

Minutes of the Select Board Meeting, June 12, 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 22, 2018 were accepted as submitted.

The Board interviewed Justin Litchfield for the chief of police position. Fire Chief Dennis Thatcher spoke of the importance of fire/EMS and police departments being able to work together. He stated Justin was an asset before and would like to see him back.

Highway Superintendent

Hampshire County bid documents for cold patch, hot mix, gravel, and winter sand were provided by Highway Superintendent Mert Taylor, Jr. Documents were signed by the Board.

A question regarding the Employee Benefit Package regarding vacation was asked. Howard will look over the Employee Benefit Package and noted the Board can adopt new hiring procedures, but the Benefit Package was voted at Town Meeting. Mert, Jr. has determined a new dump truck estimated at \$220,000 would be a better purchase in FY'19 than a used grader as voted at the May 5th Town Meeting. The Board asked him to put details of the request in writing.

West Street Conservation Restriction

Alain Peteroy, FLT, representatives of Mass Audubon, and Conservation Commission members were in attendance concerning the proposed conservation restriction of 109 acres of land off West Street sold to Mass Audubon. Howard noted that while understanding the need to conserve land, tax exempt status places an unfair burden on towns in this area creating a shrinking tax base. Bob Wilbur, Mass Audubon, stated he hopes to see western Massachusetts towns compensated for conservation lands in the future. Jack Nelson stated a building lot is being retained by the O'Briens and will remain taxable. Following discussion, Winton moved to sign the conservation restriction on the 109 acres of land off West Street. The motion, seconded by Hilary, was unanimously approved. The document was signed.

Resignation

The Board accepted Ann Kohn's resignation as Highland Valley Elder Service Representative as of June 30, 2018 with regret and appreciation.

Other Business

Howard received a complaint from the owner of 90 North Union Street that horses at 91 North Union Street have escaped through the fence and damaged her lawn. (She has photos.) Howard followed up with Animal Control Officer Casey Dwyer and Acting Police Chief Ed Morann who responded to the call. Ed told Howard the owner of the horses said he has insurance and will pay for damages. Casey told Howard the fence is legal.

Official notice of a \$25,000 grant for the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Program Grant was received. Winton moved to sign the MVP contract. The motion, unanimously approved, was seconded by Hilary.

The Board received notification of the route modification for the Northampton Cycle Club Tour of the Hilltowns scheduled for July 21, 2018. Payment in advance for police detail for the event was also received. Winton moved to sign the Northampton Cycle Club race authorization for the event. The motion, seconded by Hilary, was unanimously approved.

Winton moved to pay KP Law invoice #116077 in the amount of \$17.50. The motion was seconded by Hilary and was unanimously approved.

Winton moved to pay the \$3,000.00 invoice submitted by D I Jacobs Consulting. The motion, seconded by Hilary, was unanimously approved. Position Analysis Questionnaires submitted by employees for the Wage and Salary Grant Program will be mailed to Don Jacobs. Questionnaires have not been received from all employees/departments.

Winton inquired about the tax title statute and when delinquent tax payers are placed in tax title.

Correspondence

Information on OSHA requirements for the public sector was received.

The Board received a letter from the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection in regard to recycling markets and the impact on municipalities and businesses in the state.

Other mail was reviewed.

Warrants were signed.

The meeting adjourned at 8:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Paula J. King, Administrative Secretary