

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

November 27, 2023

MEMORIAL BUILDING

4:30 P.M.

The following are to be considered draft minutes only until approved by the Board at their next meeting.

Selectmen Present: Poul Heilmann, Chair; Amy Lewis, Vice Chair; Don Hill

Others: Jen Roberts, Royal Monty, Steve Dzubak, Theresa Quinn

Scheduled Appointments:

Royal Monty, a town resident, appeared before the Board to discuss the potential need to add new regulations to the Zoning Ordinance. Mr. Monty described a situation that happened with his property as a result of a neighbor making property improvements to prevent flooding in their basement. The result was the pipes installed are running in the direction of Mr. Monty's property, allowing water to flow into his side yard where there is a submerged propane tank. Mr. Monty has found there are no regulations for Springfield or Eastman for this type of excavation work. He would like the Board to consider adding a regulation against re-directing water to neighboring properties. Mr. Monty understands this won't help his situation, but he would like to see both entities think about creating something in the permitting process to prevent situations like this.

Don Hill explained one of the Board's biggest frustrations is to have a resident with a valid concern about his neighbor and they are powerless to do anything about it. It is Poul's understanding Mr. Monty has spoken with his neighbor and things have been resolved, after the fact. Poul feels Mr. Monty is just here as a good citizen, to make the Board aware and try to prevent it from happening to anyone else. The Board agreed this would be a good discussion for the Planning Board. Amy asked where the water is coming from, wondering if it's surface or groundwater. Mr. Monty explained much of the water is natural to the area but it is exacerbated by the pipes installed. Mr. Monty provided regulations that Grantham and Enfield have in place surrounding this issue. Poul stated that this will be brought to the attention of the Planning Board for further discussion. The Board thanked Mr. Monty for bringing this situation to their attention.

Sidum Lu, a Springfield property owner, was present by telephone, to discuss with the Board the piece of property owned by the town on Baptist Pond. This year Mr. Lu has had some insurance agents out to get quotes on homeowners' insurance. They have been declined by a couple of companies stating that one of the reasons is the neighboring property, the town's property, is a safety hazard. Poul provided background on the town-owned land and added, that due to state regulations, the town is two years away from being able to do anything with the property. The Board does recognize that some no-trespass signs need to be put up on the property. It was suggested that Mr. Lu could explore the possibility of putting a fence up on his property to block that area off. Unfortunately, this is not a Board of Selectmen issue, but an issue with Mr. Lu and his insurance company. The town is locked in our inability to do anything with that property. Don pointed out that just because the Board mentioned a fence does not mean they are giving

permission, they are suggesting it as something to explore as a possible solution. It is the responsibility of the property owner to do the research and find out what is permitted. Mr. Lu was told if he sees people on the property to please inform the police as they are not permitted to be there. Mr. Lu was informed that no-trespass signs will be put up within the next week. Mr. Lu thanked the Board for their time.

Zoning/Heath Officer Report:

REPORT from ZONING COORDINATOR -- Board of Selectmen – Monday, November 27, 2023

Application for Zoning Permit – APPROVED

No approvals since last BOS meeting

Other Business

1. Email response to R. Monty, Winding Woods Rd. concerning proposed amendments to Zoning Regulations (copy to Selectboard members)
2. Phone conf. with Beth Castello (Pizza Hero), Four Corners Road, concerning food license, potential requirements for business. To be discussed at the next Planning Board meeting.
3. Chiarella, J, Nichols Hill Rd., site visit / owner discussion concerning permit for an addition to existing barn and potential future building plans.
4. Crosby, J, Main St. Email response to inquiry concerning “second dwelling” under Zoning Ordinance (copy to Selectboard members)

REPORT from HEALTH OFFICER -- Board of Selectmen – Monday, November 27, 2023.

No new business to report.

