

Select Board Meeting Minutes

July 05, 2022

Members Present: G. Adams, S. Collins, M. Kelly, A. Soto

Public Present: M. Doyle, Jane Freeman, John Freeman, C. Jambora, Carol Platenik, C. McClure, Chris Harry, Crystal Harry, Joe Venezia, Lt. Beaudry

RECEIVED
DATE 7/25 TIME 9am
Debra J. Fagerstrom
TOWN CLERK

6:00 PM: M. Kelly, Chair, opened the meeting. He asked if anyone wanted to lead the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance. Everyone in attendance stood as M. Kelly led the Pledge.

Minutes:

The minutes from the June 27, 2022, were reviewed.

MOTION: S. Collins made a motion to accept and approve the June 27, 2022, minutes as written.

SECOND: G. Adams

VOTE: All in favor

Zoning Board of Appeals – Paul Vandal (3-year term)

MOTION: S. Collins made a motion to appoint Paul Vandal for a 3-year term for the Zoning Board of Appeals.

SECOND: G. Adams

VOTE: All in favor

New Business:

McClure Engineering – Public Well System Study for Library, Town Hall Annex and Town Hall

S. Collins introduced Chris McClure and detailed his qualifications for this project. Mr. McClure presented the plan and detailed reasons why the plan was designed as it is. He indicated the well test was a short duration test. He said the well that serves the Elementary School, the Public Safety Complex and the Highway Department was approved recently by the DEP for 15,000 gallons per day. He provided the information on what constitutes a Public Water Supply. He stated this was more water than was being used by these facilities each day. He explained the Department of Environmental Protection regulations on a Public Water Supply and what action they could take to ensure they were followed. He explained the yield of the test and stated the three buildings using the well would have more than conservative supply to serve uses being reviewed. He stated they would need to apply for a permit if adding more connections to the well. He contacted Doug Payne at the Department of Environmental Protection and he indicated it is just a formality to do this. He went on to discuss the pumps and other details of the well's usage and detailed the plans.

S. Collins asked if the current well could be used if the Town had new public buildings. C. McClure said there are several options for this. He stated they could frack the well which can bring the flow back up. He stated there is enough water for our buildings, but he has no idea of the Town's Master Plan. He said it could depend on what the new buildings would be used for. S. Collins indicated they would like to be inclusive information to ensure any water system they choose will be able to provide water for all new Buildings. S. Collins asked what Mr. McClure's recommendation would be if there was a new Senior Center and Town Complex. He explained it is always good to have a second well as a back-up. He talked about the school having enough water and if they do not, they would have to close the school. He indicated the well could be slowed down, but it would be better to put a smaller pump in the well, otherwise if you try to slow it down it could blow out the line. S. Collins asked C. McClure if he would have to do another study for the Town. G. Adams questioned the last bullet in the list of recommendations regarding the existing well at the Highway Department not being potable. He asked what that meant. C. McClure explained the use of that well and how it can be evaluated and used as the Public Water Supply and could have a new well right next to this well that the Highway Department can use. G. Adams talked about the distance from the well to the buildings that would use the Public Water Supply. M. Kelly asked C. McClure could bring back more information and then a meeting could be advertised so the residents could ask questions.

Trail Committee – Department of Conservation and Recreation Grant Award in the Amount of \$280,000.00

Joe Venezia stated the Trail Committee has been working since 2018 to put together grants and money to build a bridge across the Grand Trunk Trail. He explained that they have enough money for the first abutment. He went on to say this will be a three-part process. He indicated, with the help of T. Cofske (Select Board Administrative Assistant) they will be putting this out to bid in the next week or two. He informed the Select Board they would like to start the work between September and April. He said the Committee is working with the Mass Heritage Endangered Species since there are endangered Wood Turtles on the site. They are working with a Wetland Scientist who is helping to manage this. He indicated it this would include educational pieces along with that program. He said there will be information on the site explaining how to protect the turtles. He stated they submitted that last week and are using some of the Trail Committee funds to create these pieces. He informed the Board the bridge project be funded by the Department of Conservation and Recreation, and they also have some private funds to match. He asked the Select Board to sign the Grant for the funds. He said if anyone wants to help, they can, and match funds as needed. S. Collins congratulated J. Venezia for getting this done. M. Kelly told J. Venezia he and the Trail Committee did an excellent job getting this done. G. Adams asked where the matching funds of 71,000 dollars came from. J. Venezia stated they were from private donors and no Town Money was being used. He went on to say they have bids from between 500,000 and 900,000 dollars. He indicated this was the total for the full project and the Trail Committee split it into three pieces, the first abutment, the second abutment and the third. He informed the Select Board that Todd Smola was essential in getting this project pushed along and thanked him for that.

MOTION: S. Collins made a motion to accept the Department of Conservation and Recreation grant for 280,000 dollars for the Trail Committee.

SECOND: A. Soto

VOTE: All in favor

Citizen Security Proposal(s) – Access Control \$7,963.21 Security - \$5,281.07

M. Kelly explained this is just updating security on the buildings for locks door handles and things of that nature. S. Collins asked where the money for this would come from. T. Cofske stated the initial thought was it could come from ARPA funds, but it could certainly come from the Building Repair Maintenance fund. S. Collins said it was critical to inform the Public there was an incident that makes it important to provide security for the safety of the Town Employees. M. Kelly said he agreed and there was a very disturbing threat to one of the Town's employees and therefore this proposal. S. Collins indicated that there is no security system currently.

