

## Selectmen's Meeting Minutes August 17, 2020

**7:00 PM** Meeting called to order by Selectboard Chairman, John Esposito. Also in attendance were Selectmen Kim Roberge and Tim Berry.

Esposito led the meeting in a moment of silence.

Board reviewed the minutes of 8/3/20. Berry motioned, seconded by Roberge to accept the August 3, 2020 minutes as amended. Roberge; yes, Berry; yes, Esposito; yes.

Roberge let the Board know that she was ok with the contract for replacing the streetlights.

Peter Ecklund asked if the speed limit sign that was on Route 13 was stolen and was told that it is a portable sign that has been moved to another location in Town.

Berry brought up the Hazard Duty pay for the Transfer Station employees again this week. He would like to give each of them \$100 for dealing directly with the public for 3 days a week. They have to deal with irate folks at times, and if it is not hazardous, it is at the least, unpleasant.

Berry motioned to award the two transfer station attendants \$100 each for their work during this COVID pandemic.

Roberge said that she was fine with that, although she wished that the State had included them in their hazard duty payout.

Roberge; yes, Berry; yes, Esposito; yes.

Angulas asked if it was going to be a \$100 bill in a card.

Roberge said it would be a check.

Brown said it will go through payroll.

### **7:17 PM Department Head Meeting**

#### **Bonnie Angulas – Library Director**

- The library is approaching Phase 3 of their re-opening plan: fully open, but only 3 patrons at a time, with masks. No public meetings. No public computer access because there is no way to separate it safely.
- Earle Rich is building a plexiglass shield for the library.
- We are collecting the necessary PPE to re-open.
- We will continue outdoor activities through September only.
- We will continue curbside pickup also.

The health of Mont Vernon Village School is critical; if numbers start to rise, or the Town numbers go up, we will slide back into Phase 2. Roberge asked when Phase 3 will be implemented.

Angulas said that it will be on September 8, 2020. The kids will be in school until 3:00 pm and we will go to the regular hours and old staffing. On-line learners will need services along with home-schooled students.

Esposito what if there are 5 members of the same family?

Angulas said that if there are already 2 patrons and a family of 5 comes, they will have to wait, if there is a family of 5, and they make an appointment, that is fine.

#### **Chief Kevin Furlong – Police Department**

- Finally got a build date on the new cruiser of August 10, 2020. Delivery would be the end of September/early October. Then it will go to be upfitted and be here the end of October.
- Kris Wolf is in his 2<sup>nd</sup> week of full-time employment.
- The tropical storm hit us pretty hard; there were lots of downed trees and road closures.
- In speaking with the Town Clerk and the Town Moderator regarding elections; Sturm asked for a police presence from 7:00 am to 7:00 pm. School is not in session those days.
- He is continuing to monitor the Governor's Commission reviewing law enforcement. They have discussed things like eliminating part-time officers, making P/T officers go to the full-time academy, and mandating body cameras.

Esposito asked if it looks like they will mandate the body cameras.

Furlong said that it does look like that, and the problem is not with buying the cameras, it is with the storage of the data; it can run \$10K – 15K per year for storage.

Roberge asked if they had set a date for the commission to un-convene.

Furlong said that the Governor is being very strict on deadlines – he will forward the dates to Roberge.

### Chief Jay Wilson – Fire Department

- Training on Batchelder Road
- Getting ready to do September vehicle inspections.

Roberge asked: From a usage standpoint, did you have enough PPE, and the right kind to respond to the forest fire the other day? Wilson said that they did.

Esposito asked Wilson to put on his Conservation Commission hat and tell him about the light and light pole for skating at Carleton Pond.

Wilson said that he is waiting to see what the light already on the pole will look like.

Berry said that he looked at the plans – there was a telephone pole with a light on it to be relocated so it was on the edge of the new parking area. Also, on the scope of work for the contractor was “Reinstall light pole”. I assumed that when you said you had a work order with Eversource, it was to reinstall the light and pole and run electricity to it and the aerator. It was on the plans and this work was not done. All I want is for the telephone pole with the light to be installed.

