**Joint Board of Selectmen & Regional School District Planning Committee Meeting Minutes**

**11/7/2018, 5:30PM, Ramsdell Room**

**Present:** Selectmen Alisa Pearson, Bob Agoglia & Karen Ribeiro, David Burgess-Regional Assessor, Bruce & Leslie Laurie, Peter Demling, Rusty Rowell-Board of Assessors, Fred Vanderbeck, Tom Fanning, Emily Marriott, Cara Castenson, and Susannah Carey.

**Open:** Selectman Pearson opened at 5:30pm.

No quorum present for RSDPC.

**Tax Classification Hearing-5:30PM**

Proposed tax rate for FY19 is $20.70. The number of non-occupied homes in Pelham was unknown at time. Only about 30 towns in Massachusetts use the residential exemption.

Motion to approve single tax rate, seconded, unanimously approved.

Motion to not have open space exemption, seconded, unanimously approved.

Motion to not have a residential exemption, seconded, unanimously approved.

Motion to not have small commercial exemption, seconded, unanimously approved.

Local Assessment-5 form will be provided for the board’s signature at a later date.

**Regionalization Discussion and Overview with RSDPC**

Packet provided describing how group formed, purpose, process & timeline, key information for public, Board resources, key questions, and contact information.

RSDPC called to order at 5:53pm. Cara Castenson joined the meeting.

Previous Regionalization with 4 towns; Leverett, Shutesbury, Pelham & Amherst; did not succeed. Primary driver for potential regionalization with Amherst is for financial reasons.

Pelham School Committee has determined that there are not many options for Pelham and potential regionalizing with Amherst seems at this point like the most viable option. Pelham would gain predictability, the ability to have Charter School costs spread out over the region, and access to programs across the entire district; dual language program recently approved.

Recent walk thru with Kuhn-Riddle Architects at the Pelham Elementary School explored building condition, identified leaky skylights as a problem area, and determined that expansion of the school with multiple stories was a future possibility. Replacement of the school roof; part of capital planning; will occur in 2025. Solar feasibility for the school roof was not discussed.

Committee will ask Mark Abrams for investigation of multiple scenarios with and without the regionalization including projections for previous and future years. Pelham’s cost to continue as is will also be provided.

Discussion about keeping building costs separate for Pelham and Amherst and as a condition of the regional agreement. Pelham School’s building was determined to be in good shape. Two of three Town of Amherst Elementary Schools were in need of replacement or other major renovations.

Option for a shared School Committee discussed and will be explored further.

Group is currently working with Consultant, Bill Logue, on future public forums.

Pelham Select board would like to see future cost estimates with the new Regionalization versus what the costs are currently for the Pelham School. Could other communities similar to our situation provide modeling for such scenario regionalizing with another community & the proportional relationship.

Motion to close APRSD Committee, passed unanimously at 6:11pm.

**School Proposal for Piloting a Sexuality Gender Education Curriculum**

Proposal for Kindergarten, first & second grades education. Currently in feedback gathering stage until November 19, 2018. Director Tim Sheehan is working with Principal Lisa Desjarlais. Pelham School Committee has not discussed proposal yet.

**Award Contract for Town-Wide Culvert Survey/Assessment**

Motion to award BETA Group, Inc. Town-Wide Culvert Survey/Assessment, seconded, unanimously approved. Bid for $22,400.00. Survey project will be paid out of the MVP Resilient Roadways grant. Budgeted amounts within the Resilient Roadways have turned out to be less costly than anticipated. Selectman Ribeiro will petition the State to see if the remaining funds not used for the MVP Action Grant could be used for other related projects.

**Robt Hall Consulting Engineers, Inc. Proposal for New HVAC Design**

Community Building HVAC system in need of replacement. MVP Action Grant Resilient Campus will fund the design proposal. Motion to accept the proposal for the Community Building new HVAC design from R. W. Hall Consulting Engineers, Inc., seconded, unanimously approved.

**Town Officials**

Dana MacDonald, Conservation Commission Chair, was present to discuss the McClung property acquisition. McClung family distributed letter of recent boundary line change due to the change in land use; part of property was taken out of Chapter 61 and incorporated into the McClung’s current residential lot creating space between neighbors, etc. Money remaining in federal grant would be used to purchase the piece of land. Property was assessed for $155k. The purchase & sale agreement would be presented to the McClungs for $77k, offering to take as a tax write off. The Town will acknowledge the McClung’s application for tax program benefits. There is a short time frame to purchase as the federal grant funds will expire on January 31, 2019. Money not used from the grant will be lost. The net loss in annual tax revenues for the Town could be around $300 for the McClung property. The Town will obtain help from the Kestrel Trust.

**Appointment of Council on Aging Outreach Worker, Wanda Kelly**

Motion to appoint Wanda Kelly as Outreach Worker, seconded, unanimously approved.

**Board and Committee Responsibilities-Plans for Recruitment, Orientation, & Where New Member Contributions Could be Most Valuable/Rewarding to Group**

Discussion of creating policy for acquiring & orientating new members. Consideration of email to all groups in town as a standard operating procedure stating that the town heard about the need for members and offer opportunities for recruitment. This may include a description of what is needed posting on both the website and in the Slate newsletter under new section, ‘help wanted,’ and sharing those opportunities open/available at Town Meeting as an announcement.

MVP Action Grant Task Force will now be referred to as the Connect Pelham Task Force. Currently working with a UMass student who is a liaison for climate change. A narrative for the MVP grant will be created. New member, Victoria Desclos, will be meeting with various town boards/committees.

