

## Selectmen's Meeting Minutes September 28, 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 will review the minutes of 9/14/20 next week.

Board reviewed the minutes of 9/21/20. Roberge motioned, seconded by Berry to accept the minutes of September 21, 2020 as written. Roberge; yes, Berry; yes, Esposito; yes.

Esposito asked if either of the other Board members knew if we were supposed to announce at regular meetings who was in the room with us while we conduct meetings on Zoom.

Roberge said yes, we should be doing that for regular public meetings.

Berry said that we are probably supposed to.

Roberge said that she agrees that it should be done for non-public meetings, but wonders why for public.

Esposito listened into the Milford Board meeting tonight for the discussion about MACC. We have to come to some kind of agreement by December 31<sup>st</sup> or there will be no funds to continue. Milford Board wants a 2-year commitment, we want 5 years.

Roberge said that they should be negotiating on the 2018 agreement – not the 2013 IMA. I would consider staying with the current distribution of votes if Milford would agree to update the infrastructure. I, as a selectperson, would never recommend Mont Vernon becoming a customer of theirs.

Esposito stated that it was a smooth operation until a couple years ago. We looked into New Boston and Amherst and will have to get that going again. We did send a letter of intent to Amherst 4 – 5 months ago.

Roberge said that she likes keeping New Boston and Amherst open as options. We are aligned with Amherst in a number of ways; we have to think of cost and service.

Esposito said that we should send another letter to Amherst and asked Brown to look into it.

Esposito stated that we do not have a telecommuting policy and asked the other Board members for their input.

Berry said that he got the Daland Library's policy from the Library Director. Their policy is pretty brief and could be adapted for our use.

Berry said that if everyone had their copy, they could re-work it right now. Brown did not have a copy at hand and it was decided to work on it next week.

Roberge wanted the Board to mark up their copies and get them to the office so that everyone could see each other's changes.

Berry said that he has been doing this with the Heritage Commission and it very efficiently to edit the document during the Zoom meeting.

Esposito brought up the opening of the Town offices. He said that Joan and Laurie are ok with opening the Town Hall for the full day – everything is in place for the traffic to come in the front door and out the back door.'

Berry said that we have had the talk with the Emergency Management Director. The Town Clerk is not interested in opening her office until next year. We should have a further discussion with the Emergency Manager, Fire Chief, and a formal conversation with Town Clerk as to why she doesn't want to open.

Roberge agreed and said that she is concerned that opening Town Hall will have people thinking that the Town Clerk is open. She is also concerned that the Building Inspector, Tax Collector and Selectmen's Secretary are all in at the same time on Monday nights. She would like to reduce the number of residents coming into the Town Hall at one time as much as possible, especially when taxes are due in December, although it worked well in July.

Esposito said that he is not against opening the office; the Town Clerk says she won't open until the DMV opens. If you want to hold off, we can talk about that.

Berry asked if Brown could ask the Department Heads could join our Zoom meeting for a few minutes this coming Monday.

Esposito suggested moving the Department Head meeting to October 5 instead of on the 19<sup>th</sup> where it would normally be moved to because of the Columbus Day holiday. Board agreed. Brown to alert the department heads.

Esposito stated that the Board should go over the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter budget report on Monday also.

Brown will have a printed copy of the YTD budget at the office for pickup by the Board members. She did caution them that it will not be a full 3 quarters since the monthly bills do not come in until mid-month.

Esposito brought up office hours and staffing that was added to the agenda.

Roberge wanted to know about the two Fridays that the office was closed this summer and what the staffing situation is currently.

Esposito said that Joan Cleary continues to be in the office from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm, and that Brown will be back in the office Monday – Thursday mornings beginning tomorrow.

Esposito stated that the Board should not seal the non-public minutes of 8/19/2020, as there was nothing derogatory discussed regarding any personnel.

Roberge wants correspondence to be on the agenda; we have received multiple letters that should be included as agenda items. If items get forwarded to the Board during the week, they should still be on the agenda so that it gets mentioned in the meeting. Berry said we used to have a correspondence folder that was brought to the [in-person meetings. There was correspondence from Milford that I never got to see. Also, the information on COVID – we should get back to seeing that stuff. Esposito we can have a correspondence file that we each look at when we come in to sign the manifest. Brown said that not all the Selectmen sign the manifest. Roberge said that she agrees with that, except that some of that should be included in the meeting. All of the stuff forwarded from the office. Maybe we create a weekly folder. I don't always know who things are coming from.](#)

Esposito feels that if Roberge gets something that she feels should be on the agenda, she should add it when she gets the preliminary agenda.

