**Board of Selectmen Meeting Minutes**

**9/26/2018, 6:30pm, Ramsdell Room, Library**

**Present:** Select board members Alisa Pearson, Karen Ribeiro & Bob Agoglia, Building Inspector-Dave Waskiewicz, Community Hall Committee-Linda Hanscom, BOH-Bill Pula, Finance Committee-John Trickey, Historical Commission-Karl Martini, Cemetery Commission-Norm Page, School Committee-Cara Castenson, Energy Committee-Stan Swiercz, ZBA-Jeff Eiseman, Housing Committee-Tilman Lukas, Planning Board-Abbie Jenks, Board of Assessors/Cable Committee-Rusty Rowell, Garden Committee-Cyd Reiman, Lee Halasz-new grant administrator for MVP Action grant; Communications, Library Trustee-Gayle Hubley, and Susannah Carey.

**Open:** Selectman Pearson opened at 6:30pm.

**Roundtable Discussion with Board/Committee Chairs**

Welcome given by Select board. Meet & greet exercise moving around the room.

**ZBA**-Jeff Eiseman, Chair. State required board because of Planning Board in Pelham. Work on Variances and findings, work with Zoning Enforcement Officer, and on town by-laws.

Resources-Use for recovering expenses, main costs are for postage and advertisements.

Needs-Ticketing policy for enforcement issues (Non Criminal Disposition). Helps Conservation Commission as well as the BOH.

**Building Inspector**-Dave Waskiewicz. Approves building permits. Ticketing policy would need Town Meeting approval.

Resources or Needs-none at this time.

**Community Hall Committee**-Linda Hanscom, Chair and Historical Society Trustee. Linda read aloud history about Community Hall.

Resources or needs-more meetings when Community Hall is Accessible for all.

**Historical Commission**-Karl Martini, Chair. Inventory project currently underway and close to completion. Commission has access to CPA funds. Interior study done on Town Hall indicating future improvements that will be addressed.

Needs-New younger members.

**Board of Health**-Bill Pula, Chair. Rich Hall and Chris Rice are other members. 2nd Tuesday/month. Responsible for the enforcement of permits and approval of Septics, wells, rentals, & animal inspections. Only ~1 house recorded as a new build per year within Pelham. Quabbin Health District provides professional staff to assist BOH.

Need-No nurse for disease investigation. Trash issues with tenants. Ticketing authority could be a need.

**Community Garden Committee**-Cyd Reiman, Chair with 7 members. Community Garden on Meetinghouse Road in its 3rd year with all 8 plots filled and a pollinator garden, which was created with CPA funds and gift account. Fire Dept fills water tank as needed. Grant from Just Roots in Vermont. Rick Adamcek and Conservation Commission helped immensely with parking area.

Wishes-more communal space and beautify with picnic tables; entice as a gathering place, social.

Problems-Unleashed dogs with walkers passing through the garden area to get to surrounding conservation area trails. Would like piles of trash where barn was taken down on site by parking area removed.

**MVP Action Grant Administrator**-New hire, Lee Halasz, will help with Resilient Communications.

**Board of Assessors**-Rusty Rowell. Board raise and appropriate for budget, work with assessments and the tax rate. Can adjust exemption for Town Meetings.

Need or idea-Program to have seniors work off tax bills but no work or request have been proposed.

**Library Trustees**-Gayle Hubley, Co-Chair. Ongoing programming for preschoolers, teens, and adults. Two meeting rooms are increasing in popularity and is concern for scheduling. Concern for ongoing issues with the Community Building. Recent bequest from Pelham resident is slated only for programming and can’t be applied to salary, improvements to building, etc. Concern for salaries that are more in line with other communities (study done 2 years ago). Annual funding approved by Friends of the Library with Library Trustees.

Needs-Full kitchen.

**Planning Board**-Abbie Jenks, Chair. Ongoing Village Center by-law from ATM approved by AGO. Projects working on: Stormwater management (1st within Village Center then remainder of Town) and Design for walkways, bikepaths, and calming roadways within the Village Center. ZBA and Planning Board work closely. PB granting authority in Village Center where ZBA is granting authority for rest of Pelham. Movement with HRD Press project to look at elderly housing proposal-working with Home City.

Needs-PB dependent on grants and consultants. Need for larger budget.

**Finance Committee**-John Trickey, Chair. Mission to present budget for consideration by voters, recommend warrant articles as needed, look at future financial issues, attend seminars for budget information (Association Town Finance Committee in Fall and MMA in January).

Resources-‘Citizen’s Academy’ for recruiting new members put in place by Concord, MA. John will share with all.

**Housing Committee**-Tilman Lukas, Chair and Conservation Commission member. Now in its 3rd year, the HC mission is to increase the diversity, availability, and affordability of housing options in Pelham, particularly for young families and seniors. Land study from ~2 years ago concluded less that 8% of Pelham was considered buildable (wetlands,etc). Warrant article for first time homebuyer program with CPC and CPA funding will be at 2018 Fall Town Meeting. HRD Press location for possible elderly housing may not be possible due to constraints with the driveway.

Resources-CPA primary funding. State requirement for local matches.

Needs-Form Affordable Housing Trust that would enable the Housing Committee to make decisions right away if land becomes available for possible affordable housing without waiting for Town Meeting (Fall & Spring only) vote. There are several limitations here.

**Conservation Commission**-Tilman Lukas, member, 3 members currently. Work on wetland site visits and violations, help advise BOH with septic locations onsite, work with Building Inspector, maintain dialogue with other committees. Conservation Agent works 20 hrs/month and helps with site visits, current forestry violations, and attends meetings

Needs-Recruit more members. Increase hours & budget for Conservation Agent.