MOTION: G. Adams made a motion to accept the proposal for the Access Control for 7,963.21 dollars and for Security in the amount of 5,281.07 dollars.

SECOND: S. Collins

VOTE: All in favor

MOTION: S. Collins made a motion to use the Building Maintenance funds to cover the two figures for the Citizen Security Proposal, and if money left in ARPA funds after the water system is complete then the funds will be transferred from ARPA fund to the Building Maintenance fund.

SECOND: G. Adams

VOTE: All in favor

NSA Commercial Door & Hardware Proposal – \$14,852.71

T. Cofske presented the plan for this proposal. She indicated this is required to ensure the buildings comply. She stated there needs to be automatic doors for handicap access as well as exit doors with the bars as required. She said the building inspector (Bill Cantell) waive the fee for the permit and he will do the inspection. M. Kelly said if the building is not brought up to code, we may lose access to these buildings.

MOTION: S. Collins made a motion accept the proposal from NSA Commercial Door & Hardware in the amount of 14,852.71 to be paid from the Building Maintenance fund and if money left in ARPA funds after the water system is complete then the funds will be transferred from ARPA fund to the Building Maintenance fund.

SECOND: G. Adams

VOTE: All in favor

Town Moderator – Requesting Use of ARPA Funds for Electronic Voting

M. Miller stated he did research on voting counters and presented information on two different proposals for the counters. There are two bids, and one is five hundred dollars higher than the other, but it has an annual fee whereas the other does not. These counters have twenty-year use rate. M. Kelly asked how it works if we bought three hundred, yet we recognized we needed more. He stated we could borrow from other towns that have the same counters. He went on to explain how it works and the cost. He said the cost of 12,865 dollars for the counters includes training and they will be on site for the first meeting they are used at. S. Collins thanked M. Miller for doing the work to research this. She asked if he could table it until the water system was completed to ensure we have the ARPA funds left to be able to pay for the counters. He went on to explain more benefits and portability of the units. Mr. Miller asked how much is in the ARPA fund. S. Collins said it is 1.2 million dollars. M. Kelly stated he hoped there would be funds left to cover these types of things for the town.

Brimfield Police Department Status

M. Kelly asked G. Adams to comment on this item as he had an interest in doing so. Mr. Adams led the conversation by informing attendees that this is a personnel matter, and the Select Board cannot share all information but can share the results of the Executive Session that took place with the Select Board and Chief Kuss which all parties agreed on. He stated Chief Kuss is still the active Police Chief with the full support of the Board. He said due to the mandatory retirement age and the Chief's desire, he will remain Chief until November 30, 2022. He indicated over the next few months the Select Board will collaborate with the Chief to create a stable and safe transfer of power for a new Chief. He went on to say over the next few meetings, they will discuss the job description and application process, laying out a plan for a smooth transition. He acknowledged the Select Board is thankful for Chief's service and look forward to celebrating his retirement and thanking him for his years of service. M. Kelly asked the Chief to come and join the Board for a minute if he did not mind. M. Kelly told the Chief he is in the position of Chief for about 5 months from now and suggested the Chief concentrate on the emails and other things on his plate and have the Lieutenant start to do the day to day and the supervision of the department. Mr. Kelly said it was not a directive but a suggestion and asked how the Chief felt about it. Chief indicated the Lieutenant knows these things already and they have interchanged their tasks previously and there is nothing he does that the Lieutenant cannot do and he wants to focus on the things he wants to finish and put away before his retirement date. M. Kelly asked the Lieutenant how he felt about this, and he indicated it was all good.

A. Soto announced thanked the Chief and said a lot has happened and he wants to apologize to the community if they felt left out of things. He went on to say if you looked at his history, he would never make a speech like this to a crowd but in the last few days he received a call from a ninety-year-old woman who lives in a mobile park. He had knocked on her door and had given her his number. He stated she said her daughter who lives in New Jersey was concerned because she saw on social media that we no longer had a Chief and she is scared. He said he told the woman she was very safe here. He explained that the Chief is just an administrator, and he is not the actual person who patrols and comes out if there is a call. He said the Chief does not do that. He said that is something that should resonate and should be said. He indicated we have an amazing community. He pleaded with the folks to stop using social media for scare tactics. He stated he will hold office hours every month and will be available for the community to talk about anything except for personnel items. He acknowledged that he would give them facts and try to help with whatever they need.

MOTION: S. Collins made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

SECOND: G. Adams

VOTE: All in favor

Meeting was adjourned at 6:54 pm

Approved:


Martin Kelly, Chair

MATERIALS UTILIZED FOR BACKGROUND AND REFERENCE

1. Meeting Minutes – 06/27/2022
2. Email - Zoning Board of Appeals – Paul Vandal (3-year term) requesting appointment
3. CSC – System Proposal and Annual Letter
4. NSA – Proposal for doors/automatic entrance
5. McClure – Water and Septic Data
6. Trail Committee DCR Grant Paperwork