

Selectmen's Meeting Minutes November 9, 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.

Esposito let everyone know that there will be a small ceremony at the war memorial for Veterans Day on Wednesday the 11th.

Board reviewed the minutes of November 2. Roberge motioned, seconded by Berry to accept the minutes of November 2, 2020 as amended. Roberge; yes, Berry; yes, Esposito; yes.

Esposito said that the SRLD budget is at \$123,307. In the spring we will get a compactor for cardboard. It is coming from Brookline and will be refurbished. The only thing acceptable in the plastic container now is opaque milk jugs; they have a value of \$.50/pound. Colored and clear plastic should be put in the regular trash.

Roberge asked how we will police that. Wilton used to have a platform where the recyclables were put, then they were pushed into the correct bin. Have we thought of that?

Esposito said that would take up too much room.

Berry said that a few months ago all they wanted was clear plastic. Every single load was contaminated. Now you are telling me that all they want is opaque milk jugs. It's not worth it – all the plastic should go in the trash. I want to have a discussion about that.

Roberge asked if that could be on the agenda next week.

Esposito said that the NRRRA had their meeting over Zoom and they are very concerned as to what will happen with China.

Crosby asked if he should hold off on pouring the concrete pad for the compactor.

Esposito said yes; we will pour 2 pads in the spring.

7:15 PM Department Head Meeting.

Chief Kevin Furlong – Police Department

- Do have the new SUV cruiser in and upfitted.
- There has been a large influx of private details in Town
- Voting went smoothly – no incidents requiring police intervention.
- We are trying out our new Police One training.

Chief Kevin Furlong – Emergency Management Director

- Community transmissions of Covid-19 are through the roof. People are having serious Covid fatigue. I anticipate that by next week we will have the most active cases as of yet.
- He would like to discuss the Emergency Management budget for 2021.
- He reminded the Board that money for PPE should be included in each buildings' budget.

Esposito said that having a good estimate from Furlong would be good.

Furlong said a good measurement would be how much we've spent so far this year.

Ben Crosby – DPW

- He had one employee that had to be tested. He came back negative.
- They are in the middle of fall clean-up.
- No word on Bob Sawyer's return to work.
- Keeping his ears open for a possible fill-in for plowing.

Roberge asked if that is because he doesn't think Sawyer is coming back.

Crosby explained that I don't know when Sawyer is coming back, and I also need to have a back-up in case someone needs to be out because of Covid.

- Talking with Amherst and Lyndeborough about neighboring roads we can help each other out with.

Joanne Draghetti – Conservation Commission

- Got the budget submitted
- Everything has gone well at Carleton Pond. Trombley was able to put in the culvert without much trouble.
- Todd Wilkins planted maple trees and blueberry bushes.
- Shelley Brooks is working to find out what kind of light will be best for the pond.
- We are also waiting to see how much light the new street light will cast.
- Todd Wilkins removed a lot of dead trees, and needs to do much more. That is why the Land Management line in the budget has increased.

Belinda Yeaton – Town Clerk

- The elections are over!!!

Esposito said that the election went very smoothly; there were no glitches.

Yeaton said that it was good to have some young people that stepped up to work this time around.

Chief Jay Wilson – Fire Department

- They had to perform a small repair to Engine 1.

Esposito thanked him for letting the SRLD use the meeting room. It was set up great.

Heather Kennedy – Recreation Committee

- Her idea for Tree Lighting is strictly outside, contact free. It would be live-streamed on Facebook. The only people being there in person would be the Honoree and family, Kennedy and an announcer. They would be social distancing with masks. She wants to have a theme of encouraging giving. We could:
 - Break the Town into 5 zones. At 5:01 zone 1 would turn on their lights, at 5:02 zone 2 would turn on their lights and so forth. When everyone has their lights on, we recognize the honoree and light the tree. This gives everyone a reason to stay home.
 - We could take some of the parking lot at the McCollom Building and have people nominate others to be able to use those spaces to watch the tree lighting from there.
 - Regarding the ornaments usually given out; we could place a certain number on an artificial tree each day for families to stop and choose one per family.

With any of these suggestions, we could add a donation box to collect for Neighbor-2-Neighbor or Share.

Tentative date would be December 12, 2020. We don't have to work around the Church because they are doing a virtual Messiah Sing.

Beautification is planning to decorate the week before.

Esposito thanked her and recognized the work that went into coming up with the plan. He feels that it would be something great for the community.

