

## Minutes of the Select Board Meeting February 27th, 2024

Ben Gillett, Hilary Weeks, and Judy Cole were in attendance. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. The minutes of February January 23rd, 2024 were accepted as submitted.

Public Hearing: Paul Davis was in attendance to represent Verizon Wireless for the Verizon Pole Hearing: (1) jointly owned midspan pole will be installed on the south side of Campbell Road at a point approximately 1,968 feet easterly from the center line of Grant Street. The pole will provide mid-span support to the existing pole line; and will provide for the distribution of intelligence and telecommunications and the transmission of high and low voltage electric current to provide service for a new house. Kimberly Longey asked if the pole would affect the fiber network as it regularly attaches to the poles. She wanted to verify the pole size to make sure that it would not affect the fiber network and it was confirmed that it will not. Hilary Weeks moved that the Board vote to approve the installation of the pole. The board voted unanimously to approve the installation of the pole and the order was signed.

Discussion with Hawley Select Board: Will Cosby and Hussain Hamdan were in attendance to discuss possible extension of Hawley's fiber network to Plainfield's fiber network. Will stated that Hawley originally got a wireless system for Hawley's network which is proving to be inefficient. Hawley has been identified as a gap that is underserved according to the federal standards. They were putting together a municipal bid package but could not come up with the finances to come up with the application. Charter Communications has made an application to serve the town of Hawley. They are waiting to hear if the application was approved. If the application is denied Hawley would like to have a backup plan of approaching Plainfield to use their "dark fibers" (unused internet fibers) in order to connect to the internet. A system would be built most likely by Whip City. Hawley is asking for our consideration in the event that the application is denied. Kimberly Longey has agreed that this could technically work but that we need more information. She provided some possible concerns but said that it is definitely a possibility and that we need more specifics as they arise. Plainfield's system was designed in case neighboring towns did need to connect in the event that our connections went down, so the system was designed to be used this way. Kimberly is in full support of working with Hawley and Charlemont to make sure

that Hawley gets connected but said that absent details she can't recommend anything. She offered to help as needed and knows that the redundancy layers were built into the system and agrees that it is a problem that Hawley is a gap. The Select Board agrees that it's important to help neighbors and that Plainfield would be willing to further the discussion in future meetings as new information arises.

Recreation Committee: The Select Board signed off on a purchase agreement from Fitzgerald Fences for a backstop (fence) for Sandy Morran, the chair of the Recreation Committee. ARPA funds will be used to cover the cost of the backstop which will total \$8,443.39.

Broadband Update: Kimberly Longey and Bob Baker from the Finance Committee had hoped to bring the Board a draft of the FY '2025 budget this evening but she is waiting for some necessary information from the Treasurer around the debt/debt structure as well as some information from the insurance company. She made a plan with Bob Baker to come back in a month with the detailed information. Kimberly shared that we are in year five and are in "maintenance mode." She expects the budget will be a break-even scenario and that the expenses will be covered by town revenue. She will keep trying to get the information from the Treasurer for the March 26th Select Board meeting. Kimberly stated that everything is going well and that there's been an update in new home construction and customers.

KP Law Payment:

Hilary moved that the board vote to approve the payment to KP law. The Select Board voted unanimously to approve a payment to KP Law in the amount of \$185.38.

Miscellaneous Mail and Meeting Notices:

FRCOG (Franklin Regional Council of Governments) FY 2024 Survey: Compilation of data from 25 of 26 Franklin County communities, and from 12 other Western Massachusetts municipalities.

Trichrome Industries: Email inquiring about the possibility of a cannabis dispensary/retail store in Plainfield. Hillary pointed out that we don't have any

specific bylaws on cannabis and that we don't have enough information to have a discussion.

Constable: Ed Morran: Ed said that there is an issue with animals in town buildings and that the bylaws state that dogs on town property or in buildings need to be controlled at all times and on leash. As the constable he would like the Board to create a policy about animals on town property. He also found that the only animals allowed in town buildings are trained service and support animals. Massachusetts law states that on other peoples' property the owner has to have their dog on leash and under control. Hilary Weeks moved that the board vote to create a policy that animals are not allowed on town property unless they are trained service animals. The board voted unanimously to create a written policy that animals are not allowed on town property.

Warrants were signed.

A motion to adjourn was approved at 7:43 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Shannon Dry