March 12, 2025

5:00 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, Diana Worth, Jim White, Vicki Winchell, Stephanie Pare, Angela Garrity, Rebecca Choquette, Tammy Smith, Daniel Tucker, Brett Roberts

Selectboard:

Interviews were held for the Town Accountant position.

* Angela Garrity: Currently working in the towns of Rowe, Richmond and Hancock as the town accountant. Angela has worked in the municipal field since 1993. Rowe and Hancock are remote positions while Richmond is in person, Monday through Thursday to 6pm but can answer calls, questions and emails at all times. If chosen, her plan would be to pick up the warrant and have it completed by Sunday, so it is ready for the Wednesday meetings. Payroll and the warrant cycle were explained to her. Since she works until 6pm she most likely would not be able to attend the selectboard meetings but is always available by phone or email.
* Rebecca Choquette: Currently working at Mountain One full-time and has worked at BCC and Primary Venture Partners. Tim questioned her knowledge of Chapter 30b. She is not overly familiar with it but did touch on it in her MBA program. She is also willing to take classes. This is a position she would like to hold and has no interest in job hopping. Rebecca is involved within the town and the school and has no issues being at the town hall on Wednesday evenings. The board explained the position to her. She has a good understanding of if and has worked with Stacey through her PTG work.
* Tammy Smith: Previously worked at Mohawk Tavern for several years until its closure last December. Tammy was drawn to this position because she has always enjoyed accounting and is interested in part-time work. She has previously worked for Carpinello’s and Williams College. Tammy described herself as a fast learner, not intimidated by computers, and she works good in a team environment. The board explained the position to Tammy. She is willing to work in the town hall on Wednesday evenings and is very flexible. She is not looking for any other positions and would stay until retirement.
* Daniel Tucker: Previously employed at Inland Management as a real estate accountant and was laid off last August. Has done accounting and clerk functions for the City of Pittsfield. Currently managing a rental property. Saw the position posted on Berkshire jobs and enjoys accounting work, does not live far from town hall and is available to work at town hall on Wednesday evenings. Daniel thrives in a team environment. The board explained the position to Daniel. Daniel asked the board about the current accountant and what challenges he would face early on. Learning the software would be the most challenge, which he has no issues with software. Tim questioned his familiarity with Chapter 30b procurement law. He is a little familiar with it and has reviewed the requirements of it.
* The board discussed their thoughts on the candidates.

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Selectboard (continued):

* Mike Bedini made a motion to hire Rebecca Choquette for the position of Town Accountant. Tim Zelazo seconded. Unanimous.
* Once Rebecca has accepted the position, Joan will contact the other candidates and let them know. Their names will be kept on file should any position open in the future.
* Mike Bedini made a motion to accept the minutes from the meeting of February 26, 2025, with one correction: The estimated damage to the FD building should be $5987.95. Tim Zelazo seconded. Unanimous.
* The discussion on the replacement of the fence has been tabled until someone from the Bohl family attends the meeting.
* Some contractors will be in touch with Jim to give him an estimate for the FD building damage. If no other estimates are received by the next selectboard meeting the board will contact Tony Arigoni to do the job so it can be added to his schedule for spring.
* McLain has not had time to submit a quote for adding the Assessor’s office to their estimate for wiring work.
* Tim updated the other members of the board on the MVP and HMP Core Team Meeting. On Saturday, March 15, 2025, there will be a presentation at the Senior Center from 10am to 2pm. Joan will be setting up hors d'oeuvres. May 10, 2025, the preparedness plan will be presented.
* Brett Roberts from the Housing Rehabilitation Program Grant updated the board on the progress. The application with Hinsdale is moving forward. It is an interlocal agreement, with Hinsdale handling most of the responsibilities and taking on the burden of the grant. This is an income driven program with 0% interest deferred and is a forgivable loan after 15 years. There should be 7 homes done in Hinsdale and 5 in Florida for a total of 12. There could be the possibility of doing as many as 15 homes, depending upon the costs and final budget. This is first come first served. Each town has their own waitlist, and this is a federally funded program. A public meeting will be held at the start of the selectboard meeting on March 26, 2025, for residents to come and hear the information.

Diana Worth, Dog Officer:

* Gillies Law passed into effect last December. This means anyone who has five (or more) dogs must purchase a kennel license and can no longer get five individual dog licenses from the town. The ACO must inspect where the dogs are kept before a kennel license can be issued. The rate is up to the town.

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Jim White, Highway Department Superintendent:

* Worked on snow, rain and flooding issues as well as filling some potholes.
* Cleaned up downed trees
* The Roger Utility Tilt Trailer needs class A license to tow.
* The highway employee who was out has submitted clearance from their doctor to return to work.
* Approximately $80,500 left in the snow budget.
* Woodchipper broke down and has been brought in for service.
* Jim will call National Grid about a few trees.
* The sign at the senior center blew down and needs to be repaired.

Joan Lewis, Town Administrator:

* Caucus on Friday at the Senior Center at 7pm.
* Scott Kirchner is working on the website to make it more user friendly.
* The attorney is still reviewing the personnel policies.
* Will cancel the accountant position help wanted ad.
* Dave Fierro will no longer be working with the town on accounting work, however his assistant, Sharon, will be asked to stay on. The funding budgeted for Dave will be set aside for Sharon.

Public Comment: None

Mike Bedini made a motion to adjourn at 7:08 pm. Tim Zelazo seconded. Unanimous.