**Board of Selectmen’s Meeting Minutes**

**2/13/2017, 6:00pm, Rhodes Building**

**Present:** Select Board members Alisa Pearson and Bill Martell, Chief Thomann, Town Clerk-Kathy Martell, Matthew Fuller-Eversource, IT Committee members Rusty Rowell and Otis Rowell, Richard Fanning, Blair Bigelow & Cynthia Weigel-Historical Society, and Selectmen’s Administrative Assistant Susannah Carey.

**Open:** Selectman Martell opened the meeting at 6:00pm.

**Minutes**

On a motion by Selectman Pearson to approve the minutes 1/4/2017, seconded by Selectman Martell, unanimously approved with corrections.

On a motion by Selectman Pearson to approve the minutes 1/17/2017, seconded by Selectman Martell, unanimously approved with corrections.

**Pelham’s 275th Anniversary & Committee**

Blair Bigelow, President of Historical Society, stated the notable people in Pelham include Daniel Shays-Shays Rebellion and Jonathon Edwards, preacher. He would like to review what went on for the 250th to use a guide.

Cynthia Weigel, Historical Society member, mentioned that the Select Board is in charge of appointing a committee of members that not only include the School, Historical Society, Historical Commission, Library Trustees, CPC, but also members at-large. The Committee for the 250th anniversary had 14 members and Cynthia suggested around 10. Karl Martini, Cynthia’s husband, served on the 250th Committee. Events at the 250th included a play, parade, and photo exhibit. Cynthia has heard from David Gross, who was Treasurer of the 250th Committee, that he is interested in joining the 275th Committee, as well as Ed Dane. Linda Hanscom, Community Hall Committee chair, would like one event to be held at Community Hall. Nora Maroulis, Cultural Council, is another person that the Committee should speak with because of her Fall exhibit ‘Picturing Pelham.’ The Select Board encourages the 275th Committee members to actively seek out other members to join. The New Committee information should be put on the website and if possible send residents a postcard mailer. Cynthia was unsure if CPA funds could be used for funding the events and Rich Fanning mentioned that the money could be used for Historical purposes, but not for speakers. The Cultural Council might be able to help with funding as well. The Finance Committee should also be consulted for this event. Town Clerk will look up exactly when the Town of Pelham was incorporated and pass along to the Committee. The Select Board stated that once the committee is formed that they have the Boards permission to do as they please in regards for the event planning. Approval will still need to come from the Board of Selectmen for funding.

On a motion by Selectman Pearson to appoint Blair Bigelow, Richard Fanning, Cynthia Weigel, and Chief Thomann to the 275th Anniversary Committee, seconded by Selectman Martell, unanimously approved. If there are more interested in joining the 275th Committee, they should sign a letter of intent, include their contact information, return to Selectmen’s Office, and the Select Board will appoint them at a future meeting.

**Pelham School Committee Request**

The Pelham School Committee requested access to the FY2017 Special Education Reserve Fund. The request was approved by the Finance Committee on February 6th, 2017. On a motion by Selectman Martell to approve the special education funds for the Pelham School Committee, seconded by Selectman Pearson, unanimously approved.

**Declare Snow & Ice Emergency**

The Highway Department has 2 line items on the expense report, snow removal wages and snow removal materials. Superintendent Rick Adamcek requested the Select Board’s permission to overspend his budget. On a motion by Selectman Martell to declare a snow and ice emergency, seconded by Selectman Pearson, unanimously approved.

**Appointment of Franlisa Rowell – Board of Registrars**

On a motion by Selectman Pearson to appoint Franlisa Rowell to the Board of Registrars, seconded by Selectman Martell, unanimously approved.

**Eversource Letter for New Electric Pole – 55 Arnold Road**Matthew Fuller, Eversource representative, was present to answer questions about the new electric pole request that will be placed outside 55 Arnold Road due to home renovations with possible hook-ups in future to existing barn. Matthew drew up the plans for the new pole and all the abutters were contacted by mail regarding this hearing. No residents showed for the Select Board meeting and it was unclear who lives at the residence. The Board of Selectmen will wait to approve the new pole at their meeting on February 27th until the resident is identified and confirmation of this request is sent from Eversource to Selectmen’s Administrative Assistant.