Proposed roundtable meeting discussion item, term limits & succession planning. School will be consulted to see if there is any recruitment tool they use as turnover engine. Hoping to have information from Concord, MA recruitment tool by March roundtable to discuss.

**Human Resources Discussion-Regular Performance Reviews & Updates with All Town Employees**

Response back from town counsel that Select board may change the title of Records/Information Clerk to Assistant Town Clerk. Per recommendation by Temporary Town Clerk, Sandra Burgess, who will be asked to create a job description for this new position. Selectman Agoglia will speak with Town Clerk, Kathy Martell, who is currently out on leave until June 1, 2019 about the new position. Motion to change title of Records/Information Clerk to Assistant Town Clerk, seconded, unanimously approved.

Performance Reviews & Updates-Select board wants to look at job compensation and duties within Pelham staff which may/may not be working well or areas that are not addressed by our current positions. Select Board requests the Selectmen’s Administrative Assistant to produce list of her duties & responsibilities and to explore what roles she performs that could be considered within a Town Administrator’s job description if any.

**Select Board Meeting with Elementary School Children**

Discussion of holding meeting at School prior to Annual Town Meeting around February/March. Parents would also be invited to event. Board would like students to presents questions, concerns, as well as address what is important to students about Pelham. Select board will schedule a meeting with the school principal to discuss possible curriculum parallel, faculty insights, needs, themes, and dates & times that work well. Matt Wolaver and PTO chair, Jenny Franz, will also be contacted.

**Regional MMA Meeting and the Hampshire County Select Board Council Meeting**

Selectman Ribeiro updated board on her attendance at the Legislative Breakfast on 10/26/18 in Sunderland which included networking and discussion of what is going on in surrounding towns.

Hampshire County Selectmen’s Association Meeting was held on 10/19/18 in Hadley. Recently there has been low participation/attendance at these meetings. Franklin County is actively engaged with FRCOG and there may be possible merger of HCOG and FRCOG.

Upcoming meeting on evening of 11/29/18 will be attended by Selectman Ribeiro. Discussion of continuing work that Representative Stan Rosenberg headed for western MA and bringing together all Select Boards in April 2019.

Select board interested in meeting with Representatives Domb and Comerford. Doodle poll will be sent with future dates. Pre-discussion prior to meeting about key talking points.

**Public Comment**

Bruce Laurie from Packardville Road complaint discussed about unleashed dogs in Cadwell Forest and recent attack. Select Board address public safety issue by posting signage at major walking areas in town. Motion to have Rick Adamcek explore signage for leashing animals, seconded, unanimously approved.

Selectman Agoglia noted that going forward at future meetings, the Selectmen should survey the public attending, who may come to speak under public comment, to see if they would like to address the Board before discussion/action items. Board agreed with request.

**Liaison Reports**

Highway; Selectman Ribeiro; Final plans for approval from Morgan Studios for Community Hall. Rick is actively soliciting bids for this project.

Town Offices; Selectman Agoglia; no report.

Fire; Selectman Pearson; Fire Dept was part of the 275th celebration. Safe Program just concluded for the 4th graders.

Proposed idea from Selectman Pearson about a ‘fix it clinic’ to attach to Fire Prevention Week and opportunity for intergenerational event.

Police; Selectman Pearson; Lieutenant Fournier involved with November 16th review of candidates for full-time officer. Discussion with Joanne Misiaszek, HR-Amherst, if more applications were going to be considered as the original date to submit had passed, and answer was yes.

Selectman Agoglia flagged that the Board should actively review/discuss Department & Employee pay scales, which need to be more competitive with other similar towns/depts. Add to future roundtable discussion, but not March 4, 2019.

Finance; Selectman Ribeiro; next meeting soon. Capital Planning Meeting expected date request to be sent to Chair, John Trickey.

Library; Selectman Pearson; no report.

Elementary School; Selectman Ribeiro; Attended Stabilization meeting and learned about roof and field expenses and projected funds.

Regional School; Selectman Agoglia; no report.

Regional School District Planning Committee/Board; Selectman Agoglia; report above.

Other; nothing to report.

**Old Business**

Telematics equipment and study-meeting with funder where town vehicle fleet list was provided. About 20 vehicles may need the equipment for study. If data is provided, could it be sent as monthly email including Stan Swiercz, Rick Adamcek, John Trickey, Ray Murphy, Gary Thomann, Karen Ribeiro, and Susannah Carey.

Website-Resend original email compiled by Selectman Ribeiro as no response has been received from VT&S.

**Time Reserved for Topics the Chair did not Reasonable Anticipate**

Response from town counsel on use of Rhodes Building for public meetings indicated that no meetings were to be held if the building does not provide handicap accessible bathroom facilities. Discussion about what to do now with Boards/Committees that meet in the Rhodes Building and what the Town should do in the future to address. Possible exploration of building expansion with ADA Compliant bathrooms, town clerk vault, and adequate space for town storage. Discussion when bonds for the Community building and Elementary School will be paid off. Local architects to keep in mind who live in Pelham for future design services for handicap accessible bathroom facilities; Carey Clouse, Amy Spalding-Fecher, & Ruth Elcan.

Next meetings: November 21, 2018, December 5, 2018 and December 19, 2018.

Extra meeting with Representatives Domb & Comerford will be explored in December-doodle poll.

**Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn, seconded, unanimously approved at 8:10pm.

**Documents Examined**

RSDPC Informational packet, Beta Group Contract with Bid for Culvert Survey, Robt Hall Consulting Engineers, Inc. proposal for new HVAC design services, Town Counsel response for Rhodes Building.

Respectfully submitted, Susannah Carey