Selectmen’s Meeting Minutes

**February 13, 2023**

**7:00 PM Quinlan** called the meeting to order. Also in attendance was Selectman Jack **Esposito** and Selectman Howard **Brown.**

Amy Wyman came before the Board because she is concerned with some of **Esposito’s** comments from the January 30th meeting about the size of the proposed library. She asked if **Esposito** has read the Needs Assessment that was done. He stated that he has read it. She said it was created for the Library Trustees by a professional library building consultant. She feels it is important for **Esposito** to understand that when he makes comments concerning the size of the library, she feels he comes across as misinformed. **Esposito** replied that he is not misinformed. She feels it is important for **Esposito** and other people in town to understand that the library is already operating at a significant deficit and that’s based on the population of the town and the size of the current collection of books that they have in the library. According to the assessment, the current deficiency of space is roughly -2,039 sq. ft. The idea of building a new library is to have room to grow so that we can assure we’ve got something that will last and thrive well into the future. Many people have referred to the new building as Mont Vernon’s new library for the next 100 years. When **Esposito** says things like “7,000 sq. ft. is too big”, it makes her wonder if what he is not taking into account is the current building codes for ADA compliance. She respectfully requests that **Esposito** read the assessment again this week. She would love to sit down with him next week and talk about it. She wants to make sure that he really understands where they are coming from with what they’re asking for the library. **Esposito** said he knows exactly what they are asking for; come to the next meeting on Monday night. Wyman said she’d rather meet with him, person to person, to sit and talk about the library. She said she hopes she hasn’t offended **Esposito.** He responded that she did not offend him; he stands by what he said. He could agree with 4,000 sq. ft. more or less. The point is that 7,600 sq. ft. and an almost 6.5-million-dollar project is something the town cannot afford. You’re over a dollar on the tax rate before you even get started, plus the school, plus the town budget. How are people going to afford this? We have about 950 families in town; that’s a big nut for a small town. We cannot afford this big building at this point.

The Board reviewed the minutes of 2/6/23. **Esposito** motioned to accept the minutes of 2/6/23 as amended seconded by **Brown.** All in favor.

**7:17PM Department Head Meeting**

**Chief Mark Slavin – Police Department**

* In the final phase of the background investigation for the new PTO. The goal is to swear him in at the next Dept. Head meeting in March. He will then attend the July part-time academy. This will bring us up to 5 part-time officers.
* Today they drove a 2nd grader to school in one of the cruisers. He won the ride as part of a fund raiser for selling popcorn with his cub scout pack. He got to play with the lights and siren; he had a fun time.
* The new cruiser is in the final stages of being built.
* The Records Room is almost complete. They had 40-50 years of records in the basement he had to go through year by year to purge out what’s not needed. He’s been doing so for about 6 months; he has 3 years left.
* Spoke with a rep from 211 about their services. They have everything from legal assistance, peer mentoring, parenting programs, etc. In the past few weeks, we’ve already used them for legal services for somebody, assistance for someone that has dementia, assistance finding housing for someone that was kicked out of their residence and family support services for someone. It’s a great service; once we have our meeting with them, we will start advertising more so the public is made aware of the services available.

**Chief Jay Wilson – Fire Department**

* Waiting on the mechanics to come in and start the yearly service on all vehicles.
* As of 3/21/23, Sgt. Daigneault will be appointed as the MACC Base Rep when Chief Wilson steps down. Still the issue of getting the convergent over at the Fire Station of a MACC Base radio to the new high band frequency at the Fire Dept. The cost of this is $1541.00. Milford wants us to use the surplus coming back to the town to pay for this and Wilson’s response was no. They don’t have the authority to expend that; our Select board does. This is MACC Base equipment; not Mont Vernon Equipment. Wilson doesn’t feel the surplus should be used at all. It is MACC Base’s responsibility; this has been discussed for the past 4-5 months. The Board agrees it is a MACC Base issue. **Brown** motioned for Daigneault to succeed Jay as the MV Rep to the MACC Base BOG seconded by **Esposito.** All in favor.

**Bonnie Angulas – Library Director**

* Library Trustees received four competitive bids for the new library project. They conducted interviews with the help of the Library Building Committee, voted and awarded the project to Turnstone Corp out of Milford, NH.
* A proposed warrant article was submitted to the Selectmen and will be reviewed tomorrow with the Budget Committee. The Library Trustees will be looking for unanimous support of the project based on the effort and success of the fundraising. A lot of work has been done on the part of the Foundation to get to the less than 50% ask of the taxpayer. **Esposito** says we can’t afford it; she feels we can’t afford not to look at this opportunity. She is asking for the support of the full Board. They will be having a public input session on Thursday, March 2nd at the MVVS MPR. That gives everyone in the Mont Vernon community to come and ask questions, comments and concerns. She’s hoping to have the bond rate by that night so they can state exactly what the amount will be. **Esposito** stated that we won’t have bond rates until July. They are estimating 5%. The architects will be there to answer questions. Turnstone Corp will be there as well as the Library Building Committee, the Foundation and the Library Trustees.
* The library is hosting a meet and greet at the library on Saturday, Feb. 25th from 9-10am for Meet the Candidates. Come for coffee and doughnuts and meet the public.
* The winter session of Lap Sit & Story Time sponsored by a grant form Greater Nashua Smart Start Coalition is coming to an end on March 2nd. They are hosting a finale event with a puppet show. All the children in the community are invited. The grant rep will be there that day so they are hoping to have a good showing so they can meet the children of Mont Vernon.
* Senator Ricciardi was invited to the library. She had an idea to raise more money for the library through gambling income that has to be distributed to non-profits so we qualify for that and with her help we could potentially be put higher on the list.

**Ben Crosby – Highway Director**

* The adjuster came out to assess the damage to the 2007 Int. door damage. They will be cutting a check to the town minus the deductible so that we can get the repairs done. The truck door needs to be replaced; there was no damage done to the building.
* Crosby is looking at options for the trailer at the Transfer Station; whether another trailer or stick built.

**Heather Kennedy – Recreation Director**

Kennedy was absent; Cleary read her report into the minutes:

* Crochet Mtn Ski Program is about halfway done. Two weather situations prompted some cancellations and rescheduling. So far, they’ve been able to provide the 18 children in the program rescheduling options.
* Trail Cleanup – Planning a trail cleanup day in March with the Lamson Farm Comm. Hoping to include the Conservation Commission. All members of the community are welcome to take part.
* January & February meetings have been focused of preparing for Egg Hunt in April and Spring Gala in May.
* Kennedy may attend a NH Parks & Rec social in March to forge stronger local rec connections.
* Early morning exercise program continues to meet 3 times a week.
* David Brooks is trying to move the Flyer solely to the town website starting next month, which will save Rec a few dollars in the budget.

**7:35 PM** The Board went over Town Counsels review of the 2023 Warrant Articles. Joan will call the NHMBB to see if we can combine three bonds into one after the Town Meeting vote.

The MVVS PTA is looking into having a clothing drive with Eco Smith Recyclers out of New Boston in April. They want to put a trailer in the parking lot for two weeks. Jay Wilson recommends that they put it in the far-right corner on the corner of Pinkham Ave. The Board agreed.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Joan Cleary