**Joint Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee Meeting Minutes**

**2/20/19 6:00pm Ramsdell Room, Pelham Library**

**Present:** Selectboard members Alisa Pearson, Bob Agoglia, and Karen Ribeiro, Finance Committee members John Trickey, Fred Vanderbeck, Emily Marriott and Bill Martell, Tilman Lukas, Judy Eiseman, Susannah Carey, and June Massee.

**Absent:** Tara Loomis

**Open:** Selectman Pearson opened the meeting at 6:01pm.

Finance Committee opened their meeting at 6:04pm.

**FY20 Budget Hearing and Selectboard Projections**

Spreadsheet read aloud by Susannah Carey. Request for Finance Committee to compile amount for Admin. Assistant salary. The discussion continued with the Selectboard members wanting to raise the Admin. Assistant salary from $19.23/hr to $22/hr. New Salem and Wendell were communities where the Town Coordinator’s position most closely resembled Pelham’s Admin. Assistant’s role. Suggestion to inquire with those Town’s to see if the Town Coordinator positions are benefitted.

**First-Time Homebuyer Documents**

Tilman Lukas presented Selectboard with First-Time Homebuyer Document approved by both the Valley Community Development and Pelham town counsel. Valley will perform an initial review of income and provide first-time homebuyer training for those approved. Two $15k loans for closing costs and mortgage assistance. After 5 years, the loan will be forgiven at a rate of 1/5th per year. Housing Committee is not involved in the income verification or home selection process. Motion to sign and approve the first-time homebuyer contract, seconded, unanimously approved.

HC Update on Habitat for Humanity and Affordable Housing Activities-Meet with CPC. Asking $125k to acquire 8 Amherst Road. Appraised for $123k a few years ago. The Housing Committee needs $5k for future hiring of appraiser/consultant and to cover cost of an environmental assessment on the property. MMA Conference alerted Selectman Ribeiro to free services offered to municipalities for Town owned properties; appraisals. Pelham would have ability to keep control over the property but may not apply in this situation. Housing is also speaking with the Conservation Commission about a Conservation Restriction along Amethyst Brook behind 8 Amherst Road.

**International Energy Conservation Code (IECC)**

Offer to have up to 4 voting members from Pelham for improving building energy codes internationally at an annual cost of $135. Tabled until later date.

**Personnel Workload Distribution**

Administrative Assistant enjoys being challenged and continues to learn and grow in her position. Pelham has a low population with similar positions in New Salem and Wendell to compare to. It is reinforcing to see what other towns similar to Pelham’s size are doing with their limited positions/resources. More information to be sought about if those other towns provide benefits.

Salary increase is $2.77/hr or $3,456.96 annually. Discussion of funding raise with other revenue opportunities such as sale of properties in Town Pelham could possibly capitalize on. Finance Committee will leave article 4 the same with COLA and 2% STEP increase factored in. A new warrant article will appear for each department’s request for FY20 compensation increases.

**Local Room Occupancy Tax**

Tax Law passed on January 1, 2019. Local room occupancy tax is already adopted in Massachusetts; MGL. Air BNB, Bed & Breakfasts, and hotel establishments register with the State, remit taxes to the State of MA, and then the State pays the Town through local excise tax. Two steps Pelham can follow, 1) Accept the provisions of chapter and establish an excise tax, and 2) determine what the percentage of the excise tax will be. If done, Pelham can collect additional excise tax from the State. Motion to accept Local Occupancy Tax for Pelham at rate of 6%, seconded, unanimously approved.

**EV Charging Stations**

Selectman Ribeiro will compile more information about stations and grant, speak with Library Director, Highway Superintendent, and School staff about spaces in parking lot, signage, # electric vehicles, public hearing idea, creation of reference materials; a one-page document with bulleted info. and possible survey, as well as public hearing in March for even greater exposure in the community prior to Annual Town Meeting. Selectman Ribeiro will create a warrant article and send to Admin Assistant.

**Contract for CADMUS-Stan Swiercz**

Contract that was accepted by Energy Committee and Board of Selectmen was sent back from town counsel with edits. CADMUS accepted those proposed edits. Contract will be sent to CADMUS.