Wilson said that the light taken out was the one that was reversed – the one sitting there will be reinstalled with a timer. It will go by the kiosk that will be there. There was a budget overrun because of a miscalculation and funds need to be found. We will not go back to the taxpayers for more money. Trees need to be taken down – I don’t know when this will all happen, but I hope it will be before the frost.

Roberge said that this was on the plan and the CC said that they would not be coming back for more money – will the light be there before the time change?

Wilson said again that they would not be coming back for more money – that they would be working within their budget constraints.

Esposito said that he thought that when the pole went in, it would have the power for the light and the aerator.

Wilson explained that the light with the full pole will be installed very near the short pole that is in there.

Esposito said to shoot for late November; no one could skate last year.

Berry said that we have a contract with a company to replace the streetlights – don’t throw away the old light; we will need the arm.

We can talk about a timer at another time, we need to get Eversource to screw in the pole. I just want to get the pole in there.

Wilson said that the arm for the light will probably not be reusable as it is a drop-down style.

### Heather Kennedy – Recreation Director

- Lamson Farm Day has been cancelled and the commission voted not to hold any events through year end.
- Common Threads and Recreational Challenges will resume again in the fall.
- Have been brainstorming Halloween with JoAnn Kitchel who has a lot of great ideas. One of the ideas is a lighted Halloween Walk where the children would wear masks and have a kind of scavenger hunt or eye spy kind of activity. It would be one way only and they would get a treat bag with candy at the end. If things need to change because of Covid or the weather, we need to be flexible.

Angulas stated that we need to go with the health of the Town.

Furlong said that, while he appreciates that we want social events to move forward, the next 3 months are make or break. We have school opening and two elections. He doesn’t think we should host any type of social events of that magnitude. You are talking about extreme exposure. Everyone is trying to play it safe and focus on mandates and should not get on board planning any type of social events.

Kennedy asked if they should play it by ear, or cancel now.

Furlong said that you can’t really play it by ear, when we schedule 3-4 officers, we can’t really reschedule it.

Kitchel stated that an event like this takes a lot of preplanning. Could we continue to collect candy; we could deliver it to school or to the homes. We have 75 ladies that volunteer for this event to help with social distancing.

Furlong said that she was already talking about bringing 75 people together.

Kitchel said that no children would be going on to anyone’s property. We would like to get candy to the kids, if that is the only thing we do.

Furlong said that he would think about that and get back to her.

Esposito said that the Chief is right – it is only candy; maybe we should take a sabbatical this year.

Roberge feels that we should bring it back to the agenda on September 14<sup>th</sup>. We know that this Town can come together quickly to put something in place. Lots of schools will be open by then, I agree with the Chief. I am even worried about what I have to do at the polls on election day.

Kennedy said that they will revisit it again in September.

**Town Clerk, Belinda Yeaton** said that

- She has received the vote counting machine
- She is asking her Deputy to work more hours
- She is picking up all the PPE for the elections tomorrow.

Esposito asked her about the new side steps to her office.

Yeaton said that they are in, and they look good. At the polls there will be one-way traffic inside the school and curbside voting for anyone refusing to wear a mask.

Berry asked if the machine counts the absentee ballots and was told yes. The only thing it doesn't count is write-ins; they must be done by hand.

#### **Ben Crosby – DPW Director**

- Bob Sawyer had his surgery 2 weeks ago and is going to PT now. He is in good spirits.
- The steps at the Town Clerks office are in, and we put in a new gravel walkway.
- Would like to do some crack sealing in Town. Have a company that will do it for \$3800/day. Will probably need 2 – 3 days to do the 2 miles of road planned and the parking lots.
- Got a quote for fixing the side door to the Town Hall. Door slab and repair to frame \$680. He will reuse the existing jam and hardware. We will have to paint it. There is a \$50/hr charge for any additional carpenter work needed.

