**Selectmen’s Meeting Minutes**

**May 15, 2023**

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

The Board discussed a broken water line under Main Street from when the fire house was built. The people at 1 North Main are showing their house and do not want the yard ripped up while doing so.

Recreation Director Heather Kennedy announced that Jack Esposito has been nominated and has accepted to be the Grand Marshall at this year’s Spring Gala. We will honor him in the parade on Saturday.

The Board reviewed the minutes of 5/1/23. **Esposito** motioned to accept the minutes of 5/1/23 as written seconded by **Brown.** Two in favor; one abstention.

The Board reviewed the public minutes of 5/8/23. **Esposito** motioned to accept the public minutes of 5/8/23 as amended seconded by **Brown.** All in favor.

The Board reviewed the non-public minutes of 5/8/23. **Esposito** motioned to accept the non-public minutes of 5/8/23 as amended seconded by **Brown.** All in favor.

The Board discussed the installation of cameras in the Town Hall. We need coverage of the parking lot, front and back doors, lobby and inside the office.

Chief Slavin notified the Board that the new cruiser will be delivered Thursday.

The Board discussed the closing of Amherst Road while the Town of Amherst does their culvert repairs.

The Board discussed the ongoing situation on Weston Hill Road.

The Board went over three draft policies concerning payroll/expense reimbursement, OT & compensatory time and Town Building use policy and procedures. **Quinlan** spoke with NHMA and another lawyer on the last one. He is still collecting information on this one as to exactly what we can and cannot do, or should or should not do. He understands banning religious organizations because there is supposed to be a complete and total separation of church and state. As for political organizations, as long as it’s a meeting and not electioneering, he makes the distinction. **Esposito** does not make the distinction. **Quinlan** wants to make sure that whatever we do is legal and defendable. **Esposito** stated that we have never allowed it; we’ve always stayed neutral which he has noted many times. If you go online and take a look at the recognized political organizations in the US today, it’s staggering. If you allow one, you have to allow the rest. If you deny one, you can deny everybody. Also, we are not covered by insurance if a third party uses a town facility. Our employees and town committees/commissions are covered, but third parties are not covered. In today’s political world with what’s going on, you never know and it leaves us wide open to a major lawsuit. The town buildings are owned by the town and the people in the town. **Brown** argued that those third parties are town people. **Esposito** stated that the Mont Vernon Democratic party is a third party and not covered. This came from both Primex and Town Counsel. **Quinlan** said that until we get definitive answers, he’s not ready to make a decision. At that time, we will have to have a public hearing on it to have a bigger discussion and then the Board will make a decision. **Esposito** brought up the fact that the library is trying to build a new building. Now all of a sudden, now everybody would love to have their meetings up there. You don’t know who is going to come out of the woodwork demanding to have their meetings. Zoe Fimbel suggested that the political groups could be told that they cannot meet in town buildings but we have a school that is readily available. That would be so simple and that way you’re not stepping on anyone’s toes. There’s plenty of space there and ample parking.

**Quinlan** feels we need to also focus on the revision of the Employee Handbook and our personnel. We need to move away from letting the Directors of the departments run everything without any paperwork backup. He’d like us to see every employee in the town get an evaluation on a regular basis. It’s good for both management and the employees.

Cleary mentioned that we have an employee inquiring about paternity leave. We have nothing in our handbook; we don’t even have a maternity leave policy. We will research further.

**Quinlan** attended the CC meeting last week. The Library Building Committee was there as well as the DPW. Discussion was had about the library project and the pond project. The impression he got was that all these different groups run and do their own thing a little bit too much. There is not much communication between these groups; sometimes little things become big misunderstandings from lack of communication. We need to correct that. That parcel was purchased 25 years ago for a new library and new cemetery. We should start coordinating meetings every few months between the BOS and the Library, CC and Cemetery Trustees so we can iron out any questions or concerns about what the other one is doing. It was clear if you were listening. The CC had certain ideas about what the Library was doing; the Library had certain ideas about what the CC was doing – and they were both wrong. The time has come for these projects to start coming to fruition. As Selectmen we are the leadership of the Town; at the very least we need to coach them and keep an eye to make sure they keep moving forward. Cleary will invite the Library, CC and Cemetery to the June 5th meeting.

**Esposito** revisited putting together a memorial park of sorts. The Heritage Comm. & Beautification Comm. have discussed doing a brick walkway on the side of the Town Hall near where we have Tree Lighting.

**Quinlan** discussed towns having the option of going from a calendar year to a fiscal year. He thinks it’s something we should look into further; we could then have Town Election and Town Meeting in May when the weather is better. Eileen Naber spoke with the Town of Amherst. When they changed to a fiscal year, they had to collect five months’ worth of property taxes from the taxpayers to put into escrow in order to do so. Also, they still vote in March.

**8:10 PM** As there was nothing further before the Board **Esposito** motioned to adjourn seconded by **Brown.** All in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan Cleary