

Selectmen's Meeting Minutes April 1, 2019

7:00 pm Meeting called to order by Chairman Jack Esposito. Also in attendance were Selectmen Kim Roberge and Tim Berry.

Residents, Matheau and Jessica Goonan came before the Board to ask that interest and penalties be removed from their December tax bill. They bought the property just after the bill was mailed to the old owner. The old owner did not pay the bill, then finally sent it back explaining that he did not own the property. The Goonans got the bill very late, and believe that half of it does belong to the old owner since it came out of current use before the June bill was figured, but the assessed value did not reflect that on the June bill. They will pay the bill and go after the old owner for his share. Board agreed to remove the interest and penalty.

Salisbury Road resident, Mike Cardoza came before the Board to discuss the appalling condition of Salisbury Road during this year's mud season. According to Cardoza, a previous Highway Director ruined the road by grading out the crown and removing too much material. The water now has no where to go but the middle of the road. It needs to be built up about a foot with good base material. It needs to be fixed and fixed right and it also needs to be widened.

He went on social media to see if there would be any support in Town for paving the road.

As upset as he was regarding the condition of the road, he was infinitely more upset over the comments of a Town board chairman. Cardoza feels that it was very inappropriate for this Town official to respond in such a manner.

Esposito explained that the DPW Director is in the process of getting estimates for having Salisbury Road paved. He said that he understands Cardoza's problem, and of course a paved road is less expensive to maintain.

Berry asked if the grade of the road was built up and culverts put in, you would be happy?

Cardoza said yes, that would be better than what we have now if it can't be paved.

Roberge said that the Board has asked Crosby to re-prioritize the road projects for the year. Both Hazen and Upper Brook were built up several years ago.

Berry said that 2018 was the wettest year in years – the water has no place to go.

Esposito said that the first thing to do is to get the culverts in.

Cardoza said that he had come in last week but figured he was too angry to speak so he left. He said he is not quite as angry now. He also said that he would like to volunteer for the Building Renovation Committee. The Board thanked him.

7:30 PM

- Board reviewed and signed checks and manifest.
- Board reviewed and signed 3 Intents to Cut, signed 5 Land Use Change Tax bills.
- Board reviewed and signed an application for the Veterans Credit, and one for an Elderly exemption.
- Board reviewed and Berry signed new signature cards for the General Fund and Payroll Account.
- Board read a letter from Fire Chief Wilson asking the Board to hold off on making a decision on the distribution of the MACC found surplus money.
- Board read a letter from a concerned citizen of New York regarding the placement of solar traffic lights in town. Office will respond.
- Board reviewed last weeks minutes. Roberge motioned, seconded by Berry to accept the minutes of March 25, 2019 as amended.

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Roberge let the Board know that she attended the Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans ceremony at the War Memorial last Thursday night. It went well – Gary Dwyer did a nice job and also told a bit of his own story.

Esposito said that we have to do something about Salisbury Road.

Roberge re-stated that we have to reassess our projects this year.

Esposito mentioned that Crosby said that Leighton-White could haul the gravel in and roll it.

Berry asked if our guys would install the culverts and was told yes.

Berry brought up the quote for the two failed doors on the Town Hall. His quote includes fiberglass doors with wood grain, and the furnace room door is a 20-minute fire door. With all hardware, the quote is \$1,962.16.

Roberge asked if the crash door in the meeting room had pvc around it to combat the water splashing up on it.

Berry said no. He also said that the sill will need to be replaced at least 2' out on each side of the door.

Roberge offered that she has 3 people in mind to bid on installing the door, and one of them may bid on installing the windows in the McCollom Building. Roberge has been waiting on a quote to fix the chimneys on the McCollom Building and the Town Hall. The guy she had lined up did come look at the job and begged off saying that he doesn't go that high any more. He did give her another name to contact. He wants the Board to consider the historical aspects of the chimneys. If we should keep them all or take down the ones not being used. The Town Hall chimneys are aesthetically pleasing, not so much on the McCollom. The updated price of the McCollom windows is \$59,020 +/-, with French Vanilla exterior and the interior primed. She asked for a price for having the interior painted as well and was told to add \$9,000 to the quote.

Berry thinks that we should buy them painted.

Esposito asked if we have an estimate to install them.

Roberge said yes (\$13,000) but it was from a different window supplier. She believes Brian Knowlton will bid on the installation. We need to double check the measurements.

