

Minutes of the Select Board Meeting, September 22, 2020

Howard Bronstein, Hilary Weeks, and Rebecca Coletta were present. Paula King, Chief David Alvord, Sgt. Matt Miazga, David Kramer, Bob Baker, Kimberly Longey, Don Boner, Brian Hawthorne, Sean Sheridan, Lily Thompson, and Patrick Williamson were also in attendance. The meeting, held via conference call in accordance with Governor Baker's temporary modifications to the Open Meeting Law, was called to order at 7:02 p.m. The minutes of August 26th and September 8th were accepted as submitted.

Pole Hearing Verizon Petition #1A4F3MG North Central Street

Verizon Petition #1A4F3MG requests permission to place one jointly owned pole on the southwesterly side of North Central Street at a point approximately 371' southeasterly from the center line of Union street in order to provide mid-span support to the existing line and to provide for the distribution of intelligence and telecommunication and transmission of electric current. Don Boner, representing Verizon, noted the proposed location as left of the driveway of the 61 North Central Street residence. He stated the purpose of the pole is to shorten the span between poles in order to support updated equipment. Howard moved to approve Verizon Petition #1A4F3MG. The motion, seconded by Hilary, was approved as follows: Howard, yes; Hilary, yes; Rebecca, yes.

Fire Department Update

Chief Alvord addressed the Board in reference to previous discussion proposing reimbursement for firefighters. Plainfield and Windsor are the only volunteer departments in the hill towns. Fourteen of twenty firefighters met and discussed the matter. There was a lot of give and take resulting in a vote to table further discussion until the FY'22 budget process is underway. Howard thanked Chief Alvord expressing appreciation for the department. He also referenced the regionalization of emergency services study.

Both Finance Committee Chair David Kramer and Chief Alvord agreed the idea of reimbursement as total budget to be dispersed as the chief sees fit rather than a per member structured budget.

Police Department Update

Sgt. Matt Miazga informed the Board of the state's August 19th approval of Plainfield as a heavily settled district. Eight 25 mph speed limit signs have been ordered. Plainfield roads are 25mph unless otherwise posted.

Howard asked the department to include the time it takes to compile the statistics report to which Matt stated 8.5 hours. Of the 43 calls since the last report, 20 were 911 and 21 were answered by the officer on duty. There were 11 animal complaints, 3 medical, 2 domestics, 2 shots fired, 3 private alarms (2 at the same residence). 30 calls were received at the station- 11 today.

In her letter of August 28th Kimberly Longey referenced comparison of Plainfield's police budget with that of area towns. Her letter also referenced the cuts in the FY'21 budget, public safety costs, and the need for a public meeting where costs and other concerns can be openly addressed. Howard spoke to a previous conversation with Cummington and concerns for getting the police department in compliance with state and federal requirements. Plainfield's level of compliance is the basic difference in the two towns. Rebecca noted residents are asking for a community forum. Chief Litchfield is open to a public forum. Discussion ensued on whether the Board should coordinate an open meeting. It was agreed there is a need to decide as a town what is needed in terms of public safety. The establishment of an advisory group to gather information and formulate questions was agreed upon. Matt, Kimberly, Kimberly, Rebecca, Justin, and Bob Baker will work together on this. Lily Thompson added that meetings have been open since questions have been raised. It was also noted the annual informational budget hearings are not well attended nor is there a large public presence at Select Board meetings. The possibility of a survey from the police department was suggested.

Host Community Agreement (HCA)

Howard began the discussion by saying he read the Cannabis Control Commission handbook and other documents pertaining to marijuana cultivation, etc. The industry is heavily regulated by the state. He stated the Host Community Agreement with Sean Sheridan is reasonable. Sean added he updated the 27 Broom Street agreement to reflect his project using the state fee structure. Rebecca stated she isn't well enough informed to make a decision at this time. Howard reminded the Board that all local processes have to be followed. He doesn't oppose business. In addition to the HCA, there are real estate taxes, etc. to be considered. Brian Hawthorne, Planning Board Chair, noted the Town needs legal businesses to generate revenue. Sean's project requires a Special Permit to which conditions will be added. Hilary approves of the HCA. Howard asked whether or not to send the document to Town Counsel. Hillary doesn't think it is necessary. Rebecca is in favor of more time before signing. Howard moved to sign the Host Community

agreement with Sean Sheridan as submitted. The motion, seconded by Hilary, was approved as follows: Howard, yes; Hilary, yes; Rebecca, no. After additional discussion Rebecca rescinded her no vote and voted yes. Sean spoke to his plan for cultivation and home delivery. He has not specified a location yet, but is looking at several properties. The Town did not pass a moratorium on marijuana.

MLP Update

Broadband construction should be completed within the next week. Manager Kimberly Longey suggested keeping the project open in the event of any unforeseen issues. The broadband finance team will meet Wednesday, September 30th to discuss end of year closeout and to consider policy recommendations.

Kimberly referred to CARES Act funding and Plainfield's allowance of \$58,000, \$4856 of which has been received for FY'20. Eligible costs may include the broadband hot spot for the Alden Pavilion, laptop computers for remote education, vocational busing, Board of Health costs, etc. Both Kimberly and Rebecca agreed to work with Paula.

Other Business

Howard move to authorize Assessors Assistant Gina Papineau to access and correct excise tax addresses through the Massachusetts RMV. The motion, seconded by Rebecca, was approved as follows: Howard, yes; Hilary, yes; Rebecca, yes.

Thatcher Property: Howard is in hopes the sale of the Thatcher property between the estate and an interested buyer will close by the end of September. After the closing the Building Commissioner can proceed with demolition process.

Procurement questions initiated by the Buildings Committee have been referred to Town Counsel.

Howard will contact the owners of Pub 116 to see if they are requesting an extension of outdoor service for up to 60 days after the end of the COVID-19 state of emergency.

The Board received notice of G Suite changes that will no longer include recording effective September 30, 2020. Hilary moved to purchase 2-3 licenses to include recording. The motion, seconded by Rebecca, was approved as follows: Howard, yes; Hilary, yes; Rebecca, yes.

The Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan has been completed and will be reviewed at a meeting of the MVP group.

Correspondence

An FY'20 invoice from American Pest in the amount of \$95.00 requires STM vote approval to pay.

Notice of vocational busing issues was received.

Eversource sent notice of aerial patrols.

An e-mail from Conrad Liebenow regarding the status of battery storage was received.

Miscellaneous mail was reviewed.

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Paula J. King
Administrative Secretary