

Selectmen's Meeting Minutes December 9, 2019

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 the Pledge of Allegiance.

Board reviewed minutes of 11/18 and 11/25. Berry motioned, seconded by Roberge to accept the minutes of November 18, 2019 as amended. All in favor. Berry motioned, seconded by Roberge to accept the minutes of November 25, 2019 as amended. All in favor.

7:15 PM Department Head meeting.

Heather Kennedy - Recreation

Esposito congratulated Kennedy on a job well done on Tree Lighting; the tree looked great and the chili cook-off was fun.

Kennedy: Recap of Halloween.

- Good overall turnout.
- Want to encourage more of the houses on the side streets to participate.
- We had 10 bins of candy donated; was a good amount.
- PTA and MVEA had the jack-o-lanterns on the green, and the teachers handed out candy at the gezabo.

Tree Lighting.

- Getting the tree lit was a feat. Thank you to Ray Lyons and Todd Wilkins, who said that this tree has only one more year in it. The center of the tree is dying.
- Replaced the bulbs with new LED bulbs as half of the strings were not working.
- Amy Wyman did a fabulous job with her Colonial Christmas theme, and the ornaments were a big hit.
- We did run out of cookies.

Esposito asked who did the snowblowing for them.

Kennedy said it was Mike Lemieux and Linda Harrop.

Ben Crosby – DPW Director

- New truck should be off to paint by the end of the week.
- Had our first significant snow storm last week. The 2005 F550 blew a break line and the old one ton had to be used.
- Wednesday the 2007 dump truck's starter froze up. It was covered under warrantee and the truck is back in service.

Berry asked how the steel plates fared up on Brook Road.

Crosby said they worked well and he is still waiting to hear back from Chad Brennan on the wetland permit that is due to the State on December 15, 2019.

Esposito said that the Department did a great job, being down a truck and down a driver.

Jay Wilson – Fire Chief

- With the amount of snow we ended up with between the Town Hall parking lot and the Fire Station, we would like you to hire Chip Day to snow blow that area.

Esposito and agreed to try it.

Roberge stated that if it is only 3" storm, it isn't worth it.

Wilson disagreed; a 3" storm end up a couple of feet at the end of the walkway when a plow is used. Wilson will bring back a number to the Board.

- The call volume went up a bit recently.
- They are having an HVAC problem in the meeting room, also they are still having leaks in the building that need to be addressed right away.

Fireward, Lucien Soucy said that some of the ductwork has collapsed; we are losing heat. We have a gable vent; we could put in a fan and keep it running until it can be fixed.

Fireward, Randy Wilson said that he would like to recognize Jay Wilson for his 40 years on the fire service.

Board congratulated him, and the room applauded.

Kevin Furlong – Police Chief

- Met with Wilton Police Chief regarding prosecution. He handed in the Prosecution Agreement for signature. Board signed the agreement and gave it back to Furlong.
- The Department decorated a tree for the PTA fundraiser.
- The Department claimed two prizes in the Chili Cook-Off.
- Provided traffic control for the Messiah Sing.
- We have been awarded two different grants:
 1. Rite Aid grant for a prescription drop off safe. We will now take part in the National Drug Take Back Days. People can drop off unused drugs anytime and we will deposit them with the Feds.
 2. A resident in Town works for 3M. We were awarded \$4,000 for our DARE program through 3M.
- The recent snowfall caused an all-out free-for-all around here. Cars were all over the place.
- Still working on the Radio Frequency purchase and antenna placement. We can add an antenna to the tower on Cross Road without any monthly fees.
- The purchase of radio equipment is in the 2020 operating budget, but if we could purchase it using some of the MACC returned money (just over \$20,000), we could reduce the budget by \$10,000. Would also like to purchase 3 new radios for another \$10,000 out of that money. They are still functional, but we can no longer find parts for them. They have to be replaced anyway, and it makes sense to use money that we already had earmarked for communication.

Esposito said that he wanted to use that money for getting the antenna onto the tower.

Furlong said that we have to spend that money this year, and no one knows how long the engineering of the antenna will take.

Berry motioned, Roberge seconded, to spend \$9,596.38 on a mobile radio and repeaters for the cruisers and \$9,191.46 on 3 new portable radios. Total being \$18,787.84.