Berry we have to do that.

Esposito asked if the factory people would do the measuring as we don't want to be responsible for that.

Berry said that they do not want to do that either.

Roberge said that Marvin came out, measured the windows and gave us a quote. That is the measurements we used for the Jeld-wen quote.

Berry said that the person you hire to install the windows should be willing to measure for them also.

Roberge said that the Building Inspector in Mont Vernon used to install Marvin windows and is very familiar with measuring them.

Esposito stated that we need to "get it right".

8:00 PM Brown would like to have Joan Cleary become a second Notary in the office so that there will be a notary in residence at all times. Board agreed.

Berry related that he has spoken with Eversource regarding replacing the street lights with LED units to save energy. He got a list of all 33 street lights and got a name of the contractor that replaced all of the lights in Merrimack. Unfortunately, Eversource could not tell us how much we would save, but did say that they would give us a rebate of \$100/light. He is working with someone else to get the cost for replacement and hopefully an idea of energy savings. We have incandescent lights from 1947.

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8:10 PM The Town Clerk, Belinda Yeaton, came in at the request of the Board.

Esposito asked what was going on between her and the Chairman of the Supervisors of the Checklist and stated that the Board has spent a lot of time on this.

Yeaton said that she had texted only Peter – they were in the office having a meeting that they never notified me about. It was ok because we were open. Kristen was there. I asked her to have them sign the book – I don't use it to pay them, just for budgeting. They signed into the book starting in 2004 and abruptly stopped in 2017.

I don't know why they stopped. Peter laughed and said that they weren't turning in their hours until the end of the year. That is when I texted him and said that we have to figure this out.

Berry asked why she wants their hours.

Yeaton said that she has to set the budget for their hours. They want to turn their hours in at the end of the year, but my budget has to be in before that.

Berry presumed that they turn in their hours after the last election.

Yeaton said "No, they still have meetings after that – they are trying to clean up the checklist.

Berry asked why we can't ask them to turn in their hours before Belinda has to do the budget?

Yeaton said that we can, but why can't they just sign the book like they used to?

Roberge asked why? They are elected officials, is there a governing body over them?

Yeaton said that there is no Town governing body over them.

Roberge then if we need to know when they are over there from a liability standpoint, I am all over it, but it doesn't have to be the book.

Berry said that obviously they don't want to give you their hours in that book anymore. Why can't we figure out how to get you the information you need to do the budget? We could forget about the book and ask them to give you their hours in a more timely fashion.

Yeaton said that we can but one of them refuses to do anything, whether you tell him to do something or I do. Esposito asked why can't you set a policy that they have to get you their hours by October 1? You have to work it out with them.

Yeaton had no problem with that.

Roberge said that she was under the impression that Yeaton only needed to be notified if they were going to be in the office after hours and asked if that was the case.

Yeaton that would be fine, except that their meeting was scheduled for the day before when the office was closed. It was because someone was sick that it got moved to the next day when we were open.

Roberge said as long as they do it

Yeaton: but they don't. Period. They do not tell me.

Roberge but it is ok as long as they are doing it when the office is open or notifying you when they are going to be there?

Yeaton said not any more. They can only come when we are open now. Period. Now it's only when I'm open. I am open 4 times per week – they can find a way to be there. The Secretary of State's Office says I have to allow them access to these files.

Roberge asked if we can now return the lock?

Yeaton said yes, it hadn't even been opened.

Roberge said that until they come to us to have some sort of discussion, that is what we can try to do.

Esposito asked if they are aware that they have to come when you are open?

Yeaton said not yet, but they will be. They have already set up another meeting, published it and not told me about it. They sent out all of their 30-day letters that they will be meeting on the 23rd of April.

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Roberge said that she believes our agreement from the last discussion that as long as they are notifying you and we put the lock on that it would be ok.

Yeaton: But they are not notifying me – that's the thing. They are not, period.

Roberge: But they haven't had a meeting yet.

Yeaton: They've had two.

Berry: They showed up while you were working totally unannounced, you didn't know they were coming?

Yeaton: Kristen knew they were coming the day before. One of them came in and told her the night before that they had to cancel their meeting and were going to have it the next night. I have never ever received an email saying that they were having a meeting.

Berry asked if it was a night that Kristen was supposed to be there.

Yeaton said yes.