**Cemetery Commission**-Norm Page, member, 3 member elected board. Maintain cemeteries, burials, creation of new are for cremation plots, tree trimming, mowing, and currently establishing green burial area at Cook Johnson Cemetery.

Needs-Increase budget, improve road access, help with tree removal, help fix tipping stones as needed.

Wishes-New area for plots on the backside of Pelham Valley.

**School Committee**-Cara Castenson, Chair, 5 member elected. Educate children within town and work with school’s budget. School choice lately falling under budget and Charter School enrollments around 2/1, which is lower than in past. Strategic Planning Group created to identify strengths and weaknesses within the school and researching other curriculum options; STEM, social justice, project baselining; in hopes to attract more students to Pelham School. The school will have a new sign out front soon and looking at temporary solutions for hot temperatures in the school this past September.

Resources- DOR grant acquired recently for $21,500.00. MARS (Massachusetts Association of Regional Schools) will assist the school with a process and governance aspect and continue to work with Mark Abrams to preserve the character of the school. Possible timeline for Regional Agreement is Summer 2019. Will be a community outreach program in the Fall time with forums, information, discussion of educational impact on students, financial standpoint, etc. No decision has been formally made at this point for Amherst or Pelham.

**Energy Committee-**Stan Swiercz, Chair, plus 4 other members. Advisory Committee to Select Board for about 10 years. Town designated Green Community in 2012. Energy conservation measures for the Community Building. Recent audit with Eversource determined Relamping work which was applied through the Green Communities Grant Division and awarded. MVP grant workshop in April 2018 identified priorities one being a heating and cooling center, which is now part of the current MVP Action Grant under Resilient Campus. Other priorities were Resilient Roadways and Resilient Communication. Recent feasibility study for Solar funded by the META grant for the Community Building and School determined the Community Building was not a good candidate for solar, but the School may have some options. The HVAC in the Community Building is failing as it is reaching its age of 18/20 years. Consultant investigating heat pumps both air/ground source with results coming soon. Town of Ashburnham received a Green Communities grant for their HVAC work. Pelham is looking to acquire GC grant for HVAC project as well. Temperature and humidity sensors set up in the Community Building with electric sensors to be installed soon. High temperatures during school and impact on classrooms & students will need further exploration.

Needs-2 more members. Better system for large board/committee purchases that must wait for reimbursements. Budget for Energy Committee in FY20. Pelham is not a good community for Photovoltaics with minimal State funding available.

**Cultural Council and COA not represented tonight.**

**Board of Selectmen**-Bob Agoglia, Karen Ribeiro, Alisa Pearson, Chair. Selectmen’s mission statement read from Selectmen’s handbook page 3,4. Offer support to board/Committees, work effectively and efficiently, facilitate communication/collaboration, be visible and accessible. Role as liaisons to some board/committees currently, responsible for hiring town employees since no HR department in town, and ensuring Committees get the members/volunteers they need. Current meetings now held in the Ramsdell Room due to lack of accessibility and ADA compliance in the Rhodes Building.

Resources-Partnering with PVPC with MVP grants work to become a leader of climate adaptability & resiliency. Grants available through State, Selectmen’s Administrative Assistant who communicates with all Committees/Boards as needed, Mass Municipal Association annual meeting in January, and town counsel services from KP Law.

Needs-Grant writers and need to use the town website to its fullest potential.

*10 minute break.*

**Group Discussion**

Meeting needs and improving communication

How to spend money-grants, workflow/procedures, memberships

Other information

Creation of an electronic version of an Events Calendar for Ramsdell Room ‘booking,’ which is very competitive. A community calendar with events will be added to the website homepage. Official public meeting calendar will be kept separate as there is a need for protection and security here. Streamline approved event postings rather than having separate postings by any board/committee.

Citizens Academy-Finance Committee Chair, John Trickey, mentioned this recruiting method that Concord, MA has introduced, which includes a 10-12 week ‘course’ for new members that meet with each individual board/committee and learn about each. John will share more information acquired from Finance Association meeting in November. Future advertising for new members could occur at Town Meeting, through the Pelham Slate mailing, and online.

By-laws-website is not up to date. Solar and new home occupation by-laws are also missing. Attorney General has not approved the Village Center proposal for zoning yet.

Membership-Acquiring cross-generational members that fit with the understanding and needs of particular board/committee. Idea to have new members without experience shadow veteran members to further educate about their particular group and role. Pelham Slate has been profiling boards/committees to educate public.

E-Alerts- Website needs more information for public on e-alerts and what that entails if you subscribe.

Membership-Trainings to learn, resume building, networking, communication.

**Financial Piece/Issues Boards/Committees have Experienced**

The library sign was purchased ahead of time. Individual used personal credit card for the large purchase and submitted reimbursement after to Collector.

Some grants directly deposit the awarded funds in their entirety, while others reimburse on a request for payment system.

Town is approaching 25/1000 tax rate and is facing financial troubles. Important to support Village Center that Planning Board is working on and the storm water task force.

Looking into having a grant administrator for the Town could increase revenue with more potential grants awarded.

Communication and support offered to residents through the Pelham Press, Pelham Slate and the MVP Action Grant and communication portion.

Feedback sheets collected from members.

Motion to adjourn, seconded, unanimously approved at 8:55pm.

**Documents Examined**

PowerPoint slides for Roundtable Discussion, feedback sheets.

Respectfully submitted, Susannah Carey