**Assessment Services Contract – Town of Amherst**

Contract with Town of Amherst to provide Town of Pelham Assessment services; part-time assessor Lori Turati works out of the Town Offices. 2-year contract beginning July 1, 2016, ending June 30, 2018, for $20,000.00 per year. The contract was delayed last year due to vacant Town Manager position in Amherst. On a motion by Selectman Pearson to approve the Assessment Services contract, seconded by Selectman Martell, unanimously approved.

**IT Committee Update – Rusty Rowell**

IT Committee Chairman, Rusty Rowell, offered 3 recommendations to the Board of Selectmen. First recommended, an IT Administrator and Select Board viewed the working job description. Selectman Martell doesn’t feel the Town needs an IT Administrator right now because he checked with the School Department, Library, Fire Department, and Police Department and they all have their own people/companies that maintain their websites and/or IT related issues. Town Clerk, Kathy Martell, stated that the current IT responsibilities shouldn’t fall upon the Town Clerk, Town Administrator/Selectmen’s Administrative Assistant. Tech 1 from Orange, MA has been addressing the computer needs/issues for many years for the Town Offices. The previous Town Administrator declined an offer 2 years ago to upgrade the website because she felt it wasn’t needed at that time. Rusty said that the Town of Amherst would contract with Pelham to help us out, but there needs to be someone who will oversee the work. That’s where an IT Administrator would come in. Selectman Pearson stated that there are no concrete figures for how much an IT Admin. would cost, so that information would need to be provided to see if Pelham could afford it. Town Clerk, Kathy Martell, stated that the Finance Committee should be involved to see if funding is possible for this position or at all viable for the Town. The Selectmen stated that this is a good beginning discussion point for a future IT Administrator position in Pelham.

Rusty called Axia about the fiber optic box in the basement of the Rhodes Building but has had no response back. Chief Thomann mentioned it is $750.00 just for the service contract for some websites and that only includes the equipment.

Second recommendation would be for the Town to establish email accounts for all staff and committee chairs. Since all email correspondences are public record it may be hard to obtain those records/information if personal email is used for Town business. Possible providers could be Outlook365, Gmail, or Comcast. There should also be a domain for Pelham, either using the website domain or pelhamma.gov. Implementation would fall under the IT Administrators position.

Third recommendation by IT Committee was to upgrade Town website with current provider Blair Winans. Blair Winans made an offer to the Town 2 years ago to create a new website for around $2,000.00. The company will not honor that offer today as their business has expanded their operations for websites to $25k or more.

Rusty stated that the process to put bids out for the website is very time consuming. Chief Thomann mentioned that there must be a company out there on state bid service to contract website through. Kathy Martell said that Topsfield, MA and Holland, MA were listed on the Community Compact Cabinet (CCC) program on Mass.gov as towns that received grant money to upgrade aging/inadequate websites. The HCOG could also be contacted for grant writing help if the Town wants to explore this grant and apply. Topsfield’s grant could also possibly be copied since they too were in need of an upgraded website. Kathy Martell has a call out to their Town Administrator to discuss details. The Pelham IT Committee has a working RFP for a new website and would be happy to get that finalized.

On a motion by Selectman Pearson for the Town of Pelham to apply to the Community Compact Cabinet (CCC) Technology Grant program, seconded by Selectman Martell, unanimously approved.

Selectman Pearson suggested to also put Digitizing Records into the grant for the Town of Pelham. Selectman Martell stated that if Rusty Rowell, IT Chair, could show him where the Town needs the IT Administrator, that information would be useful. Selectman Pearson stated that it would be great to have the RAO person double as the IT Administrator and perform both jobs. A computer still needs to be bought for the RAO position before the Town can hire someone. Selectman Pearson suggested to formally write a proposal for new computer with specifics. The Select Board needs to give Kathy Martell permission to spend X# of dollars out of the Cable Franchise Expense Account for the new computer before the Town Clerk can buy one. The Board of Selectmen would also like to get the figures for the Records Access Software.

The Board of Selectmen would like the IT Committee to get them more information on hours, costs, tasks, and functions for the IT Administrator and to keep working on the website upgrade and the RFP draft that was created by the IT Committee. Rusty stated that there would be an initial burst of work at first but there would be less as time went on. The idea that citizens in town could provide their input for the Town website is not recommended by the IT Committee.