Roberge: When is the other time they didn't notify you?

Yeaton: They've had another meeting there that they told me about after. Now they have scheduled the meeting for the 23rd, on a Tuesday night that they haven't told be about.

Esposito: how long do their meetings last?

Yeaton: Not very long maybe an hour or two.

Esposito: This has been going on for a while now, lets get it straightened out once and for all.

Yeaton: I thought we had.

Roberge: I like the idea of the guideline that you are looking for their hours by October 1st for budgeting purposes. I also like the other thing that if they are looking to have a meeting that is a night where the office is not open that they have to give you 10- or 20- day notice.

Yeaton: They cannot – they can only meet when the office is open that is the guideline.

Roberge: But that isn't what we all agreed to when we sat here together.

Yeaton: But that is what I'm saying now. They couldn't follow the rules when we set them, so now, I've changed my mind. I am not moving all my paperwork every day in case they want to come in. Now they can show up when I'm open.

Esposito: Are they aware of that?

Yeaton: They will be.

Berry: When are you going to make them aware of it? We don't want you to be as uncommunicative as you say they are.

Esposito: Obviously the meeting for April 23rd is published, they have to be there, so start May 1st with your new rules. You pointed out to me all the paperwork that is left out – it's quite a bit.

Roberge said that the Board was discussing a couple of things beyond this. Communication to or from the Town Clerk and any other Town official, employee or volunteer must not be via text. You must use email so that there is a paper trail.

Yeaton: You will notify Peter of this right? That is how he tries to contact me.

Esposito: Under the Right-to-Know there has to be a paper trail.

Roberge said the other thing is the use of time cards. So, whether or not it is a stipend or salary, there is a liability of someone being in the building and so we need accurate hours of when you are in the building. Whether you submit accurate hours of work to help in the budgeting process or not is up to you, but when you or Kristen are in the building, we need accurate time to the minute.

Yeaton said that was fine.

Yeaton said that she will email all 3 of the Supervisors of the Check List tomorrow and cc the Selectmen.

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Board discussed having the Supervisors in next week.

Roberge said that it bothers her that we had a good solution and we just went back on it. She said that she is really not ok with the decision they just made of letting the Supervisors only having access when the office is open to the public. The Supervisors said that they discuss confidential information, and it shouldn't be in front of people waiting to register their car or dog. It puts some of that in jeopardy.

There was a discussion regarding Land Use Change Tax having the possibility of being missed. Brown explained how the assessors are working on having a flag come up when a building permit is pulled for a property in C/U. They have already instituted a flag for if a C/U property is sold.

8:30 PM Roberge asked if the Board was considering setting a policy regarding social media correspondence in light of what Mr. Cardoza had come in with. Weighing in on something that you have purview over is wrong.

Esposito said that the Chairman did not sign it as Chairman, just as an individual.

Roberge wants to set a Town policy for the use of social media and the Board agreed.

Esposito said, regarding the MACC surplus, that he would like to hold it here in Town until next year when we may need it to go with someone else for dispatch. He asked if that was possible.

Brown said that they could encumber the funds, but it would have to be very specific about the use and amount.

Roberge said that Fire Chief Wilson wants to update some equipment with MACC. I don't know if that is legal, I need Wilson or Jason Johnson to explain it to me. I don't know how we can take the \$20,000 and improve just our stuff.

Esposito said we need to sit back and wait to see what happens with Milford.

Roberge asked, if Milford plans to pull out – how would that work?

Esposito said that he doesn't believe that Milford would jeopardize their standing on their share of MACC.

Roberge offered that the Milford townspeople are up in arms because their attorney was at the deliberative session and zeroed out the money to build a communication center. Now the attorney is saying that they cannot use the money voted for a study because it changed the intent of the warrant article. There is a huge backlash now from the townspeople.

Esposito said that he drove around and looked at some of the properties that we sent Junk Yard letters to. He thinks we should wait until after mud season – maybe the 1st of May to take the next steps. Board agreed.

Roberge asked about the heat at the McCollom Building and was told that it has been fixed.

Esposito said regarding the letter promoting solar traffic lights, let Mr. Wolsey know that we appreciate the thought, but do not believe Mont Vernon needs any traffic lights yet.

9:00 pm As there was no further business before the Board, Berry motioned, seconded by Roberger to adjourn. All in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,
Laurie Brown