

Selectmen's Meeting Minutes September 21, 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 for Covid victims and the first responders dealing with it, also for the passing of Harry Salisbury.

Board reviewed the minutes of 8/31/20. Berry motioned seconded by Roberge to accept the minutes of August 31, 2020 as written. Roberge; yes, Berry; yes, Esposito; yes

Esposito asked the Board how they felt about Milford's BOS request for a meeting this coming Monday at 5:30 PM to discuss the MACC IMA, and how they feel about having the MACC BOG negotiate on our behalf. Milford does not plan to renew the IMA.

Roberge said that she sent a response to the other Board members agreeing with Wilton's BOS not to meet with the Milford Board unless Milford wants to start over from the 2018 IMA agreed upon with the Wilton BOS.

Berry said that they are the ones who are going to lose here; they will go to paying 100% - let them. It is two towns against one. Let the MACC Board of Governors negotiate.

Esposito agreed.

Berry offered that Jay Wilson said that the Milford Board doesn't want the GOG to negotiate.

Esposito said that they are bent on going by themselves. We should follow up on going with Amherst.

Roberge agreed and said that if Wilson or the BOG are in the mindset of changing the 2018 IMA let them come to us.

Esposito asked Highway Director, Ben Crosby, about the one-ton.

Crosby reminded the Board that the repairs will run +/- \$4000. If we get into it, it could escalate pretty quickly. I still have a party that would purchase the truck, plow and sander for \$5000. The two most viable prospects for replacement are to replace in kind, or get a Ram 5500. Pricing for cab and chassis would come in between \$46k and \$49K with \$91K to \$94K for the total build-out. Options would send the price up or down accordingly.

Esposito asked if there is anything wrong with the pick-up, we bought 3 years ago.

Crosby said no, and that the new 550 was a replacement and you kept the old one as a spare. It was a question whether we bring on another truck. It does do a lot of work for us.

Esposito said that he is on the fence. We know we are going to have to spend \$5000, if we end up spending \$6K or \$7K are we throwing good money into a diminishing return truck: I don't know if we need a "spare" truck so to speak.

Crosby said that if everyone is healthy and working, he would be in the new truck or the loader.

Berry said to sell the truck. We get \$5000 and also don't spend the \$5000 in the maintenance line. It isn't really a pick-up; it has a plow and sander. What would you do with the new truck, and how badly do you need a new one?

Crosby said that he would rate it a need of 8 or 9 on a scale of 10. I'd put a flat dump bed, stainless steel sander, front plow set up, and built in toolboxes.

Berry said it would be a multipurpose utility truck.

Roberge is in agreement with Esposito and Berry not to put any more money into a 16-year-old truck. It is a 2004/2005 and was replaced with a 2018. We got along many years with just one truck and the last 2 years had two trucks. I need to look at all your equipment and replacement expectancies. I'd like to see a spreadsheet on the overall picture. In the running of the DPW, I don't put that truck at an 8 or 9 need; more like a 6 or 7. I'd like to look at the larger picture on roads and everything else. What if you need a larger truck in 2 years – then we are paying for two vehicles at the same time. I need to see the whole picture.

Esposito explained that when one vehicle gets paid off, we buy another; it keeps taxes level. We do the same in the Police Department.

Crosby said that the loader is in the running for replacement.

Esposito feels we should sell this vehicle, then look at what needs replacing first.

Roberge wants to see the spreadsheet.

Esposito asked if any parts were compatible with a new truck and was told no.

Crosby said that he will put together a spreadsheet for the Board.

Roberge said that will allow them to shoot for a long-term plan. The plan can change. Maybe we need it in the budget to move forward.

Crosby said he would put it together for the Board.

Esposito said that there were two letters that need mailing: one for a camping trailer on the Frankestown Tnpk. and the other for the property on Old Milford Road.

Roberge said that she is ok with the letter written for the Turnpike property, as was Berry.

Brown said that the one for the Old Milford Road needs to be written.

Esposito let the Board know that the new cleaning company will start this Thursday and clean on Tuesdays thereafter.

Berry asked if they were unable to get into one of the buildings for some reason, would we be billed anyway.

Esposito said that the quote was per building, so no.

Esposito said that he received the email from Furlong regarding the webinar regarding Halloween. He is concerned that we have such a big group, if one person gets/has Covid we would effectively have to shut down the whole Town. I don't want that responsibility. Roberge said that she appreciates the thought that is going into this, but these are strange times and we can't be out there reminding everyone to stay 6 feet apart and to wear their masks. Something like that that is Town sanctioned goes against all State guidelines. Esposito said that he did contact Kitchel to see if they could come up with something for the kids, but it is something we just can't take a chance on.

Roberge agreed that it cannot go through as a Town sanctioned event.

