

Minutes of the Select Board Meeting, May 11, 2021

Hilary Weeks, Rebecca Coletta, and Patrick Williamson were present. Other attendees: Paula King, Dale Eddy, and Rob Ritchie. The meeting, held via conference call in accordance with Governor Baker's temporary modifications to the Open Meeting Law, was called to order at 7:01 p.m. The Board accepted the minutes of minutes of April 27, 2021 as submitted: Hilary, yes; Rebecca, yes; Patrick, yes.

NEXAMP PILOT Agreement: Battery Storage

As the Select Board member designated to research the NEXAMP project, Patrick is reviewing the existing files. The proposed fee structure for the addition of battery storage for the existing solar array was discussed. Assistant Assessor Gina Papineau, in her email of January 13, 2021, stated the Board of Assessors recommended the Select Board negotiate an additional \$2,800 per MWDC to be added to the PILOT agreement for battery storage. On February 9, 2021 a \$2,600 figure was mentioned. To date a written proposal to amend the PILOT agreement has not been received. Patrick moved that \$2,800 per MWDC for battery storage be added to the NEXAMP PILOT agreement. The motion, seconded by Hilary, was unanimously approved: Hilary, yes; Rebecca, yes; Patrick, yes. An amended schedule reflecting the \$2,800 for battery storage will be prepared for the May 25, 2021 meeting.

Rob Ritchie, representing NEXAMP, noted the battery storage equipment is not yet on site. Patrick had questions regarding electrolytes and ether to which Rob stated the battery storage container is environmentally sealed such that any leakage would be contained. Fire protocol was also questioned. Should any problem be detected the system would be remotely shut down from the NEXAMP operational base. Mr. Ritchie said Chief Alvord is acquainted with fire control procedures; manuals and training for first responders will be provided. A late December completion date is anticipated and an on-site meeting will take place in early 2022.

Highway Department

Highway Superintendent Merton Taylor, Jr. submitted his resignation as Highway Superintendent effective July 2, 2021 noting he will continue to serve in that capacity until a replacement is found. Mert, Jr. would like to stay on as a highway

department employee. Hilary reviewed the Human Services manual noting option B on page 15, with the Board's approval, addresses the situation; Mert, Jr. is aware there will be a reduction in his hourly wage. The position is classified as a working superintendent. Hilary noted the following items in need of the Board's attention: The Human Services manual states "no employee will receive comp time.", annual performance evaluations (suggests superintendent evaluate employees and employees evaluate superintendent), and to add and adopt a written request for vacation time.

Mert, Jr. agreed to compile a general list of seasonal chores performed by the department.

The position will be advertised. Hilary will work on the job posting, information packet for applicants, and interview questions.

It was also noted Mert, Jr. is the only Highway Department employee holding a 4G Hoister's license.

There is no provision in the Mass Works Grant for additional compensation for the Highway Superintendent or departmental employees.

Hilary moved to accept Mert Jr.'s resignation as Highway Superintendent and approve his voluntary demotion to laborer/equipment operator. The motion, seconded by Rebecca, was unanimously approved: Hilary, yes; Rebecca, yes; Patrick, yes.

Mosquito Spraying

The Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs has extended the application deadline for municipalities to opt-out of SRMCB mosquito spraying to Friday, May 28, 2021. For an application to be considered for approval by EEA, an email containing an acceptable alternative mosquito control management plan and a certified vote by local City Council or Select Board must be submitted by midnight on the date referenced above. Rebecca suggested those who raised questions look into state-required alternatives for next year. Risks of spraying and the EEE virus were discussed. Patrick suggested the Agricultural Commission may be willing to look into the matter. The Board of Health is also aware of the spraying program. Hilary moved not to participate in the opt-out process this year. The motion, seconded by Rebecca, was approved: Hilary, yes; Rebecca, yes; Patrick, pass.

Other Business

The Board extended a "Thank you" to the Plainfield firefighters for setting up and taking down the necessities to hold the Annual Town Meeting at the Alden Pavilion on May 1st. Rob Shearer provided the sound system and Brian Hawthorne managed the microphone.

The Board received a letter from James Pugliese regarding the condition of the upper half of Jones Avenue. Rebecca will respond by letter letting Jim know the issue has been forwarded to the Highway Department.

FRCOG has requested a vote of the Board naming an authorized contract signatory for Construction Services Bids and Materials Bids. Hilary moved to authorize the Select Board member designated as Procurement Officer to sign FRCOG contracts. The motion, seconded by Rebecca, was unanimously approved: Hilary, yes; Rebecca, yes; Patrick, yes.

Hilary moved to pay KP Law invoice #130664 in the amount of \$185.00. The motion, seconded by Rebecca, was unanimously approved: Hilary, yes; Rebecca, yes; Patrick, yes.

IT Grant: Steve Barlow, NOVUS, has contacted the treasurer in regard to his email issues. Steve also plans to be on site to work on the IT project Thursday.

Rebecca asked to have the Plainfield Police Ad Hoc Working Group on the May 25, 2021 agenda. The Police Chief is also expected to be in attendance.

Patrick noted the ad hoc group should continue to operate as a “working group” reporting to the Select Board.

Hilary will be not available for the June 22, 2021 meeting. Rebecca informed the Board of meetings she may miss with dates to be determined.

Other mail was reviewed.

A motion to adjourn was entertained at 8:20 p.m.: Hilary, yes; Rebecca, yes; Patrick, yes.

Respectfully submitted,

Paula J. King
Administrative Secretary