**Pelham Leash Law Information for Review**

Pelham has a leash law in the Code of Pelham (Chapter 5, Animals). The language is not as descriptive as other municipalities or States. Town of Amherst has more descriptive language in their leash law. The Board of Selectmen would like to hold public meeting with Plotkin/Wasserman family, dog officer, witnesses, and complainants on March 6, 2019 and will ask if Gary Thomann can find an objective 3rd party to act as hearing officer during meeting. Bruce Laurie was bit in Cadwell Forest by two unleashed dogs and sent in written complaint to the Board of Selectmen’s office. Warrant language acquired from State of Arizona with leash law information reviewed. Suggested paragraph to add to sec. 5-3:

‘Town further requires any dog for which a formal complaint has been filed be kept under the owners/custodians leash control at all times.’

In this case, it would only take one incident to prompt leashing of that dog(s) going forward.

SC will look at Town of Amherst bylaw for more descriptive language. Selectman Pearson will speak with Gary about hearing officer. Dean Brown will be contacted.

**Chapter 90 Reimbursement Request Forms**

Motion to sign Chapter 90 reimbursement paperwork, seconded, unanimously approved.

**Vote to Allow Highway Department to Overspend Budget**

Motion to allow Highway Department to overspend budget, seconded, unanimously approved.

**Town Officials**-none.

**Public Comment**-none.

**Liaison Reports**

Highway Department; Selectman Ribeiro; SC follow up with Liz Pitts at Amherst Trucking.

Town Offices; Selectman Agoglia; Post Records Information Clerk to website. Discussion of pros and cons with elected versus appointed positions especially the Town Clerk, town counsel’s response, term of current Town Clerk, methods to change elected positions with Town Meeting vote & process, and possible options if Town Clerk does not finish current term.

Fire Department; Selectman Pearson; no report.

Police Department; Selectman Pearson; AP will speak with Chief about hiring process of new officer and Village Center traffic calming report. Message to Kristen DeBoer about March 6 BoS meeting.

Finance Committee; Selectman Ribeiro; meeting March 4. Budget meetings ongoing. KR will contact Tara Loomis about researching ways Pelham can increase revenue in relation to properties.

Library; Selectman Pearson; no report.

Elementary School; Selectman Ribeiro; MMA promoting 8th grade essay contest. Idea to engage school students. Meeting with school students email to be sent to principal for dates in April from 2-3pm.

Regional School District Planning committee; Selectman Agoglia; no meeting scheduled.

Regional School; Selectman Agoglia; 4 town meeting 2/26 at 8am for Regional budget. 4 town forum will be 3/2 at 9am with FC & BoS members at Middle School.

Other; Planning Board Chair Abbie Jenks resigned. Judy Eiseman currently contact person. PB will look to fill vacancy until Annual Town Election in May. Plan to have moratorium for Village Center zoning which would allow for amendment to zoning. Board will submit warrant articles for Town Meeting by deadline.

Roundtable-Facilitator Steve Botkin and Selectman Agoglia drafted an agenda for review. Roundtable pre-planning meeting from 2/26/19 at 5:30pm. Motion to formally invite Steven Botkin to lead the 3/5/19 Roundtable, seconded, unanimously approved.

MVP Action Grant- Question if there could be additional narratives for each piece of the grant created in the google folder; Campus, Communication, & Roadways. No narrative for Campus or Roadways currently. Connect Pelham’s goal is engagement through narratives (Resilient Communication) and creating cohesiveness in community planning events that bind us. MVP Resilient Roads and Campus focus is on resiliency. Potluck attendance was between 40-50 people and included Energy Committee membership interest. KR will speak with Rick Adamcek about MVP monies not used for roads.

**Old Business-**none.

**Time Reserved for Topics the Chair Did Not Reasonably Anticipate**-none.

**Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn, seconded, unanimously approved at 9:05pm.

**Documents Examined**

FY20 budget spreadsheet, Town Coordinator job description, Local Room Occupancy Tax email, IECC paperwork, Leash Law information from Arizona, chapter 90 reimbursement forms, Dodson & Flinker contract for VC Zoning Revisions, Valley CDC first-time homebuyer contract, and Breaking the Spell by Declaring Climate Emergency article.

Respectfully submitted, Susannah Carey