Esposito said that we have to get it done.

Berry asked about the stairs at the transfer station to get down to the compactor.

Crosby said that the stairs are not a high priority right now.

Berry told Crosby to put it into his budget next year.

- I'm still waiting on information for the Brook Rd. culvert permit; discussed with Chad Brannon. We need to get this squared away so that we can get bids.'

Berry asked if Crosby was all set with the engineering firm regarding the road work for the new library and cemetery.

Crosby said that the plans are at the Town Hall if you want to send letters with plans to certain companies.

Roberge feels that the Board needs to have some discussion with the Trustees.

Crosby said that he had met with Lou Springer and John Quinlan. The road will need to go approximately 400' beyond what the plans show. It will be approx. 1300' overall to where the cemetery gate will be. The Trustees keep asking what the cost will be. Using the extension of Purgatory Rd. as a guide, He estimated that the new road will cost \$300K - \$400K.

Angulas asked if this was the cost of a finished road.

Crosby said that he believes so, but actual contractors need to see the plans and the site to give an estimate.

Angulas said that the Trustees were proposing a phased road project.

Crosby said that it would make sense to leave it graves for 1.5 years. Do the base coat the second year and top coat the third year.

That way you can take care of any defects as you go.

Berry said that it is good to phase a road. A subdivision would be phased construction, but not the cost – that would have to be bonded up-front.

Angulas asked what the warrant article would look like.

Berry couldn't begin to answer that question.

Crosby offered that Amherst did this.

Angulas said that this all needs to be discussed between the Trustees and the Selectmen.

Esposito asked that the Board be kept in the loop.

#### **Chief Kevin Furlong – EMG MGT Director**

- Covid Stats: 279 active cases in NH, no active cases in Mont Vernon, only 2 active cases in all of the MACC communities.
- The distribution of PPE continues.
- Getting cloth masks donated for the employees to wear. The disposable masks are for the public visiting the buildings.
- Milford donated hand sanitizer, masks and a no-touch thermometer.
- Ordered the social distancing floor markers, and one-way signs for all of the buildings.
- The expectations for sanitization/cleaning of the building are not being met.

**8:30 PM Department Head meeting closed.**

Esposito said that the bids to re-shingle the Town Hall have been reviewed.

Berry motioned to accept the Conde Roofing and Construction bid of \$21,489, seconded by Roberge.

Roberge; yes, Berry; yes, Esposito; yes. The contract is in the office to be signed.

Esposito brought up the sale of the piece of property on Weston Hill Road taken in tax deed many years ago and said that he believes there will be enough money in the legal budget line to get started on this.

Berry asked how much was left in the legal line and what the estimated cost would be.

Brown said that the cost would be \$5000 to \$7500 for the attorney plus the cost of the advertisements and that there is approximately \$7500 left in the legal line.

Roberge said that this has been on the agenda for a while and we should move on it and that the money would likely not be all in this year.

Esposito said that the budget overall is tight – we should wait till closer to the end of the year.

Berry motioned, seconded by Roberge to move ahead on the sale of the Weston Hill property. Berry; yes, Roberge; yes, Esposito; yes.

Esposito asked Roberge where we stand on DEW, and the Town Hall renovation.

Roberge asked if they both got the email forwarded with the information from Matt at DEW, and said that we would be going in with the same price as we did last year – taking out the roof. DEW will host another meeting if we wanted them to.

Esposito agreed that he didn't see any glaring increases and that the 20-year bond rate is ridiculously low.

Roberge asked if the Board wants them to come in.

Esposito said yes.

Roberge asked when they should be put on the agenda.

Berry said the LCHIP grants will be awarded in late September and we will know the status of the windows.

Roberge wants them on the agenda for 9/28 or 10/5.

Esposito referred to the letter the Board received about 3 Bancroft Circle being sold with all kinds of mechanics liens on the property. This would be a civil matter and not under the Town's jurisdiction.