Berry agreed that the Board cannot get involved in it. The plan that was presented is probably a safer plan than what will actually happen, but we, as a Town cannot bear that liability.

Berry explained that, a few weeks ago, he got a call from Lyndeborough's town administrator who said that the GOFERR grant was going to allow for emergency personnel's payroll to be reimbursed. Berry asked for proof and was sent the State guidelines that said that the Municipalities were able to make that decision. Police payroll was added to the latest request for reimbursement from GOFERR. Last week he got a letter from the Federal Government that said that they changed their minds, that the emergency personnel needed to be substantially involved in dealing with Covid to qualify. He then got the same news from the State. Also, from the State, that they are not giving any money to schools for PPE. The only way schools can get PPE is if the Town buys it for them and then gets reimbursed. Esposito said that Mont Vernon got everything filed on time and that it was typical of the government to demand something but not fund it.

Roberge let everyone know that MVVS still has zero cases of Covid and that Amherst Middle School has 1 case.

Berry asked how tax collection was going for the July 2020 bills.

Sue Leger, Tax Collector, said "Excellent. 96.6% of July tax bills have been collected. That is a total warrant of \$\$,060,597 and only \$136,673 still uncollected.

Berry asked how that compares to last year.

Leger said that it is right in line with prior years.

Berry asked if we have got any money from the foreclosure on Purgatory Road and was told not yet.

Roberge asked if there were any big amounts that are not usually on the unpaid list.

Leger said that you can look historically at the outstanding properties.

Roberge asked about new properties on the list.

Brown reminded the Board that they have some outstanding minutes to approve. Berry motioned, seconded by Esposito to approve the non-public minutes of August 19, 2020 as written. Berry; yes, Esposito; yes, Roberge recused herself from that meeting. They will hold off on sealing those minutes until they are sure it is proper to do so.

Esposito stated that Brown called the NHMA regarding a statement on working from home being inserted into the employee handbook and the recording of time while working from home. NHMA did not have any suggestions for wording for the handbook and said that it is important for all workers, not just those working from home to have an accurate recording of time worked. This includes signing in and out with times included.

Berry suggested using most of the Library's policy and add exactly how we want to see the time cards.

Roberge asked if we are looking to review because it is going to be an option, or just from a Covid perspective. Now that everything is in place when do we open the office? And why would we need a work from home policy?

Berry said that we never know when it will be necessary. We need to have a policy in writing so that their time cards show exactly when they were working. If you want to come down on someone because they are not doing what you want, you need a policy. We need to cover the employee and employer.

Esposito feels that everything is in place and the library is open. The side door is in stock now and Loucien Soucy will install it shortly.

Berry said that we need to notice the opening on the website, and on Facebook. How about 9/28?

Roberge asked if we were thinking 9:00 to noon, or what? We haven't discussed with the tax collector; we shouldn't open without talking to her.

Esposito asked Leger if she was ok with opening the office on 9/28.

Leger said yes, the traffic would be light.

Berry asked about public meetings.

Esposito said that we need to stick to Zoom for now.

Roberge said that we don't want to make people come to meetings that they are not comfortable with. There are still some safety issues. I think we should open, but for a limited time.

Berry understood her point, but said we want consistency in hours here. It should be the same schedule as usual 9:00 to 3:00; we should stay with that.

Roberge said that maybe 9:00 to noon and noon to 3:00 by appointment. We should give it some more thought and make the decision next Monday.

Berry said that he doesn't mind waiting till next Monday.

Roberge also feels that there might be too much traffic on Monday nights with the Selectmen's secretary, Building Inspector and Tax Collector all in at the same time.

Esposito said that at a certain point we are going to have to open up. The amount of traffic is not that much. Permits are most of the traffic so maybe we should change the night the Building Inspector is in.

Berry wants to hold off and not make the decision tonight.

Eileen Naber asked if the Building Inspector was in the office or by appointment.

Roberge explained that he was in the office two nights per month.

Naber asked if the Building Inspector could move around the corner to the Selectmen's meeting room.

Berry explained that it is the waiting room that has the restrictions.

Sean Mamone asked why the Emergency Management Director hasn't given this kind of guidance. Also, the new door should be covered by GOFERR money.

Esposito said that Furlong has been involved and all of the safety measures are in place.

Roberge asked Brown to let Milford BOS know that we are not interested in negotiating from the 2013 agreement and that we have tasked our MACC BOG representative that the BOIG should negotiate for us.

Mamone suggested that the Board watch last week's Milford Board meeting.

8:25 PM As there was no further business before the Board, Berry motioned seconded by Roberge to adjourn. Berry; yes, Roberge; yes, Esposito; yes.

Respectfully submitted,

Laurie M. Brown