

Minutes of the Select Board Meeting, January 24, 2023

Patrick Williamson, Hilary Weeks, and Ben Gillett were present. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. The minutes of January 10, 2023 were accepted as submitted.

MLP Manager

MLP Manager Lucas Suarez-Orozco notified the Board of his unplanned move to Amherst at the end of January. He would like to retain his position as MLP manager indicating he would be able to do so if notice of mail/invoices were emailed to him. Additionally, he suggested a long-term plan. Patrick referenced the idea of combining MLP, Planning Board, etc. administrators into one position.

Buildings Committee

Buildings Committee Chair Peter Lapointe informed the Board the oil furnace at the Highway Garage has failed and cannot be repaired. An oil burner has been found for \$10,000. Two furnaces are needed, one at each end of the garage, to adequately heat the space. Converting to propane is an option. Two ceiling mounted propane heaters, one at each end of the garage, quoted at \$12,800 or a propane tubular infrared system, also ceiling mounted, quoted at \$26,800 are possibilities. The tubular infrared system offers 97.7% efficiency with a savings of 30-35% per year in fuel costs. The cost to purchase a propane tank is \$6,000. A Special Town Meeting to transfer funds from the Highway Garage Roof Account to a Highway Garage Repair Account was discussed. Walter Jennings, Highway Superintendent, reached out to our MassDOT representative who said Chapter 90 funds could be used to replace the heating system. Interim heating was also discussed; oil units use both clean and used oil. Hilary inquired about available in Chapter 90 funds noting that using Chapter 90 funds would reduce the amount for roads. Three quotes will be obtained pursuant to M.G.L. Chapter 30B. The chair entertained a motion to approve the purchase and installation of an infrared tubular heating system for the Highway Garage. The motion, moved by Hilary and seconded by Ben, was unanimously approved. A Chapter 90 Project Request for \$40,000 will be prepared by Walter to be submitted to MassDot after securing the required signatures. Funds not used will remain in Chapter 90.

Peter also noted the Town Hall Heating System Account should be transferred to

an account to include repairs required with the installation of a heating system at a Special Town Meeting. Other Buildings Committee projects include upgrades to the Police Station, Town Hall Painting, and the Town Hall Fire Escape. Future projects include Town Office relocation, Village Green (Town Hall), Solar Array Canopy at the Highway Garage/Transfer Station, addition to the Public Safety Building, replacing the Highway Garage, and converting the current police station to a community center.

Police Department/Animal Control

Police Chief Justin Litchfield and ACO Kate Nevins approached the Board place the Animal Control Officer position as part of the Police Department. The move would provide much needed office space for the ACO in addition to police enforcement when necessary. A question as to how the coordination of the offices would be accomplished was answered by Chief Litchfield who stated the ACO would be based out of the police station, calls would be answered, and response would be provided either by the ACO or another officer if the ACO wasn't available. The ACO budget would be part of the Police Department with the chief responsible for training and regulatory issues. The chair entertained a motion to place the ACO as an independently run subdivision of the Police Department. The motion, moved by Hilary and seconded by Ben, was unanimously approved.

Other Business

Hilary moved to designate Kate Nevins as ACO and Warren Kirkpatrick as Primary ACO per request of Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources. The motion, seconded by Ben, was unanimously approved.

FY24 budget forms will be completed and approved or amended by the Board at the next meeting.

A vocational application for Franklin Technical School was not approved by the MTRSD superintendent because Franklin Tech is not Plainfield's preferred vocational school. The parent will be encouraged to file an application with Smith Vocational School for the student. The Board signed a letter to Greenfield Savings Bank stating Amelia Dwyer is the current Plainfield Treasurer.

In reference to the MIIA Unemployment Services Program it was noted though the program is free of charge should a claim be deemed valid resulting in costs to the Town, MIIA would front the expense and be reimbursed by the Town.

PVPC is updating the Joint Transportation Committee member and alternate. The Board confirmed Walter Jennings as JTC member; there is no alternate at this time.

Correspondence

Notice of the PVPC District Local Technical Assistance Grant Program was received.

The Board received an email from Valerie Podolak reiterating her January 10th concerns about police coverage.

Other mail was reviewed.

Warrants were signed.

The meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Paula J. King
Administrative Secretary