Kennedy asked if they could discuss it further next Monday.

Esposito agreed.

Wilson said that the FD and the FD Association want to do a Town wide lighting competition, and that Santa will be in a Fire Truck.

Roberge said that the judging could be the same night as Tree Lighting.

Kennedy said that the museum is usually open that night also.

Berry said that the museum will not be open this year. He also asked who will be making the ornaments.

Kennedy said that she and her family would be making the ornaments this year.

7:45 PM End of Department Head Meeting

Budgets

Esposito asked the Town Clerk about the 10% raise she put herself in for when everyone else is getting 2% and added that there are no elections in 2021.

Yeaton said that it wasn't 10% and that she added the 2% she didn't get last year.

Roberge asked if she was saying it is 4%.

Yeaton said that it is 2% on the warrant article and 2% on that total.

There was some discussion over whether or not she had gotten the 2% last year.

Esposito said that Brown could look that up tomorrow. He then asked about the increase in hours for the Deputy Clerk.

Yeaton said that she increased the Deputy hours by 3 per week because they are floundering as is and she doesn't see anything changing soon.

Roberge said – so 156 more hours this year?

Yeaton said yes.

Roberge asked if it was taking longer to do each registration.

Yeaton said yes, because of Covid. She also reminded the Board that she has gotten grants in the amount of \$11,600 for election related expenses; extra postage, vote counting machine, Bobbi's extra hours etc.

Roberge said that she did a good job getting the grants and asked if she was using more postage.

Yeaton said that the overage on postage is from the absentee ballots.

Berry asked Chief Furlong about the increase in Special Duty.

Furlong said that Eversource is the biggest user.

none of the old poles have been removed, no lines have been switched over yet. He also sees Rte 13 being another large project this coming year. This year so far, we have brought in over \$60,000 in special duty income.

Roberge asked why the part-time budget didn't go down further now that we have another full-time officer.

Furlong said that he did decrease the part-time hours by 4 hours per week, but that he now has to cover for sick and vacation for another full-time officer and the 2% raise is in there too.

Roberge remarked that even though it is 4 hours per week less, there is an increase of 30 days.

Furlong added that the raise adds 1500 hours x 2%

Esposito asked about the Equipment line.

Berry said that their radios are going out of date.

Furlong explained that they do not have a spare radio for emergencies any more. The radios that we do have are out of date and I plan to rotate them through making sure we have one to use as a spare. The PD budget is down almost 3% if you don't count the new officer. We also do not anticipate any warrant articles.

8:00PM Roberge asked Ben Crosby about the Gravel line, and said that Salisbury Road is in great shape.

Crosby said that the increase was kind of going off the last few years; we used \$24K last year and are up to \$20K so far this year. I'm trying to be proactive; using Salisbury Rd for an example, you can eat a lot of gravel up very quickly. Some of our roads are down to their base. We need to add material gradually. Even with plowing you lose some gravel. We are losing typically ½" to 1" every year.

Esposito asked what the feasibility is for paving the end of Weston Hill, Gregory and the top part of Mason Rd.

Crosby said that Mason would be the easiest. Weston Hill will take some engineering.

Roberge said that the \$25,000 in gravel was not earmarked for anything specific. The reason that those 3 roads came up is: 1) They are smaller than other roads, and 2) To lessen the cost of maintenance. I want to make sure we are thinking that paved roads are less cost to maintain.

Crosby said that Lyndeborough has 18 miles of dirt roads with a gravel budget of \$50K, we have 15 miles of dirt.

I could do \$30K worth of work on Joe English and then get it paved, although the drainage might need some engineering. There are so many roads to choose from I didn't want to earmark it for one road and then need to use it on another.

Bill McKinney said that we tend to plow all the gravel off to the side creating berms that don't allow the road to drain properly. Each spring the berms should be removed.

Crosby said that they are always trying to ditch the problem areas; we need a good base of gravel to be able to crown the roads.

McKinney said that we have roads where the mud is a problem – then we need to add gravel. We shouldn't have to do that.

Crosby agreed and said that we do have to add material in order to crown.

Roberge said that the gravel roads are getting a lot better; you have come a long way. There are some roads that you haven't been able to address yet.

McKinney said that Mont Vernon does not want to get rid of the gravel roads. He asked what Crosby needs to get them back in shape.

Esposito said probably 2 – 3 million dollars. We are doing the best we can.

Esposito changed the subject saying that we will have to think about replacing the trailer at the transfer station before it fails completely.