Roberge said that we didn't include a letter from Chief Wilson regarding the way we run our meeting. This Board decided they weren't going to sponsor Halloween – did the Recreation Director or the Emergency Manager get notified of this?

Berry said that the Board did not make that request. You can't expect someone to do something you never asked of them. We all would agree that since the Selectmen's Secretary has been working from home, the communication has not been the same. She is coming back to work in the Town Hall and things will improve. We need to give her more direction; we can't fault her for not sending a letter we never asked her to send. We need to tighten up that way, and the staff needs to tighten up their communication with us. I'm not too concerned about it.

Roberge asked if Attorney Quinn was working on the sale of the Weston Hill property.

Brown said that she had sent Quinn an email asking what he needed to proceed, but hadn't heard back yet. She will follow up this week.

Roberge spoke of a problem that she feels is important. She would like the office to look into missing emails and emails that come in hours later than they are sent.

Esposito asked whose fault it is.

Roberge said that it may be Comcast, or our server. We need to make a phone call to find out.

Esposito agreed that we should address it.

Berry feels we need a new IT vendor.

Berry said that he wants to hear from the Conservation Commission Chairman. He wants to hear the status on the lights at Carleton Pond. The park looks unfinished and I'm making it a personal mission to tighten up that project.

Esposito reminded him that the Department Heads would be in next week, and we could ask Jay Wilson then.

Berry wants Brown to contact the Chairman, Joanne Draghetti, to get an update from the Chairman.

Esposito mentioned the letter that was sent to a resident of Frankestown Turnpike regarding a trailer that was being lived in on the property. The owners are applying for temporary (6 month) occupancy.

Esposito asked if we have heard from the owner at 66 Old Milford Road again and was told; no.

Roberge said that she was lucky enough to pick up the trail map etc. that the Conservation Commission and the Library teamed up to do. This collaboration is impressive.

Esposito said that the new cleaning crew had started last week and he hadn't heard anything about them yet.

Roberge asked if the Board was going to discuss anything that the Milford Board brought up regarding the 2013 IMA changes.

Esposito reminded everyone that MACC will be out of funds on December 31, 2020 if no agreement is made between the three towns.

Roberge said that she would be ok negotiating a 5-year agreement and would be willing to stay "as is" with the voting as long as Milford was willing to look at upgrading the infrastructure over a 3 year period.

Esposito said that he feels the same way.

Roberge doesn't understand how the Milford Board will sell this to the voters; that they are using 79% of the services, are paying 72%, and want to go to paying 100%.

Esposito agreed and said that whatever our usage, it isn't a significant cost to them.

Berry feels that Milford has a pretty good deal for their 17,000 residents down there and that we should stick to our guns about this. We would sign on for 3 years if they will commit to funding infrastructure improvements. They don't realize what a poor position they are in. They have ruined the whole thing by holding back the improvements.

Esposito explained that we cannot afford a 1 or 2-year payback; a 5 or 10-year period is doable. The funding mechanism must be changed.

Resident, Sean Mamone, said not to extend the contract; it is just a stall tactic that they are looking at just to get them through town meeting. Don't agree to anything less than 5 years. Do not go with them as a customer. It is a regional thing – you will be paying for things you don't want – it's regional. Meet with the Wilton Board to make sure you are on the same page.

Esposito reiterated that at the end of the year, there will be no more money to pay personnel.

Mamone said again not to extend the current contract – get an IMA signed.

Resident, Kathy Marchocki, asked if the Police Chief is going to be making a report on the data from the speed signs.

Berry told her that the Chief puts the reports on his Facebook page as he gets them.

Roberge said that it does take him a little while to compile the numbers.

Eposito did say that 90% of the traffic was not speeding.

Rebecca Schwarz of the Heritage Commission asked about getting a new recruit appointed to the Commission and was told to get it on the next agenda.

Roberge said that the Board doesn't want her to miss out on a Grant Writing course.

Schwarz said that there is one starting in November.

**8:05 PM** As there was no further business before the Board, Berry motioned seconded by Roberge to adjourn. Berry; yes, Roberge; yes, Eposito; yes.

Respectfully submitted,

Laurie M. Brown