

Town of Florida Select Board Meeting

Florida Town Hall
379 Mohawk Trail
Drury, MA 01343

May 22, 2024

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

Select Board members present: Neil Oleson, Mike Bedini, Tim Zelazo

Select board members absent: None

Others present: Joan Lewis, James White, Vicki Winchell, Cindy Bosley, Ron Bosley, Diana Worth, Mike Gleason, Carlo Pellegrini, Lisa Brown, Stephanie Pare, Al Bedini, Heidi Dugal, Doug Miller, Dave Fierro (partially attended by telephone).

Selectboard:

- Mike Bedini made a motion to approve the minutes from the joint selectboard and finance committee meeting on April 10, 2024, and the minutes from the selectboard meeting on April 10, 2024. Neil Oleson seconded. Unanimous.
- Mike Bedini made a motion to approve the minutes from the joint selectboard and finance committee meeting on April 17, 2024. Neil Oleson seconded. Unanimous.
- Tim Zelazo made a motion to approve the minutes from the selectboard meeting on May 8, 2024. Neil Oleson seconded. Unanimous.
- The finance committee accepted the joint meeting minutes from April 10, 2024, and April 17, 2024.
- The financial team requested the selectboard's permission to hold off on audit. Dave Fierro recommended waiting until the new software is up and running. Stephanie is currently wrapping up FY23 with Dave. The board agrees to postpone the audit.
- Mike Bedini made a motion to appoint Susan Fulton to the Council on Aging. Neil Oleson seconded. Unanimous. Tim Zelazo abstained.
- Mike Bedini made a motion to accept the new personnel policies and manual. Tim Zelazo seconded. Unanimous.
- Discussion on job descriptions tabled.
- Mike Bedini made a motion to accept the warrant for the annual town meeting. Tim Zelazo seconded. Unanimous.
- Town bylaws were discussed.
 - Mike Bedini made a motion to approve the zoning bylaws and the town bylaws. Tim Zelazo seconded. Unanimous.
- Doug Miller discussed his plan to retire towards the end of August 2024. The board asked for as much notice as possible, in writing, with the retirement date.

Select Board Initials

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Selectboard (continued):

- Budget
 - Town Clerk Discussion. Neil Oleson abstained. Mike discussed increasing the town clerk's salary \$1500 per year due to the amount of work involved. He also suggests starting to plan for an assistant town clerk to start working with Lisa to learn the job for when she decides to retire. It is recommended an assistant town clerk line be created for FY25 with \$5000.00.
 - Mike Bedini made a motion to increase the town clerk's salary an additional \$1500 and create an appropriation for an Assistant Town Clerk in the amount of \$5000.00. Tim Zelazo seconded. Neil Oleson abstained. Unanimous.
 - The accountant will not know how much is able to be transferred from free cash to stabilization until free cash has been certified. It should be certified before the annual town meeting.
- Board of Health:
 - Al Bedini and Heidi Dugal discussed the concerns regarding property owners who will not cooperate with the board of health and clean up their properties. The state offered to help but that will result in large fines for the residents. It is difficult to discuss with the property owners. The selectboard is responsible for ensuring the building inspector follows up to enforce the bylaws. Tim discussed a nuisance law. He will investigate that further as well as check with other towns to see how they handle these situations.
- Carlo Pellegrini discussed grants available. He has found several to apply for and has started a spreadsheet of them, to streamline the process. He will send the information to Joan for her to investigate further. Berkshire Regional Planning Commission informed Joan they do not have time to help apply for grants. Cindy Bosley suggested Joan contact the state as soon as possible to get Whitcomb Hill as a line item in the state budget.
- Telephone System Quotes. Scott Kirchner at Mad Mac's feels the currently system used, GoNetSpeed, is comparable to what could be offered. Town not interested in changing to cell phones as service does not work well at Town Hall. Mike Gleason discussed ATT First Net. Coverage has improved compared to a few years ago. Seven phones would be needed with hotspots to trial. Cost without hot spot is \$36.99 or \$41.99 with hot spot. Board wants ATT to demonstrate first. Mike will contact them to set up a demonstration.
- Tim attended a broadband meeting via zoom about digital equity. He questioned if the town was 70% covered and if the school was connected to broadband.
- Mike Bedini made a motion to keep Neil Oleson as Chair of the Selectboard. Tim Zelazo seconded. Unanimous.

Jim White, Highway Department Supervisor:

- Tilda Hill Road Update – no one has gotten back to Jim yet from the Windmills. Neil asked Joan to draft a letter stating they need to respond by the next meeting date, or the town will contact their lawyer. Jim will give Joan the contact information.
 - Joan will prepare a letter for the board to sign stating the above information. Steve will need this for the state.
- Town received \$110,571.00 from Rural Road Funds that will be put back in chapter 90 funds.

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Jim White, Highway Department Supervisor (continued):

- Dealing with River Road issues. Concerns regarding native plants. Waiting to hear back on it. Will need to possibly shut the road down 2 days for the project.
- Truck 1 and the (2) Humvee registrations given to the board to put the 3 trucks out to bid. Jim will send Mike pictures of the trucks to post.
- Tractor Quotes. All 3 include loaders and 6' brush hog.
 - Bobcat \$29,125.80; Mahindra \$30,653.00; John Deere \$39185.96. Jim recommends the Bobcat. Discussion tabled until next meeting to review the amount left in the ARPA funds.
- Mowing, cleaning cemeteries, fixing lawns where needed.
- BDM sweepers came in.
- Working on trucks.
- Cleaning out swale on Whitcomb Hill.

Joan Lewis, Town Administrator:

- Berkshire Regional Transit Advisory Board needs a new contact person. Cindy was doing it for a couple years and would like to no longer be on it. Joan will be the contact person.
- Mad Mac's gave Joan the new email addresses. Senior Center will have one email, not one for each person. Selectboard will each have their own email address. Discussion tabled to the next meeting.


Mike Bedini made a motion to adjourn at 7:45 pm. Tim Zelazo seconded. Unanimous.



Neil Oleson, Chair



Michael Bedini



Timothy Zelazo

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