Berry asked if there is money in the 2021 budget to move the diesel tank down by the garage so that it can be run by the generator when power goes out.

Crosby said that he doesn't know how much of the Diesel Fuel / Tank Repair line will be needed for fuel for the year. He is thinking 1 or 2 diesel pumps or a diesel and a gas pump. The quote for the panel is \$4300. Should that budget line be bumped up?

Berry asked if he has enough in the 2021 budget line to get it done?

Crosby said that that was a good question because the electrical work isn't all that is needed; there is also the containment system that will be approximately \$2500.

Esposito estimates it will be \$8000 to \$8500 before it is finished.

Berry said that he noticed the stack of culvert pipes we already have.

Crosby said that they are for Salisbury Road.

8:25 PM Esposito stated that the Board had no questions regarding the proposed Fire Department Budget.

Roberge asked Wilson about the Tree Maintenance line in the Conservation Commission line, and why it is at \$4000.

Wilson explained that there will be quite a bit of dead tree removal around Carleton Pond.

Esposito asked Wilson if he agreed to extension of the MACC IMA was of the 2013 or 2018 version. He also said that if Milford's warrant article does not pass at their town meeting, we will draw up a new IMA.

Wilson said that it is an extension of the 2013 IMA.

Esposito asked for Wilson's guidance regarding signing the extension.

Wilson feels that we should sign the extension of the 2013 contract.

Roberge said that even though Mont Vernon and Wilton are ok with this extension, this has come about each year that I have been on the Board. Can you, or are you making sure that they are progressing in some manner.

Wilson said that Milford is not going to improve infrastructure.

Roberge said that the safety of all our personnel, taxpayers, and residents is a concern.

Wilson explained that MACC has been trying to improve radio communications. Every year Milford shoots it down. They are doing nothing to protect their own PDS, FD and DPW. We have improved our own safety piecemeal.

Roberge thanked him for his work on the MACC Board of Governors and feels that it must be more frustrating to them than it is to our Board.

Crosby let the Board know that Bernie at Beltronics told him that the low band radios jumped from \$1200 to \$2300 this year. High band radios are around \$500. Crosby said he is looking into how much it would cost to switch to high band. We would co-license with Lyndeborough. Having our own channel would be approx. \$1000.

Esposito said that the radios are at the end of their useful life.

Crosby said that the price with Beltronics would include an antenna on the highway garage.

Wilson said that he believes the frequency would be more like \$2000 by the time you are done.

Yeaton said that she had to give the State the ballots for the recount and that she has two changes for her budget. Add \$1000 to the Election Supply line to account for the resetting of the counting machine and for printing. She couldn't remember the second one.

8:40 PM Esposito said that we are going to sign the MACC IMA extension.

Roberge said that she agrees as long as it includes the full 2013 IMA.

Berry said that Wilton had the same stipulation.

Wilson said that the whole IMA was supposed to be sent to the Towns.

Esposito brought up the cyclical revaluation of the Town.

Roberge asked why we are doing a full measure and list rather than a statistical reval.

Esposito said that doing it all in one year is too much on the taxpayers.

Roberge said that we could do a statistical revaluation this year. We had a presentation on that several years ago.

Esposito said that he is not ready to have this conversation tonight.

Roberge said that people are concerned about Covid and someone going out to houses. I am unsure as to whether we could do a statistical revaluation to meet the State guidelines.

Esposito reiterated that he is not ready to have this conversation tonight. He can't give a good answer.

Roberge asked if it could be on the agenda for next week.

Esposito said yes, sometime later.

Roberge asked if, because of Covid, we could hold off on sending people out to houses till we make a decision.

Brown will speak with CNP about this.

Esposito brought up another letter received by a resident complaining about two homes on one site, and saying that the septic for that property is failing. The septic failing is a civil matter; nothing the Town can get involved in. Discussion over the two residences ensued. Bill McKinney asked if someone has done work without permits, how does that move forward? The building department has to issue an injunction.

Esposito said that the barn that the parents live in has been there for 25 years or more.

McKinney asked if we just ignore it because its been there so long?

Roberge asked for the junkyard letter to be updated and resent.

Esposito said that we may get the Tax Rate from the State tomorrow.

Roberge said that she supports the Planning Board's budget but would like to see quotes for the Master Plan.

9:00 PM As there was no further business before the Board, Berry motioned seconded by Roberge to adjourn.

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

Respectfully submitted,
Laurie M. Brown