

Minutes of the Select Board Meeting, May 22, 2018

Howard Bronstein, Winton Pitcoff, and Hilary Weeks were present. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. The minutes of May 8, 2018 were accepted as submitted.

Police Chief

The Board publicly acknowledged and thanked Stacey Hudson for her years of service both as police chief and as an officer of the Plainfield Police Department. Ed Morann met with the Board to discuss the Board's authority to appoint an acting police chief or an officer in charge in the absence of a police chief. Winton moved to appoint Edward Morann as Acting Police Chief as of June 1, 2018 until a new police chief is selected and appointed. The motion, seconded by Hilary, was unanimously approved. Ed was thanked for stepping forward to serve during the application and interview process. Howard will notify Northampton Dispatch by telephone and in writing of the change.

Highland Ambulance

Ed informed the Board that the President of the Highland Ambulance/EMS Board of Directors is stepping down from his position in October. Highland will be seeking a replacement.

As a solution to the number of ambulance calls at the Swift River Addiction Campus, Highland has negotiated an agreement with the Swift River Addiction Campus for payment of 75% of the cost per call for uninsured patients. Highland is also negotiating a \$100,000 payment from the Swift River Addiction Campus to staff a second ambulance to ensure coverage for the area covered by Highland.

Conservation Restriction

Franklin Land Trust Director of Land Conservation, Alain Peteroy presented the Conservation Restriction for the Sargent/Nelson property, part of the Swift River Conservation Project, for signing. Two copies of the document were signed by the Board. Alain will next meet with the Conservation Commission for their signatures.

Alain also sought the Board's signatures on a recently awarded conservation partnership grant allowing MA Audubon to purchase most of the O'Brien property

adjacent to their West Mountain Preserve. Franklin Land Trust has been asked to hold the Conservation Restriction on the property and needs to close by June 30th. Following discussion, concerning the lateness of the request the Board asked Alain to attend the June 12, 2018 Select Board meeting so the issue will appear on the agenda. Howard also noted, while land conservation is important, it places an unfair burden on area towns.

HCOG Update

HCOG Commissioner Peg Keller updated the Board on HCOG happenings and issues. She spoke of the formation of a Strategic Planning Committee to reexamine the structure and operations of the organization as the current model in unsustainable. The April 13, 2018 letter to member towns regarding unfunded retirement liability was discussed. The Board received a letter signed by Representative Steve Kulik and other legislators stating their belief member towns should not be responsible for the unfunded liability. House Bill 4000, an Act Relative to Deeds Excise Receipts is “not going anywhere”. Peg noted the importance of the Council’s regional services programs and their potential savings to Hampshire County towns.

A copy of HCOG’s proposed FY’19 budget was received.

Appointment

Renee Schmidt’s letter of interest in serving on the Energy Committee was received. Winton moved to appoint Renee Schmidt to the Energy Committee through June 30, 2018. The motion, seconded by Hilary, was unanimously approved.

Other Business

MLP bid dates have been established.

Winton moved to approve Ch44:33B end of year transfers to offset deficits in the Winter Roads and Building Operations accounts. The motion was seconded by Hilary and was unanimously approved.

Howard stated wet insulation was found under the siding at the Public Safety Building. Estimates indicate the Town Hall lift may be replaced for \$10,000. It was noted inspection of the lift is to be scheduled.

Mail was reviewed.

Warrants were signed.

The meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Paula J. King, Administrative Secretary