January 15, 2025

6:05 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, Vicki Winchell, Jim White, Diana Worth, Jamie Richardson, Wayne Gelinas

Selectboard:

* Mike Bedini made a motion to accept the minutes from the meeting on December 18, 2024. Tim Zelazo seconded. Unanimous.
* The Town Personnel Policy was reviewed. An employment contract is not needed as it was part of the union contract, however no one is in the union any longer. Article 20 “Longevity” needs to be added under compensation. The board discussed a short-term disability offering. Stacey is looking into this for the town. Tim shared his research into MA Employment laws regarding MA being an “at will” state. Joan will update the policy manual for the next meeting.
* Overtime for the highway department was discussed regarding an emergency basis.
* The animal control officer discussion was tabled to the next meeting on 1/29/25.
* Discharge paperwork of a HUD loan was signed by Neil.
* Mike Bedini made a motion to grant business licenses Peter Arigoni, dba Little Brook Builders and Brent Bergendahl, dba Poets Seat Water. Tim Zelazo seconded. Unanimous.
* Town Hall closed for Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

Jim White, Highway Department Supervisor:

* Looking into Northeast Municipality for plow blades to be purchased using ARPA funds.
* Bakers and North Adams Sheet Metal were called for quotes for the dump body.
* The quote for a welder is $2115.00. The board approved the purchase and advised it to be paid out of the Tractor & Machine account.
* On January 4, 2025, Jim had an incident with his truck (18) and misjudged the fire station on Church Road. Tony Arigoni is looking at the damage to the building and will give Jim a quote. The incident report has been turned into the board as well.
* Discussed crack sealing and chip sealing for Whitcomb Hill Road, Phelps Road, Oleson Road, Monroe Road and the school parking lot using chapter 90 funds. The discussion will continue in March.
* Mike questioned how Jim’s new cell phone worked. Jim does not see much difference for service. Audience members suggested looking into Spectrum Cell service. Jim will investigate that further.
* The Conservation Commission approved replacing the main power lines.

Select Board Meeting

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Joan Lewis, Town Administrator:

* Tony Arigoni is installing the gate on the Senior Center stairwell.
* On February 14, 2025, there will be an emergency evacuation meeting with MVP at 10 am being held at the town hall. Joan requested a board member attend.
* Budget request forms are going out to all departments next week
* Working on Chapter 90.
* Year end tax bills have been sent out and people are paying.
* Scott Kirchner asked Joan to discuss with the board that he is working on a grant from the state for Savoy, Monroe and Florida for Cyber Security.
* Jim questioned how research is going on grants for Whitcomb Hill Road. Joan will contact Berkshire Regional Planning. Jim added there is information on mass.gov.

Public Comment

* Jamie Richardson commented that Jim does a great job as the highway supervisor but questioned why no one was out when North Adams and the state were out plowing during one of the last snow squalls. She expressed concerns that it had to do with overtime expenses. The board explained that money is never part of the decision to plow. Mike explained some plows have shoes on them that are necessary but cause the plow to not plow down to the pavement also. Jim has full authority on the matter and bases the decisions on the weather forecast. It can also sometimes take time for the guys to get to the highway department when they’re called in. The department was also down two people.
* Wayne Gelinas praised the highway department’s work. Wayne also questioned if there is any way the towns’ people can help get weather information to Jim from various areas of town since the weather and snowfall can be so different in each section of town due to the several different elevations.

Mike Bedini made a motion to adjourn at 7:05 pm. Tim Zelazo seconded. Unanimous.