**Selectmen’s Public Meeting Minutes**

**October 17, 2022**

**7:00 PM** Meeting called to order by Selectmen Chairman John **Quinlan.** Also present was Selectman Jack **Esposito,** Selectman Howard **Brown** and minute taker, Joan Cleary. The Board reviewed the minutes of October 3, 2022. **Esposito** motioned to accept the minutes of 10/3/22 as written seconded by **Brown.** All in favor. The Board reviewed the minutes of 10/5/22. **Esposito** motioned to accept the minutes as written seconded by **Brown.** All in favor.

The Board discussed the COLA rate for 2023 which came in at 8.7%. Last year the COLA was 5.8%; the Board rounded up to 6%. **Esposito** motioned to set the COLA at 9% for 2023 seconded by **Brown.** All in favor.

The Board discussed the audio-visual equipment needed for the Meeting Room. **Brown** Feels we should find out what we can do with the funds we have put aside this year. He also feels we need to pursue upgrading the Wi-Fi service with Comcast.He wants to know why we are getting charged so much more for a business plan when we are basically using a residential plan. All of our departments are paying a different price; we should be able to bundle it all together and hopefully save some money.

**Brown** motioned to reappoint Charlie Schuessler to the ZBA for three years through 2025 seconded by **Esposito.** All in favor.

**Esposito** discussed the SRLD meeting he attended last week. The budget for 2023 will have a major increase due to fuel cost increases and recycling falling apart. We are now paying to get rid of our recycling.

**Quinlan** discussed the Planning Board meeting he attended last week. They are considering modifying our current Accessory Dwelling Unit regulations. They are reviewing regulations from the surrounding towns. The main question is whether they have to be attached or detached as well as their dimensions in relation to the main building. There was also discussion about revamping more of our regulations; some of our land use ordinances are badly out of date and need to be realigned. **Brown** feels that solar power needs to be identified and guidelines set in terms of where you can put it and how it can be attached to your property.

**7:15 PM Department Head Meeting**

**Chief Jay Wilson – Fire Department**

* Things are running properly right now; they will be out in town doing training over the next couple of weeks including hose testing in conjunction with New Boston.
* Budget Has been submitted. There is a significant increase to the maintenance budget due to the increase in fuel costs.
* **Quinlan** noted that he appreciated the recommendations given regarding the new library project. They have been passed on to the architects.

**Sgt. Aaron Daigneault – Police Department**

* The water pump on the 2018 cruiser blew; the vehicle is in the shop being repaired.
* The Souhegan High School Golf Team won the state championship on 10/11. The PD escorted them up from the Amherst Village green up thru Main Street to Blood Road. They hope to get a flag to raise for when these events happen like they do in Amherst.
* The latest quarterly newsletter is on the website.
* They are waiting on the 2022 Explorer; Joan secured the financing.
* They are working to put a grant together for new portable radios and a ballistic shield for active shooter situations and additional funding for the body worn cameras.
* In September they received $1,885 from the DOJ grant for bullet proof vests.
* They are participating in the DEA’s Drug Kickback Day on 10/29 from 10:00-2:00.
* Officer Johnson is in week 12 of the full-time academy and is currently scheduled for graduation on November 18th.

**Ben Crosby – Highway Department**

* The paving and shoulder gravel is complete.
* The library walkway has been repaved.
* Fall grading is underway; when complete they will change gears and start outfitting all the trucks with the plow frames. Will start hauling in winter sand next week.
* Rode with **Quinlan** last week to look at a couple of bridges that Hanson Bridge Co has done in the area. They were pleased with what they saw for finished product. They are wood and steel, 60% of the cost of steel and guaranteed for 50+ years.
* He has had no luck getting in touch with the state re clearing the brush on both sides of Amherst Road. A local resident reached out to the state and was told that they’re short-handed and may not get to it. Crosby recommends sending a letter from the Town Hall and all public safety departments to try to push them to get it done.

**Bonnie Angulas – Library Director**

* Thank you to the DPW for the new walkway.
* Library Trustees has seated a Library Building Committee. The Committee voting members include Bill McKinney, Charlie York and Christine Hamilton. The consulting members are Anne Dodd and Jill Weber from the Daland Trust, Cindy Raspiller from the Library Trustees, Bonnie Angulas from the staff and John Quinlan as a Selectmen’s Rep. The committee traveled to Concord MA to meet with the team at DSK to see a preview of the preliminary final design documents. They are tasked with developing the RFP for distribution to construction firms in early November.
* Friends of the Library had their book sale on 10/1 at the MVVS in the MPR. All funds go back to the library for programs. They just voted thru $600 to support Halloween this year. The Friends volunteers will do their annual Halloween toy handout instead of treats.
* There is a new story walk at Carleton Pond called Pick a Pumpkin.
* The library budget will be voted on tomorrow night.

**Heather Kennedy- Recreation Department**

* Candy collection has begun. Donations seem a little lower than in past years. McCollom has not been a good source and the library seems low. The General Store and MVVS seem to be on track. Candy distribution will happen on 10/23/ & 10/29. Volunteer signup is on the town website, MV Flyer and on Facebook. Houses in the village who would like candy also have a link to follow to complete a brief form regarding candy needs. They will follow up with a door to door notice later in the week. A new map will be created. Halloween night will have trick-or-treating, ghosts on the green and a pumpkin carving contest. The MVVS teachers will pass out candy at the gazebo; the Fire Dep, Police Dept. and Friends of the Library will take part too. The bee hive will also be in operation at the cemetery.
* Tree Lighting is set for Saturday, December 10th tentatively at 5:30pm. The SHS chorus will sing. The plan is for a mostly outdoor event. Recommendations for Honorary Tree Lighter can be sent via email.
* She represented the Town of Mont Vernon and Recreation Dept. at the MVVS Kindergarten lunch day last week as well as the first day of school welcome last month.
* The ski program with Crotched Mountain is happening again this year. Information will be coming out later this month.

**7:35 PM Esposito** noted that we need to appoint a new Deputy Tax Collector. Joan will ask the Tax Collector if she has a preference as to who she wants to work with and if so, she can give us her recommendation.

The Building Inspector joined the meeting via Zoom to discuss the ongoing situation on Weston Hill Road. The letter sent in June gave the residents 120-days to comply with the deficiency list provided by the Building Inspector. That time expires on Thursday of this week. Roberge feels the next step would be another letter to them telling them they are in violation of the zoning laws. He reviewed the NH Govt. website on Code Enforcement. It spells out the steps the town should take as the second dwelling on the property is being occupied. We need to follow the law and start the process by sending a land use citation. He feels we should talk with Town Counsel first as the next step appears to be litigation. **Quinlan** will contact Town Counsel tomorrow for further guidance and will get back to the Building Inspector.

**8:00PM** As there was no further business before the Board **Esposito** motioned to adjourn seconded by **Brown.** All in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan Cleary