Roberge offered that just because we got this money, it doesn't mean we have to spend it on portable radios that are still working. I think the money for the radios should be put into the budget.

Esposito said that it would help the taxpayers by not having to raise that money next year.

Wilson said that they are working now, but can go at any time; we should replace them now.

Board voted all in favor of the motion.

8:00 pm End of Department Head Meeting

Wilson expressed his concern over not hearing about what the Building Renovation Committee was doing sooner and as they went along. Berry said that everything has been on the website.

Wilson said that he doesn't use the site, and said that he is also concerned that the Board is only considering the Town Hall, when there may be an overcrowding situation coming up for our school.

Roberge said that the school does not feel that way, and they use all kinds of factors in projecting the future enrollment needs of the school.

Randy Wilson said that he found out that there is a million-dollar warrant article coming up this March for the Town Hall.

Esposito said that that is just a rumor.

R. Wilson asked what the real number is.

Esposito said that we don't have a number yet.

Kennedy suggested that the Selectmen give an update monthly at the department head meeting.

Wilson said that he would like to see the website upgraded: if we could only get 4 people to volunteer for this committee by advertising on the website; clearly it is not being used.

8:15 PM Esposito let the Board know that he had called Wilton's Town Administrator and let him know that Mont Vernon will be looking to extend the MACC contract by at least two years; one year is not in the best interest of anyone. Wilton is on board with two years. The Board will be attending the Milford Selectmen's meeting at 5:30 PM on December 16, 2019.

8:20 PM John Quinlan, Chair of the Heritage Commission came before the Board to discuss the Commission's proposed 2020 operating budget.

Esposito began by explaining that the Builder/Architect need \$15,000 to get going on the plans for the renovation of the Town Hall. We were hoping to get that money from the Heritage Commission and then in March bring a warrant article before the Town to replace it.

Berry reminded the Board that the Heritage Commission was already asking for \$10,000 to be added to their fund in their proposed budget; we would have to have to fund \$25,000.

Roberge believes it must be raised by warrant article rather than a line item in the budget.

Berry then explained to Quinlan that the Board had pushed back on the historical resource survey referenced in the budget saying that the Town had not set up the Commission for this purpose; the main purpose of the Commission was to support the renovation of the Town buildings via grant seeking or fund raising.

Roberge said not initially, the role could be determined, but initially it was presented to the Selectmen it was solely for funding the renovations of the buildings. It was a way that people could contribute to the project.

Quinlan agreed that that was the primary attraction, but it wasn't limited to that, and the Commission does not take directive from the Selectboard.

Roberge asked what other Commissions have done Historical Resources Surveys and was told "all of them". She then asked how long it takes, does it supersede applying for grants for our project and who does it.

Roberge asked for a breakdown of the requested budget numbers.

Quinlan said that a laptop is included in the supplies number, a seminar on grant writing is included in training. I don't have exact numbers.

Roberge said that this budget is higher than other departments.

Quinlan said that these are the best reasonable estimates that I could come up with. A big part of the Historical Survey will be overlays to the NRPC maps.

Berry said that he concurs with the numbers requested.

Roberge wants more detailed backup.

Eposito said that there is no way to get that – we are dealing with something new with no track record.

Quinlan asked about the Selectboard's request for \$15,000.

Berry explained that the Board has hired a Design/Build firm. We have to give them a retainer to design the 1st and 2nd floor of this building. They will come up with a "Not to Exceed" number and a presentation for the Town before March Town Meeting.

Quinlan said that it would have to be voted on by the Commission at their meeting this week. He asked for a detailed plan in writing for what the \$15,000 will be used for. He does not want this done informally.

Berry has found that going for an LCHIP Grant may end up costing us more, as the more they give you, the more control they want in how the money is spent.

Roberge asked why the office staff and the DPW were paid for the Friday after Thanksgiving, and other people were not.

Eposito reminded her that we do not run the Library, and the PD is their own entity.

Roberge wondered why it wasn't across the board.

Eposito said it has been done this way for at least 15 years.

Eposito let the Board know that he had spoken with Chief Furlong regarding seeing one of our police cruisers in the parking lot with 2 feet of snow on it – it should have been parked in the fire station. He has asked Furlong to straighten this out with Chief Wilson as we can't have an emergency vehicle that is unusable.

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

All in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,
Laurie Brown