Respectfully submitted,

Tim Bray

Zoning Coordinator / Heath Officer

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Don received a phone call regarding Pizza Hero and the point made was that it's interesting that you can renovate a bus, start a business and park anywhere in town to serve food; but if you wanted to do this in your home you would likely have to jump through many hoops and likely be denied. The caller felt you need to jump through hoops to do business in this town unless you are mobile. Don is all for the bus, but it seems to be a loophole that is making businesses in this town rethink how things work. Poul stated the main issue he has is the parking issue. Jen stated the owner has been to the Selectmen and to Planning to ask questions; he's done some due diligence there. The Board agreed, but we have nothing in our regulations about food trucks. Tamara stated the owner is going to Grantham's Planning Board meeting in December and is scheduled to come to our Planning Board in January. The caller's concern was regarding Maple Ave. Stating the business on that property has had to revise their site plan multiple times, but the bus can park there having not gone through the planning board process. Don added the pizza hero owner wants to do things the right way and they can help the town develop the rules of the road for this scenario.

Poul made a motion to accept the Zoning Coordinator and Health Officer report submitted by Tim Bray. The motion was seconded by Don. Poul, Don and Amy voted in favor of the motion.

Minutes of November 13th and 21st :

November 13th, page 4:

There shouldn't be any cost to the town because all the fees for the program are ~~included~~ baked in.

November 21st:

*~~Special~~ **Selectboard** Meeting ~~of the Selectboard was held to discuss and approve the 2023 Tax Rate~~*

These total an increase of \$2.69, ~~of~~ which we can only control the Town portion and because of inflation we have limited control over.

Poul Heilmann moved to accept the tax rate of \$23.27 without using any amount from the Unreserved Fund Balance to reduce the rate, Don Hill seconded; ~~the motion~~ passed unanimously.

Don made a motion to accept the minutes of November 13th and 21st as amended. The motion was seconded by Amy. Don, Amy and Poul voted in favor of the motion.

Unfinished Business:

- a. Vacation Policy – This is now being combined with the personnel policy. The Board will have their notes to share by December 6th. The notes should be provided to Tamara, and she will disburse them to the Board members for their review. Subsequent to this the Board will restructure our personnel policy.
- b. Health Insurance Policy – Overall the rates increased by 16%. The coverage will remain the same as in the past. There will be a separate conversation about possibly introducing employee participation. Poul made a motion to accept the Healthtrust 2024 rates. The motion was seconded by Amy. Poul, Amy and Don voted in favor of the motion.
- c. Sign Healthtrust form – The form was signed by Chairman Poul Heilmann.
- d. Energy RFP – Steve Dzubak stated the RFP is now available, the due date is December 22nd by 4 pm. Steve has reached out to four different companies and has three more on his list; one of them declined, two said they would submit bids, and he is waiting for a response from the fourth company.
Steve reminded the Board they still need to respond to the joint powers agreement, it is still pending.
- e. The CIP meeting is Wednesday, November 29th at 7pm. Two areas of discussion will be the Highway Department and the Police Department.

New Business:

- a. Personnel Policy- This is now included with the vacation policy and will be reviewed in December.

- b. Don has been intrigued over the years by the number of complaints received during the snowplow season. In doing some research Don found the town of Freemont posted on their homepage a statement on the town's right of way. Don recommends Springfield add this statement to the website. Poul made a motion to add a statement on the town's right of way to the website. The motion was seconded by Amy. Poul, Amy and Don voted in favor of the motion.
- c. Auction- There was discussion on whether to accept the bids received on town items put up for auction. The auction ended on Friday November 17th. Tamara added the cascade stuff the Fire Department put on be declined. Tyler, from Auctions International, feels we could get more than what was bid. Poul made a motion to accept all bids with the exception of the cascade. The motion was seconded by Amy. Poul, Amy and Don voted in favor of the motion.
- d. Budget – Don questioned the computer line being over budget. Tamara explained that two new laptops were purchased this year, one for the Supervisors of the Checklist and one for the road agent. The rest can be put to cost increases we didn't anticipate. The computer line does include town clerk software; it is not all executive costs. It was suggested to separate the line so we will have a hardware and software line in the budget. Don also questioned the building and property maintenance line being over budget but the non-recurring projects is untouched at \$14,000. Tamara will review the line for building and property maintenance, it is possible some items may have been posted to the incorrect line.

