a pre-k program last year due to all the covid restrictions.

Ron Bosley asked if there were more teachers being added. John said no the only thing they needed to add this year was the principal asked for two more teaching assistants but they did not fill one of those positions.

Neil asked if this is a new bus contract. John replied they are negotiating a new one and was told by the bus company the increase is going to be 7.5%. The one they are in now is a 1 yr extension from the last contract.

Terry asked if the teacher aid line is decreasing because they have not hired another aid for those classes and what is the average salary. It was explained that it wasn't decreasing per say but moving salaries around to recategorize them. Lisa answered generally the aid salaries are in the \$15-\$16 per hour range but have some making close to \$20 because of certifications. John also explained their salaries have gone up over the last couple years because the school committees wanted to bring them up to minimum wage because they were lower.

Select Board Initials



Select Board Meeting

April 13, 2022

School Budget Review (continued):

Cindy asked how many hours per week was the principal secretary and how many weeks per year. John answered 7 hrs per day, 190 days per year. She will be increased to \$20 per hour next year.

Neil stated the budget request is an increase of \$38,000 from last year, which includes more students and moving the nurse to a full-time position. The school was level funded the last four years. John added they've been trying to use the school choice funds to offset any expenses. Neil asked how many school choice for the upcoming year and how much is paid for them. John answered about 20% are school choice and the income ranges from minimum of \$5000 per student and increases if they are special education students, based on the services they receive. Neil and Cindy discussed the pros and cons of school choice students. Lisa added the school choice account has \$375,000 currently.

Neil called for questions from the finance committee. Jon Oleson abstained.

Judy Oleson commented that they are also always aware of incoming students who may need more special education or even out of town placement that could destroy their budget if they do not have a little leeway. Terry asked how much they expect to receive from grants. Lisa replied they budgeted the same as this year, \$92,000.00, as many are recurring grants. There will also be \$10,000 from the ESSER grant. Terry also asked regarding the Technology, would they be adding another person. John replied no, the Director of Technology will be entering his 5th yr this yr and just received a new contract. She clarified that he can be spread pretty thin and was wondering if they'd be adding an assistant for him. They will not be.

Neil asked about a line item in their budget stated School Committee \$650. Is that for the 3 committee members. Lisa answered the school committee salary is for the school committee chair. Terry and Neil pointed out the town budget includes the school committee salary. Lisa will remove the \$650 from the budget. Neil also asked for clarification on Principal Technology line. Lisa explained its equipment, software, and supplies.

Mike asked for clarification on Medical Therapeutic line item. It was explained that would be the Occupational Therapist, Speech and Language Pathologist and Physical Therapist special education therapists. The costs went down as services went down in Florida.

Terry asked how often is the Guidance/Adjustment Counselor there. John answered he is there 2.5 days per week and on the regular teacher contract.

Neil noted after removing the \$650 school committee salary line item the total would now be \$1,425,333.68, and asked for the finance committee decision. Cindy said they agree and recommend going with the same figure.

Terry questioned the health insurance plan information and costs. Lisa did not have that information with her and would email it to Terry.

Select Board Initials

Select Board Meeting
April 13, 2022

School Budget Review (continued):

The Selectboard and finance committee recommend \$1,425,333.68, with Jon abstaining.

Oleson

~~Sue Olsen~~, Senior Center Budget Review:

Neil addressed the finance committee stating that Sue can answer the questions they had previously regarding the Senior Center number of hours and the pay rate. Sue informed the committee the town pays for the upkeep and utilities for the center. The programs come out of the COA grant, which can only be used for certain things. If programs are not covered under that The Friends of the COA usually donate money or Sue and Joyce, cover the expense out of pocket. They each are paid \$17 per hour and together work a combined total of 18 hours.

Various Line Items Reviewed:

Cindy asked about Interest on Town Notes and what it is used for. Neil replied it is used towards interest on any notes. It is also used quite often at the end of the month, depending on when the credit card bill arrives, if it missed the warrant, to cover any late/interest charges that accrue because of late payment of the credit card bill. Terry suggested receiving the credit card bill online vs waiting for the mail. Brad Furlon asked why doesn't the town use debit cards. Neil did not think they were allowed. Brad added North Adams and Williamstown both do. Terry explained how the process would work. Neil will look into it when the Town Administrator position has been filled.

Cindy asked about School Repairs remaining balance. Neil replied the repairs are not completed yet and any balance remaining this year will be carried forward into next year.

Terry asked for clarification between State Police Patrols and Police Work Expenses. State Police Patrol is when the town schedules the state police to patrol the roads. Police Work is for Dave Burdick issuing the firearm permits.

Donna stated the Berkshire County Retirement Assessment is to low and will be an additional \$14,000. The original assessment did not consider the School Union shared employees who are paid out of Clarksburg but are Florida employees also. The increase will be \$14,194.11 more for a total of \$154,978.00. Selectboard and Finance Committee in agreement.

