

Minutes of the Select Board Meeting, July 27, 2021

Hilary Weeks, Rebecca Coletta, and Patrick Williamson were present. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. The minutes of July 13, 2021 were accepted as submitted.

Highway Department

Superintendent Walter Jennings presented an application for driveway permits which the Board deemed to be standard and appropriate.

Available Chapter 90 funds total \$297,000 with the FY'22 allocation and the remaining balance of FY'21 funds. Walter consulted David Stokes, District 1 advisor, about the purchase of a mini rubber track excavator with Chapter 90 monies. Quotes from two manufacturers were received: Tyler Equipment- \$95,639.20 for a Volvo and M&B Tractor- \$100,328.52 for a Kubota. Both quotes include a trailer. Hilary moved to allow the Highway Superintendent to purchase a mini rubber track excavator with Chapter 90 funds. The motion, seconded by Rebecca, was unanimously approved.

Walter has also received quotes for finishing the reclamation and resurfacing the first section of West Street.

Fire Department

Chief David Alvord reported on departmental equipment and gear purchased during the past year with grant funds. The 2018 Mass DCR Firefighters Equipment Grant was used to purchase 7 sets of wildfire gear (PPE); the 2020 Mass DCR Firefighters Equipment Grant was used for the purchase of 5 new water backpacks which are lighter than previous models; the Mass Department of Fire Services Firefighter Safety Equipment Grant was used for individual SCBA masks, two water rescue suits, portable lights, and two automatic pistol grip fire nozzles. Chief Alvord attributed the successful grant application processes to Administrative Assistant Theresa Thatcher with input from firefighters.

The Fire Department has been very active.

Police Department

Chief Litchfield will contact the Town's Eversource liaison and CEO concerning an outstanding police detail invoice.

Howard Bronstein has volunteered his assistance to the Police Department and will serve as the department's media relations person and has been scheduled to attend training in December.

Sgt. Matt Miazga reported on the incident of last Wednesday which resulted in an accident in the vicinity of Rte. 116 and Cummington Road in Ashfield. Matt's radar detected the vehicle traveling 73 mph in a 45mph zone on Rte. 116 at the west end of Plainfield. He pursued the black BMW which traveled through the center of Plainfield in excess of 120 mph. Matt stated he did not exceed 63 mph and discontinued his pursuit. After hitting another car and crashing near the intersection of Rte. 116 and Cummington Road in Ashfield, the driver and passenger exited the vehicle and ran. At this point Ashfield and State Police took over. The driver was apprehended on Rte. 9 in Goshen and the passenger was rescued after hiding in the woods for 5 hours.

Chief Litchfield praised Sgt. Miazga for discontinuing the chase.

Ashfield used their reverse 911 system to notify residents of the search in the immediate area where the accident occurred.

Rebecca expressed concerns that Plainfield residents weren't notified of the situation. (Pleasant Street residences are only ½ mile from the search area.) Justin said State Police didn't deem Plainfield to be in the assessed danger zone. Rebecca reiterated her concerns that Plainfield residents were not made aware of the situation. Justin agreed and will have a reverse 911 issued in the future. He reminded the Board that drugs are being transported on Rte. 116 through Plainfield.

The chief is researching a 50/50 grant for body cameras for police officers. He also noted the 6:00 a.m. through 9:00 p.m. coverage is handling calls and working well.

HCA

A Host Community Agreement submitted by Mary Flahive-Dickson and her husband doing business as BTE was discussed. The Dickson's are seeking to cultivate marijuana on their Grant Street property. Hilary stated she was pleased with the HCA, that it is both generous and adequate. Rebecca agreed it is generous, but would like to have the HCA looked at by the Planning Board. Patrick questioned the meaning of "successor, affiliate or corporate entity" on page 6 of the agreement to which Mary responded, "one BTE would create". Patrick also inquired about the proposed 100,000 sq. ft. cultivation location and the current status of the ground. Mary stated the location needs to be cleared and the soil prepared. The location, accessible by an old logging road, cannot be seen from the road or by neighbors. BTE plans to advertise and hire locally. Plans are to hire a diverse group of employees. She has already spoken with a few people.

Rebecca referred to the proposed HCA template previously discussed by the Board. Hilary agrees with the creation of a template, but doesn't feel this process should be held up for that. Hilary moved to accept the HCA between the Town of Plainfield and BTE contingent upon review and approval from town counsel. The motion, seconded by Patrick, was unanimously approved. Hilary added that there may be recommended changes to the HCA from town counsel.

Appointment

Hilary moved to appoint Ronald Weeks to the Board of Health for the balance of the term vacated by Nicole Meehan. The motion, seconded by Rebecca, was unanimously approved.

Other Business

The Board agreed to participate in the Board of Health Nursing Grant.

Hilary moved to pay the FY'22 MMA dues in the amount of \$563.00 The motion, seconded by Rebecca, was unanimously approved.

IT Grant: CARES Act funding for the Municipal Area Network, to be funded in part by the IT Grant was initially rejected, but accepted, after being resubmitted, with the notation to retain records of expenditures and the necessity of the project is related to the COVID-19 public health emergency in the event of a federal audit. The Board discussed the processing and recording of departmental revenues. A memo reminding everyone to turn in receipts by the 28th of each month in order to be deposited and recorded by the treasurer will be distributed to departments and committees.

Governor Baker signed legislation extending certain pandemic-related relief provisions which expired with the State of Emergency. Public meetings may be held virtually until April 1, 2022. The Board stated all virtual meetings must be posted and held in accordance with the summarized provisions included in the KP Law eUpdate entitled "Extension of Pandemic-Related Relief Relative to Municipal Operations" dated June 17, 2021.

FY'22 Cherry Sheet estimated revenues of \$138,810 and assessments of \$1,268 were received.

The Board received notice of the approval of the Town's request to opt out of mosquito spraying.

Chief Litchfield is working with the state auditor's office in response to Phil McLaughlin's email about needed renovations for the police building.

Other mail was reviewed.

Warrants were signed.

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Paula J. King
Administrative Secretary