Board and Department Updates:

- a. Agricultural Commission – They meet next Wednesday.
- b. Buildings/Grounds – Don prioritized a list of projects. It comes down to the heat loss in the town office building. Don reached out to Chris Gerharty, who is currently unavailable, but they will be talking soon. Don would like to talk to him about doing the two main entrances at the same time, so they match. The other item is possible rot in the sills at the meetinghouse. There is rot in the fascia board in the front of the building. Mason informed Don there is daylight downstairs as you look out underneath the men's room toward the historical museum. That should be evaluated. Poul stated another source of heat loss is the police department window, it needs to be fixed. Don would like to ask Mason what it would cost to add five or six feet of baseboard heat in the police department.

Tamara added that yesterday she was informed there was no heat at the meetinghouse. Tamara spoke with Irving to confirm a recent delivery. Tamara asked Darrin to check the boilers with her as she couldn't reach Mason. They checked the basement, the oil tank was three-quarters full. They turned the heat up and left. A couple of hours later Tamara was informed there was still no heat. This morning Tamara was able to get Mason, he checked the boilers and there are parts on one or both of the boilers that were bad. Mason has ordered the parts and they should be fixed by tomorrow at the latest.

Amy asked if we have preventative maintenance schedules for town-owned buildings. Tamara informed her that Mason handles the meetinghouse twice a year and maintains the boilers. Poul stated we can ask if there is anything we should be doing in between Mason's visits. It's hard to know when parts go, especially in a building that isn't regularly occupied.

Don's plan is to get a conversation started with Chris Gerharty about being a reliable town carpenter and handyman for one to two weeks a year depending on what the Board determines is required for the year.

Tamara informed Don, for his list, there is an area in the basement, around where the upstairs door is and the ramp, that is an open space to the outside. There is a grate on the outside, but nothing other than that.

- c. Cemetery – They are working on restoration. They had someone last year that was phenomenal, but only able to do a few number of stones a day. There is someone else, new to the scene, but has tremendous credentials. His day rate is a bit higher, but he'll do three times as many stones per day. They are looking at trying to stretch their budget for that. They are getting ready to do a layout of the newer part of the cemetery, it needs to be pinned. They are unclear if a surveyor is needed for this so they are doing some research. Tamara informed the Board Gardner called and did find a surveyor; they are meeting Friday at 11am. There seem to be three cemetery ledgers, and they don't agree. So the committee plans to choose one of the ledgers that they will adjust slightly and use that the one going forward. That is a work in progress.
- d. Conservation Commission – Their meeting is coming up.
- e. Energy Committee – This was discussed earlier.
- f. Fire Department – Attorney Johnston provided quite a bit of feedback. She wants to make sure the intent of what the officers are trying to do with the bylaws is how it reads to the layperson. Ian and crew have her suggested edits and recommendations. The officers have to meet and review what attorney Johnston is suggesting, and do another revision of the bylaws. Then it will get sent back to attorney Johnston once they have a second draft. It will hopefully go before the company in January.

The position of the town will be a separate discussion. There is nothing stated in the new bylaws as to who has oversight of what. The officers will have to decide this by the January or February meeting so the town can get it on the warrant if necessary. This is regarding whether oversight of the department will be a town responsibility or remain within the company. If the officers and company want town oversight it has to be voted on and approved by the town and it won't go into effect for another year.

Amy added that the morale in the department seems a lot better. People are attending meetings again.

We have been teased with the possibility of the new fire truck being here before Christmas. It's still a tease. Amy believes the truck will be 95% complete when it arrives here and then it will be lettered after arriving.

