

Town of Florida Select Board Meeting

Florida Town Hall
379 Mohawk Trail
Drury, MA 01343

January 3, 2024

6:00 pm meeting called to order by Neil Oleson.

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

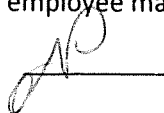
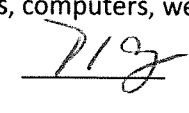
Select board members absent: Mike Bedini

Others present: Joan Lewis, James White, Vicki Winchell, Cindy Bosley, Ron Bosley, Diana Worth, Stephanie Pare, James Martin, Donna Randall, Roger Randall, Vincent Sager, Steven Morin

Selectboard:

- Terry I. Green made a motion to approve the minutes from the Selectboard meeting of November 8, 2023, December 6, 2023, and December 20, 2023. Neil Oleson seconded. Unanimous.
- James Martin, attorney, request amendment for the two documents in place for the town of Florida for the Hoosac Wind Project. One document is an amendment for the easement agreement and the other is a lease amendment. They are asking the town to extend the terms of the documents for the primary reason for the operators to make the investments to repower the turbines. They would like the lease to go to 2054. They propose the easement be extended for 15 years to December 2052. Avangrid is offering to make a payment of \$10,000.00 per agreement, to the town, totaling \$20,000.00 which they would pay within 90 days after the agreement is signed. Copies of the information given to the board to review. Joan will send a copy for the town attorney to review as well.
- Terry I. Green made a motion to grant a license for Little Brook Builders, LLC. Neil Oleson seconded. Unanimous.
- Terry I. Green made a motion to grant a license for Poets Seat Water Company. Neil Oleson seconded. Unanimous.
- Terry I. Green made a motion for Thomas Brule to be appointed to the Conservation Commission for the Town of Florida. Neil Oleson seconded. Unanimous.
- RFP for the accounting software was reviewed by the board.
 - Terry I. Green made a motion to approve the request for the proposal for the municipal financial management software system. Neil Oleson seconded. Unanimous.
- There will be a rate increase of \$10 per hour for FY 2025 for KP Law.
- Terry asked Joan if she had heard when the email accounts would be set up. Joan responded that Mad Macs is waiting for the server to come in. Terry will contact Mad Macs for information.
- Terry clarified how continuing business should be utilized on the agenda. Joan does not need to put the call in by telephone conference call selectmen members with roll call vote under continuing business. It should be its own line. For continued business she should include items still in progress that are unresolved; employee manuals, job descriptions, computers, website, extended windmill lease.

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Selectboard (continued):

- Terry I. Green made a motion to approve Josh Arrico for PC Support for 2 years as well as the purchase of two wired mice and two laptops for \$2920.00 to be paid out of the ARPA grant for the Library. Neil Oleson seconded. Unanimous.

Jim White, Highway Department Supervisor:

- The International should be ready by next week.
- Chipping, cutting trees on upper River Road
- December 18th rainstorm had some catch basins plug up with rocks, branches, and leaves. Rebuilt side of road on Monroe Road. Rebuild side of upper culvert on upper River Road.
- Dealing with catch basins and trees.
- Truck 18 put the brakes on as they were not working or holding. They were still not holding. Tore it apart to find out the brakes were frozen. Rebuilt the rear end.
- Superior Springs computer was down. Still waiting for the invoices from them.
- Doug had a leak on hydraulic controls. Found a bad hose and repaired it.
- Put dense grade on Bliss Road
- Road repairs on Savoy Road.

Joan Lewis, Town Administrator:

- Town budget requests are being sent to the departments for FY 2025.
- Worked on the RFP with Stacey, Melanie, and Stephanie.
- Taxes went out.
- A lockbox has been installed by the door for cash and early voting forms to be submitted.
- Covid tests are still available.

Public Comment:

- Stephanie Pare informed the board the paper folding machine she uses broke. It was bought second hand through a company in NY. The machine is 19 years old. The repair person estimates a minimum of \$500 to service it. There is no estimate on repairs until he can see what is wrong. A used machine costs \$4000.00.
 - Terry I. Green made a motion to have the repair man come to fix the machine, if possible. Neil Oleson seconded. Unanimous.
- Steve Morin asked the board what would be required to put a ground array solar on his property regarding permitting and what is required. Neil informed Steven he would need to contact the building inspector and the electric inspector.
- Ron Bosley pointed out that Kyle Kuczynski's name is still on the website and should be replaced with Joel.
- Cindy Bosley questioned where the money is paid to Mad Macs when they help with other items. Clarifying to Joan that she needs to be careful about what she asks them for help on as the funds would need to be paid from other areas when the work is not part of the grant-related work.

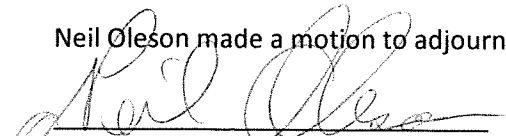
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Public Comment (continued):

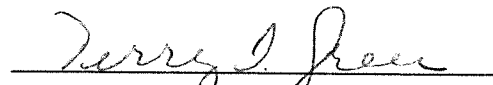
- Vincent Sager asked for information regarding the playground at school as some equipment is not safe. Stephanie Pare responded that the playground is closed to the public after school hours therefore anyone using the playground outside of school time is trespassing. During the day students are supervised and only use safe equipment. The PTG did secure a grant for \$50,000.00 to replace the playground, however the check was sent payable to the North Berkshire School Union. The union is unable to cash checks therefore the check had to be returned and they were waiting for it to be reissued. Due to unpredictable weather conditions in our town, by the time the check arrived, it was too late to redo the playground, as the company could not deliver until November. The new equipment has been put on hold with the company providing it until spring. Stephanie also noted there are no PTG members from town on the PTG. It consists of all parents not in town. Vincent asked about volunteering to help construct the playground. Stephanie will be calling him when they have an installation date.
- Vincent also discussed the Florida Facebook page his wife had joined. He was informed it is not an official site and the board will not respond to anything on Facebook. Terry offered that his wife could reach out to her anytime if she would like to discuss anything.
- Vincent questioned the budget passed last year that appropriated \$54,000.00 to Assessors. He feels that is a lot of money. Terry clarified it is also part of the software costs. He was told we source out from other areas as well. He felt we could offer someone \$15,000 locally to do it. He was told it was tried a couple years in a row and no one would take the position. There is a lot of time and training involved in being an assessor. They also discussed the person used for the hydro plant reevaluation is very knowledgeable and a lot is involved with evaluating a hydroelectric plant.
- Vincent questioned going to a school board meeting, stating proficiency numbers. No one was sure where those numbers were coming from. It was recommended that he attend the school board meetings. Neil thanked Vincent for attending and asking his questions to the board in a respectful manner.
- Roger Randall requested to be added to the next selectboard meeting agenda and the board of health agenda to discuss properties and irregularities of the law on properties at 44 and 48 Stryker's Road. One concern is a junk cars bylaw problems, and both concerns apply to sanitation and health and safety in condition of the property in accumulation of trash. Neil responded it would be the building inspector and board of health that would be needed.
- Ron Bosley asked for an update on the town report. Joan responded they just need to bind the reports. Terry requested a deadline of the end of January to have them completed. Stephanie asked if the reports could also be posted on the website which would save on paper.

Neil Oleson made a motion to adjourn at 6:51 pm. Terry I. Green seconded. Unanimous.



Neil Oleson, Chair

Michael Bedini



Terry I. Green

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