Select Board Initials

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218

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Select Board Meeting
April 13, 2022

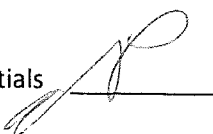
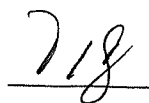
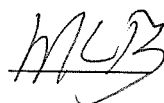
Selectboard (regular meeting continued):

- Mike informed all why Harry Beverly would be resigning from the Memorial Committee. Harry did not realize the majority of the work is on or near Memorial Day. Harry is working the entire weekend and does not feel he'd be putting enough effort and time into it.
- Board will be meeting next week, 4/20/22, to review any resumes received.
- Neil informed all that he would speak to Brent Bergendahl regarding the Accounting Officer position as he used to do it in the past. Mike asked if it would be a temporary appointment as he should apply for the position as anyone else would. Neil said he can do it temporarily while they're waiting for resumes to come in. Cindy asked what the Accounting Officer does. Terry explained the job details. The board agreed to table the discussion and speak with Brent next week.
- Terry pointed out the agenda included an open meeting law complaint and conflict of interest spreadsheet. Board reviewed the spreadsheet.
- Terry I. Green made a motion to accept Christine Dobbert's resignation as April 13, 2022 as her final day. Mike Bedini seconded. Unanimous.
- Biweekly warrant signed by the board.
- Terry I. Green made a motion to sign and initial the meeting minutes from 3/30/22 and 4/6/22. Mike Bedini seconded. Unanimous.

Public Comment:

- Ron asked if there were any responses to the job postings. Neil responded there were 6 resumes for the Town Administrator position and nothing received for the other positions so far.
- Tim Bartlett spoke to express his concern for the upcoming election and the possibility of having two family members on the same board. He was clear he has no issues against Jon. He just feels it would prohibit having 3 independent views and each selectboard member having an equal say if two are family members the decisions can be channeled into one direction and one remaining member has no say. He could understand, since it is a small town and if there was a need to fill the position, but when there is a sitting selectman who is doing a good job, is familiar with the town as he's lived here all his life, why would someone want to run against him. Jon added that just because they share the same last name it does not mean all their views are the same. Neil is understanding of Tim's concerns however Jon took out the papers legally and the board does not have a say in the election. It is up to the town to vote him or not vote him in. There is nothing in the law that says relatives cannot be on the same board. Discussion continued about the election process.

Select Board Initials

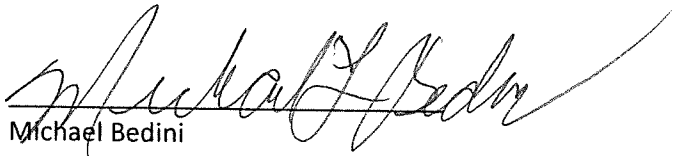




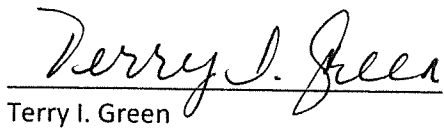
Select Board Meeting
April 13, 2022

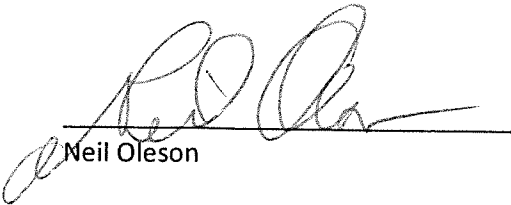
Public Comment (continued):

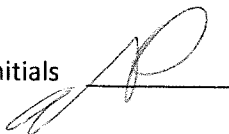
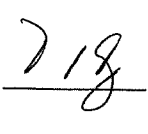

- Brad asked about the open meeting complaint on the agenda. All board members replied that they could not find the letter. Terry said she could address it, that she was the person who contacted the Ethics Committee. She did not realize what they would do or their decision to reach out to the town but she had and still has concerns. She will continue to reach out to any state officials to be sure things are done the proper way. It was on the ethics violations that she brought to the attention of the board when she first started as a selectboard member.

7:55 pm. Mike Bedini made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Terry I. Green seconded. Unanimous.


Michael Bedini


Terry I. Green


Neil Oleson

Select Board Initials   

Select Board Meeting
April 13, 2022

6:10 pm meeting called to order by Neil Oleson.

Select Board members present: Mike Bedini, Terry I. Green, Neil Oleson

Select board members absent: None

Others present Vicki Winchell, Tim Bartlett, Jason Green,

Selectboard:

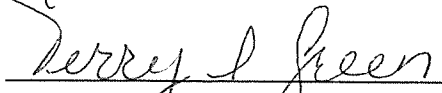
- Terry I. Green made a motion to continue business with MIIA for property, Liability and Worker's Compensation Insurance for FY2023. Mike Bedini seconded. Unanimous.
- Review of 6 applications received for the Town Administrator position. An email was also received from Susan Wright showing interest in the position as an Interim Town Administrator. There were no Treasurer/Collector or Accounting Officer applications received. Terry will reach out to local accountants to see if any have any interest in the position.
- Neil informed Vicki she would need to do the agenda for the upcoming Selectboard meetings in the absence of a Town Administrator, as well as prepare the annual town report and prepare the warrant for the annual town meeting.
- Neil reviewed an Open Meeting Law complaint that was filed by Christine Dobbert against Terry claiming an ethics violation. This discussion was tabled to the next meeting, April 27, 2022.
- There will be a Public Hearing held next week for Justin and Elizabeth Henderson and their plan to build self-storage units.

Public Comment:

- Jason Green discussed the facebook comment made against Terry by Nate O'Hearn under a recent posting of the selectboard minutes.
- Tim Bartlett expressed concerns about the chipper sitting outside in the elements all year long. Mike said it is still in the plan to find a conex box to store some equipment. Neil responded he has found some less expensive and it could be purchased out of Tractor and Machinery. They will discuss with Jim.

6:42 pm. Terry I. Green made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mike Bedini seconded. Unanimous.


Michael Bedini


Terry I. Green


Neil Oleson

Select Board Initials 