Roberge agreed and said that the Code Enforcer has nothing to do with this kind of issue and asked if the Town had a tax lien on this property and got no answer.

Esposito said that we don't know, for sure, that it is true since the Town is not notified by the courts when a mechanics lien is put onto a property.

Berry wants the office to reach out to the letter writer and tell him to contact the States Attorney General. Board agreed.

Esposito asked about the letter the Board sent to the owner of 66 Old Milford road regarding the violation of the Accessory Dwelling Unit regulations.

Brown said that he did call the office after receiving the letter and wants to talk to the Board.

Esposito told Brown to get him on the next agenda.

Esposito relayed that Crosby wants to hire a crack sealing company to do 2 miles of Town roads and maybe the parking lots. Crosby said there is money left in the block grant.

Roberge asked if this money has to be spent this year and was told; No.

Board agreed to the crack sealing.

Berry asked if we were all done with roadside mowing.

Crosby said yes, and that we didn't do any sweeping this year. There was not much to sweep and we got 3 weeks of mowing done for less than \$7000.

Berry thanked Crosby and Chief Furlong for getting the issue of trimming at the corner of Purgatory and Rte 13 taken care of.

Furlong said that the cleaning of Town buildings has been an issue lately. The Library and Town Clerk have complained about consistency and not being notified that the employee took a 2-week vacation. Then, under State guidelines, they must quarantine for two weeks when they get back. In this time of Covid, it is very important that there is consistency – we cannot go 4 weeks without being cleaned.

He stated there is problems with consistency, quality and communication. He added that the sanitization of the buildings is paramount and will give the office the name of a professional cleaning company that Milford uses. He added that this must be addressed urgently.

Angulas confirmed that she was not notified.

Berry asked if Covid funds would cover the cost of a professional company.

Furlong said that he doubted it since we have not been cleaning our buildings properly and that the Highway Garage should definitely be added to the list.

Angulas asked if there will be notification to the employee.

Furlong said it is the Town Office's responsibility to follow up, and this should be done in a private session.

Esposito said that he had gotten a call from the Pomeroy's who are asking for the Building Inspector to contact them as they have questions about how to fill out their building permit. He asked Roberge what was going on and to forward the information to the Building Inspector.

Roberge said that she doesn't understand why this is coming through a Selectmen's meeting; this isn't the place.

Esposito said that he was just asking her to relay the message to the Building Inspector.

Roberge said that she was not having this conversation in this forum.

Esposito asked how he was supposed to get information to the Building Inspector.

Roberge said: call, email but not in a Selectmen's meeting.

Esposito asked if the building permit for 92 Old Wilton Road was moving along ok.

Roberge asked Brown if there has been any further correspondence from their attorney.

Brown said that there has not been anything further.

Roberge said that she believes the agenda should be set by the Chairman on Tuesday. She said that the staff works 35 hours per week and that the secretaries should carry things forward to the draft agenda.

Roberge asked about the website and our electronic storage. She feels that a composition book recording cash in from the transfer station is not sufficient; that we should move away from the 4<sup>th</sup> grade and come into this century. It should be recorded in the computer on a spreadsheet. We have had some discussion on a couple of people that could help with the website. The secretaries should be looking into this right away.

Brown explained that the book is the "Original book of entry" and that is the way the auditors want to see it. They want to see it in our handwriting.

Roberge said that it should be put into a spreadsheet after it is recorded in the book.

Furlong said that there are companies that would do an independent audit over how we do things.

Berry said, regarding the website, we should hire someone with experience on municipal websites.

Roberge asked if the gap had been closed in the plexiglass in the Town Hall and was told; yes.

Esposito set Wednesday afternoon at 3:00PM to hold a non-public session to discuss a personnel item.

Roberge had to recuse herself and then said that she believes it is illegal to have a minute-taker in the meeting.

Brown will call legal to confirm.

**9:20 PM** As there was no further business before the Board, Berry motioned, seconded by Roberge to adjourn.  
All in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Laurie Brown