

Select Board Meeting Minutes

1/6/2021 Virtual via ZOOM 6:00pm

Present: Select Board members Robert Agoglia, Tara Loomis, & David Shanabrook (6:45pm), Finance Committee Chair John Trickey and member Cara Castenson, Housing Committee & Con Comm. member Tilman Lukas, Library Director Jodi Levine and Library Trustee Gayle Barton, Fire Chief Raymond Murphy, School Committee Chair Sarah Hall, Principal Leigh Whiting-Jones, Superintendent Michael Morris, Planning Board Chair Judy Eiseman and member Alexandra Dewey, Finance Director Doug Slaughter, Board of Assessor's Chair Robert Rowell, and Susannah Carey.

Open: Select Board Chair Robert Agoglia opened the meeting at 6:00pm. Remote script read aloud. All public as well as members of Boards/Committees/Departments introduced.

Minutes-Motion to approve minutes from 12/16/2020 as amended, aye Robert Agoglia, aye Tara Loomis, motion passes.

FY22 Budget Roundtable Discussion with Finance Committee, Dept Heads, & Board/Committee Chairpersons- 6:00pm

Pelham financial situation:

Little new money is expected from the State, lucky to remain even in Chapter 70; Schools; as the number of Pelham School Choice students is down this year and Chapter 70 funding is largely based on enrollment.

There was an interim re-evaluation which saw part of the town have a significant increase in value such that the tax rate went down. The entire town is scheduled for a complete re-evaluation in 2023.

The agreed State Revenue number has not been announced

The Governor will release his budget by January 25, 2021.

1.5% increase in wages (COLA)

The two and a half increase will allow about 90,000 in additional money.

Insurance costs look manageable for this year.

The Regional Assessment is far from clear.

Additional requests for increases should be listed on your forms and the Finance Committee will do its best to recommend those funds.

Please send your complete form to the Finance Committee Chair at least 3 days prior to your hearing. If the time of your meeting does not work please contact John Trickey and he will find another slot. Once again, if you want to be level funded, you do not need to attend a hearing, just notify John.

All hearings will be via Zoom and will be finished by first of March.

Questions, advance requests?

Select Board member Robert Agoglia asked that DPW Superintendent Rick Adamcek include painting of interior of Rhodes Building in the Building & Grounds FY22 budget. Also, a reminder to departments to include the upgraded compensation of \$1.00 more/hour on their FY22 budget spreadsheets.

Superintendent of Schools, Michael Morris, spoke about Pelham School choice student reductions and the upcoming regional 4-town meeting.

Cultural Council Appointments-James Lumley Appointment

James Lumley interested in joining Cultural Council. Chair Nora Maroulis also sent memo about two additional interested residents that would like to join; Susan Daniels, Antonios Maroulis. Motion to appoint James Lumley, Antonios Maroulis, and Susan Daniels to 3-year terms on the Cultural Council, aye Robert Agoglia, aye Tara Loomis, motion passes.

Town Officials

8 Amherst Rd-Habitat for Humanity accepting applications for two houses to be built in Spring.

Amethyst Brook Apartments-Notice of Intent filed with Conservation Commission including stormwater and wetland management information. 40B application filed with Pelham ZBA. Future Consultant to be hired to assist Conservation Commission.

Walter Jones Working Forest-Pelham is losing tax revenue due to recent sale of land off of Shutesbury Rd. WD Cows will continue to have timber rights on both parcels.

Liaison Reports

Building Inspector; Select Board member Tara Loomis; Email sent to David, no response yet.

Fire Department; Select Board member Tara Loomis; TL will attend budget meeting for Fire and Police Departments. Work continues on restructuring Fire and Police departments budgets based on new potential structure.

Highway Department; Select Board member Robert Agoglia; ERV up and running at Rhodes Building. Staff will keep an eye on temperature in building when system is running. System can be retrofitted at later date with heating unit if need be.

Police Department; Select Board member David Shanabrook; Vaccinations upcoming Monday 1/18. Request for monthly report to be electronic instead of paper copy. Public Safety Director discussion still ongoing. TL needs job description from Police Chief. Chief has asked for extra compensation and Select Board would like to view other descriptions to see if additional funding for position is fair.

Town Offices; Select Board member Robert Agoglia; Town Clerk working on bylaw submittals with the AG office. TC alternating hours with RAO. Collector has been working both in and out of the office on free cash. Admin. Assistant has been working on Slate, grants, and Community Building HVAC upgrade paperwork.

Tree Warden; Select Board member David Shanabrook; DS reach out to Dave Hawkins this week.

Public Comment

CPA funds-Would Pelham consider residents to use CPA funds for housing (mortgage, rent) during the pandemic.

Dog Attack-Notification from Cydnie Reiman of another dog incident which occurred on walking trails off of North Valley Rd. Complaint was filed with the dog officer.

Climate Bill-Update from Karen Ribeiro on bill currently on Governor's desk which will increase small scale solar to 60 Kilowatts. Solar plans outlined in the MVP grant for the Community Building/Library parking area had more limited figures for KW.

Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) Update – Karen Ribeiro

Joint Powers Entity has retained counsel who has reviewed bylaws. DPU must approve creating a governmental entity. Possible future names; Valley Green Alliance, Valley Green Energy. Town of Amherst is leading the search for a Director who has both aggregation and technical experience who can give the group a quote. Tom Thompson, owner of Gridworks of Amherst, has technical experience and is being evaluated. JPE won't be formed until about Summer 2021 which will then be followed by formation of a Board of Directors. Eventually residents will be able to opt out of the program.

Old Business

Town Clerk waiting to hear back from Attorney General on Warrant related to Moderator. Response ramifications of last Town Meeting and warrants passed were all part of the Town Clerk's email.

Time Reserved for Topics the Chair Did Not Reasonably Anticipate

Presidential Inauguration Committee inviting cities/towns to participate in January 19, 2021 memorial for Covid victims at 5:30pm. Select Board would like Pelham to participate by displaying candles in municipal buildings. Other ways to participate include ringing bells or lighting up buildings/homes. Susannah Carey will add a message inviting residents to participate on the website and Cydnie Reiman will notify community via NextDoor Pelham. Motion for the Town of Pelham to participate in Presidential Inauguration Covid memorial on January 19, 2021, aye Robert Agoglia, aye David Shanabrook, aye Tara Loomis, roll call unanimous.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 7:14pm, aye Robert Agoglia, aye Tara Loomis, aye David Shanabrook, roll call unanimous.

Documents Examined

Minutes 12/16/2020, Cultural Council Chair memo, Requests to serve on Cultural Council, FY22 Budget Hearing schedule.

Respectfully submitted, Susannah Carey