

Minutes of the Select Board Meeting, March 22, 2016

Phil Lococo and Judy Feeley were present; Dennis Mimitz was absent. The meeting was called to order at 7:04 p.m. The minutes of March 8, 2016 were accepted as submitted. The March 8, 2016 minutes of the Plainfield Light & Communications Plant were also accepted as submitted.

Highway Department

The Highway Department will remove the shrubs and trees at the 347 Main Street property in order to improve visibility on the corner of Main and South Union Streets.

Superintendent Mert Taylor, Jr. informed the Board the FY'16 General Highway Account will have a \$5,000.00 balance after the current invoices are paid.

Chapter 90 Project Requests will be prepared for signatures at the next meeting.

An article seeking the Town's approval authorizing the Highway Department use of the \$30,000.00 received from Eversource will appear on the Annual Town Meeting Warrant. Mert plans to patch West Street with the funds.

The Town received an insurance reimbursement in the amount of \$10,300.00 for damages to a truck and plow. The truck has been repaired and the plow has been replaced.

Energy Committee/Planning Board

Tim Walter, representing the Energy Committee, approached the Board concerning the committee's proposed 1.5 acre Solar By-Law. The Energy Committee's proposal seeks a designated single site while the Planning Board's proposal seeks town-wide by-right 1.5 acre array with an overlay within the Town's historical district requiring a 300' setback. Two informational meetings have been held on the subject with a Public Hearing scheduled for

March 28, 2016. Tim asked for the Select Board's endorsement of the Energy Committee's proposal.

Tim strongly suggests full disclosure from the Planning Board Chair Ed Morann at the Public Hearing and Annual Town Meeting as he is considering a large-scale solar array on his property. Ed filed a written disclosure with the Select Board on June 23, 2015. The Board is also in possession of the State Ethics Commission exemption for Planning Board members.

Brian Hawthorne has consulted the Moderator for time to talk about the three Solar By-Law articles at Town Meeting.

An article concerning the adoption of the Stretch Code in order to apply for Green communities status will be placed on a Special Town Meeting Warrant.

Later in the meeting Ed Morann asked if he should step down as chair of the Planning Board. The Board does not have concerns about Ed continuing as Planning Board chair. Both his written disclosure and the Ethic Commission exemption clarifies the matter.

Jackson Property

Lina Bernstein, a member of a volunteer group to improve the lives of seniors, asked for permission to walk the Jackson property with Conservation Chair Judy Williams to look at environmental concerns and about the possibility of creating walking trails with benches on the site. The Board consented noting it would be “at her own risk”. Such a project would have to be funded by grants or Town Meeting vote.

Lina also mentioned painting the rails on the South Union Street bridge. She and other volunteers are willing to take on the project.

North Union Street Complaint

North Union Street resident Christian Wrobel registered a complaint about her neighbor’s draft horses getting out and causing damage to her property again. The horse have also been in the road. Last June Mr. Hubbard was informed by certified mail to keep his horses fenced in. Types of adequate fencing were provided by Animal Control Officer Casey Dwyer. Ms. Wrobel said fence posts and wire fencing are laid down and the animals walk over it. Ed Morann stated Ms. Wrobel has the right to get an estimate of damages and bill her neighbor. Phil will arrange a time when he and Casey can check the fencing. Laws relating to “fence viewers” will be researched.

Other Business

A draft of a proposed town by-law amendment regarding meeting posting requirements was reviewed.

An e-mail update from Conway stated the Attorney General plans to review their Comprehensive By -law by June 8th.

An update from the Ad hoc Vocational Education Advisory Committee was received.

The Board received information on the Northampton Cycle Club’s 2016 Tour of the Hilltowns. The information will be forwarded to Police Chief Stacey Hudson so police detail can be arranged for the event.

The Board accepted Jim Feeley's resignation from the Buildings Committee with appreciation and regret.

Correspondence

The Baker-Polito Administration has been conversing with MBI to understand the broadband expansion strategies being proposed, including diverse approaches from individual towns, companies, and regional organizations, and to ensure that public investments will be sound as well as provide their intended outcome.

An e-mail from MTRSD stated the Board will be receiving an application from a Plainfield student to Smith Vocational School.

Kopelman and Paige has issued an eUpdate entitled "Emergency Regulation Reducing Fees for Copies".

The Board received a copy of FERC's response to Minority Leader Bradley H. Jones, Jr. letter of January 15, 2016 asking FERC to consider Massachusetts laws and environmental goals in its Environmental Impact Statement.

Tennessee Gas Pipeline Company, LLC has filed a response to FERC's February 26, 2016 Environmental Information Request.

A copy of the Colrain Selectmen's letter to the MTRSD School Committee expressing concerns over the increase in Colrain's FY'17 assessment was received.

Information on the Western Mass Forest Legacy Partnership was received.

Miscellaneous mail was reviewed.

Warrants were signed.

The meeting adjourned at 8:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Paula J. King
Administrative Secretary