- g. Highway Department – Several meetings ago the Board approved naming the old highway garage in honor of Pete Abair. The sign has come in. The Board is discussing options on how and when to plan a small ceremony for this tribute.
Tim has done some research on a 550 or 1-ton as far as pricing. He has also been researching a variety of options for an eventual replacement of the grader.
Tim has found a part-time person for this winter. He will work about 20 hours per week.
- h. Library – They meet tomorrow.
- i. Planning Board – A lot line adjustment for Hayes was approved. There was a lot of discussion on driveway regulations. There is a proposed ordinance that will be re-worked. The road agents' role is critical as he is the signer of the driveway cuts. The agreement at the planning board was to have Tim Hayes attend and inform them what he does when approving driveways. There was further discussion about driveways that go onto state roads. The RSA states it is purely the responsibility of the DOT and the town can not regulate what driveways look like if they dump onto a state road. Attorney Johnston was asked what can the town do about these driveways. Her answer was nothing; you can complain and bring it to the attention of the DOT but that is all.
- j. Police Department – Chief Zullo is coming to the end of re-writing the policies and procedures. There are no updates on the radars.
 - a. Cruiser Update – Despite assurances we could get one more year out of the old cruiser it's becoming evident we need to replace the cruiser sooner than later. Amy asked if there were any grants available for emergency services that could be used to offset the cost of a cruiser. That is something that could be looked into by Chief Zullo. Chief Zullo has gotten a few estimates on new cruisers, a Tahoe and a Durango, keeping in mind they would also need to be outfitted. They are talking about a warrant of approximately \$60,000 to replace the cruiser. The cruiser should be replaced every 5 or 6 years. Our cruiser is eight years old. Amy added this is why we need Capital Reserves. You have money set aside for a specific purpose, like the police department. If the money is already there you don't need a warrant article to spend it because you already have the warrant article approving the funding of the account.
Poul added that we might have extra funds this year in the budget; we will review what is available in the current year's budget to possibly fund a new cruiser.
Chief Zullo is still trying to find a part-time officer. There were two potential candidates, one has decided not to pursue the position. This becomes a critical issue in 2024 because at some point in 2025 Sgt. Julian is planning to retire.
- k. Recreation Committee – The craft fair will be held on December 2nd and Santa will be at the meetinghouse on December 9th. Don will train someone to operate the lift for those who will need assistance getting upstairs during the craft fair. The recreation committee is on high-sensitivity on the second floor. They will ensure that kids won't be running around up there, the Fire Department will be aware it is being used. Poul said this is a trial run at utilizing the upstairs for something beyond a memorial service or a concert. If it is taken advantage of it may not be allowed again.

- l. ZBA – they will be meeting on December 5th.
- m. Administration – Don provided an update on the E-bike question brought up at the last meeting. Tamara found a pamphlet she shared with Don that provided the classification of E-bikes. A stage three E-bike is rode only where permitted and only if the local jurisdiction says it's ok; it is essentially a motor vehicle. Class one and two E-bikes are considered bicycles.

The mylar for Gene Hayes had spelling errors. New ones are being made and will be available for the next planning board meeting to be re-signed.

The RFP is on the website. There have been no responses to it here in the office. Tamara feels most responses will go directly to Steve Dzubak.

Don expressed concerns with the JPA, joint powers agreement. Don stated he spoke with one of the utilities and was told that you will likely find most of the success they talk about is because it was a tumultuous time for rates. There was a discussion on community power, who would benefit, and what the JPA does for us. The JPA is a non-binding agreement that just gives us access to information on the process of community power.

Poul made a motion to sign the Joint Powers Agreement. The motion was seconded by Amy. Poul, Amy and Don voted in favor of the motion.

Correspondence:

Evans Fuel information on diesel fuel

Signatures:

None

Miscellaneous Business:

Steve Dzubak informed the Board that the property at the end of the Class VI Road on the Springfield/Enfield town line is now for sale. It is an approximately 100-acre parcel and the only access to it is over the Class VI road which has been a subject of conversation at board meetings for other reasons. Tamara informed everyone that 82 acres of that land is in Springfield.

Poul made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Amy. Poul, Amy and Don voted in favor of the motion.

Meeting adjourned at 6:18 p.m.

Jill Hastings

Deputy Administrative Assistant