**Childcare at Annual Town Meeting/ Notice about tax rate/ Drought Update**

The Selectmen viewed Spring Town Meeting childcare forms and Selectmen’s Administrative Assistant is working with Lennie Ware and School to finalize plans for this event. Selectman Pearson suggested that a mailer/postcard should be sent out to residents about the childcare being offered, the new 275th Anniversary Committee, tax rate going down, and a quote or drought update for our Town. Wording could be “did you know” and “check this page for more information/link” and could be short simple sentences. Selectman Pearson spent around $230.00 for her mailer she sent before the Annual Town Election in 2016 for the open Select Board position.

On a motion by Selectman Pearson to send a black and white postcard mailer for childcare, drought, tax rate, and the 275th Anniversary Committee, seconded by Selectman Martell, unanimously approved.

**Review Board of Selectmen 2016 Town Report Article**

The Selectmen viewed the article and Selectman Pearson wanted to add a sentence at the bottom encouraging residents to join the Boards/Committees in Town.

**Town Officials**

Chief Thomann mentioned that the Idle Right technology discussed at previous Board of Selectmen’s meeting would cost $750.00 for installation. It would take 10 years to get the money back from this vehicle maintenance equipment. Originally recommended by Jim Barry at the DOER to Selectman Pearson who was told that others used to their satisfaction. Selectman Pearson was disappointed to hear this.

Chief Thomann handed out information from Code Red, a Reverse 911 Emergency Management System originally discussed and recommended for Pelham in the Hazard Mitigation Plan. The company Code Red would give a sales pitch about this product to the Town. The product has a 3 year lease for 24/7/365 uninterrupted access, unlimited calls and texts, no set up fees or equipment to buy, and costs $1,500.00/year and there is a grant to pay the first $1,500.00. Pelham is at the smallest tier for our population size. The software would be able to send reverse calls about weather, notifications, and emergencies. Residents who provide their phone numbers, home or cell, would become registered for the program. Town Meeting would be a good place to start registering residents, posting information on the Town and PD websites to promote this new technology available, and maybe send a mailer to residents. Both Selectmen seemed excited about this product.

Chief Thomann discussed the installation of new tablet computers from Patrol PC located in Attleboro, MA for both Pelham Police vehicles. Patrol PC covers maintenance and upgrades. The new tablets, which are removable from vehicles, would replace the current laptops that are no longer supporting the new software. There is an in-car video system that the PD can review, which records all motor vehicle stops. Contract is a 5 year lease with payments stretched out over 5 years; 1st year $1,000, 4th year $2,000, 5th year $8,000-totaling $10,000.00.

**Public Comment –**none.

**Liaison Reports**

Highway; Selectman Martell; The Highway crew has been working hard these last few storms.

Town Offices; Collector/Treasurer has Selectman Pearson as liaison, that is ok.

Fire Deptment-nothing to report.

Police Department-nothing to report.

Energy Committee; Selectman Pearson; Committee has decided not to apply for the upcoming grant cycle. Potential upcoming workshop with Paul Fen, Local Power company will discuss electric bills in Town.

Finance Committee; Selectman Martell; Budget meeting with BOS on 2/27/16.

Library; Selectman Pearson; new member Darci Palmquist began, Joan Levy will be stepping down as Chair, Library assessment for Director-provided to Select Board.

Elementary School; Selectman Pearson; Preschool needed special education teacher and funding-both approved by Finance Committee and Board of Selectmen. Assessment of Superintendent position.

Regional School; nothing to report.

**Old Business –**none.

**New Business** –Upcoming MA Rural Communities Summit is March 7th, 2017 at Mohawk Trail Regional School.

Next Board of Selectmen meetings set for March 13th and 27th.

Selectmen’s Administrative Assistant needs to call Accountant, Gail Weiss, to ask about having a meeting on April 10th, which is Passover.

**Adjournment**

On a motion by Selectman Pearson, seconded by Selectman Martell, unanimously approved at 8:07pm.

**Documents Reviewed**

Pelham School Committee Request-FY17 Special Education Reserve Funds, Eversource Letter for Electric Pole at 55 Arnold Road, Assessment Services Contract-Town of Amherst, IT Committee recommendations and IT Administrator working job description, childcare forms for Spring Annual Town Meeting, Board of Selectmen 2016 Town Report Article, Code Red-Reverse 911 Program information.

Respectfully submitted,

Susannah Carey