

Select Board Meeting Minutes

1/20/2021 Virtual via ZOOM 7pm

Present: Select Board members Chair Robert Agoglia, Tara Loomis, and David Shanabrook, Susannah Carey, John Trickey, Judith Eiseman, and Robert Rowell.

Open: Select Board Chair Agoglia opened the meeting at 7:00pm.

Minutes-Motion to approve 1/6/21 minutes as amended, aye Robert Agoglia, aye Tara Loomis, aye David Shanabrook, roll call unanimous.

2021 Annual Town Election & Meeting Calendar

Prepared by Town Clerk. Appears to be missing dates; finalize warrant with Moderator, Citizen Petitions deadline. Tabled until next meeting.

Update on Bylaw Submittals to Attorney General

Town Clerk submitted bylaws to the AG office for the 2019 and 2020 Fall Town Meetings. AG has certain number of days to reply back to town.

Request to Reduce Size of Anti-Racism Advisory Committee

ARAC originally appointed by Select Board with 15 members, but currently has only 8 to 11 active members. This causes issues with a quorum of the Committee. Select Board Chair will reach out to the Committee to request a list of the active participants and those that requested not to be active anymore. Motion to reduce the size of the Anti-Racism Advisory Committee from fifteen to eleven and request the Committee name the active members and those who are not part of the Committee, aye Robert Agoglia, aye Tara Loomis, aye David Shanabrook, roll call unanimous.

Concerns About Unleashed Dogs in Town

Residents from North Valley Rd contacted Select Board Chair Agoglia regarding continued presence of off leash dogs not under voice control walking on Pelham trails. The dogs have confronted some residents using the trails. Proposed bylaw language was submitted to adjust the current bylaw. The proposed language appears similar to the bylaw crafted by the Town of Amherst. The Pelham Dog Officer was contacted about the incidents but the result is unknown. Select Board collectively agreed that a Citizen's Petition brought before Annual Town Meeting would be the best option for residents to be able to affect change here. Select Board member David Shanabrook will reach out to Police Chief Thomann. Select Board Chair Robert Agoglia will contact the residents who submitted the request and encourage them to submit a Citizen's Petition to the Select Board for consideration for the ATM warrant.

Consideration of Staff Salary Increases for Upcoming Fiscal Year

Due to uncertainty in State funding in fiscal year 2021, requests to increase department salaries by one dollar per hour was paused. Suggestion to include on FY2022 ATM warrant a separate warrant article for the salary requests for all staff minus the Fire Chief and Police Chief, due to creation of the new Public

Safety Director position. Reminder that in 2019 the Select Board Administrative Assistant was brought up to a competitive rate based on surrounding town's similar positions, etc. The Treasurer/Collector also in 2019 had a two-step increase request approved. Currently the town has no standard wage and grading system used for hiring. Generally, the town compiles a listing of salaries of surrounding towns similar positions and then creates a 'scale'. DPW/B&G Superintendent, Rick Adamcek, holds a position that appears to have a lower grade salary that may need review with potential increase. There is a State Community Compact grant that could fund a Classification and Compensation Study. Finance Committee Chair reminded Town Clerk liaison to review FY22 budget requests prior to budget hearing and status on recruitment for that position. Motion to not support the \$1/hour increase because we will apply for the Community Compact grant and consider two projects, IT best practices and HR best practices, aye Robert Agoglia, aye Tara Loomis, aye David Shanabrook, roll call unanimous.

Town Website Exploration and Options

Select Board member David Shanabrook has been reviewing other supporting website programs. DS is connecting with the Town of Shutesbury. More to follow.

Upcoming MMA Virtual Annual Meeting

1/21 and 1/22, 9am-5pm virtual. Previous years keynote speakers have been quite inspiring. Hope to all attending to will find enjoy various topics in the webinars of interest.

Town Officials

Board of Assessor's Chair Robert Rowell-Reviewing requirements of stipend paid to newly elected members based on completed training. BOA will draft an agreement for new elected members to sign with promise to become certified before receiving the stipend. The Collector/Treasurer will be informed of this new protocol.

Public Comment-none.

Liaison Reports

Building Inspector; Select Board member Tara Loomis; Meeting with Dave Waskiewicz with discussion and brainstorming how to improve record keeping. Question if the current Building Inspector left tomorrow, would the next person serving as BI be able to pick up where DW left off. DW mentioned request for additional compensation for position. The BI and Police Department are handling continued complaints regarding a civil issue between neighbors on Harkness Rd. Channels for recourse and holding parties accountable for actions pursued were main concerns. Select Board agreed to reach out to counsel regarding Harkness Rd. dispute.

Fire Department; Select Board member Tara Loomis; Fire Chief position was budgeted for \$27k in FY21. Pelham Fire Chief retiring June 30, 2021. SB will pursue a Public Safety Director position with a one-year contract, which is of interest to the Pelham Police Chief. Continued review of salaries, job descriptions, contract request from Chief Thomann, etc. A meeting of the Select Board with Police Chief, etc. will be in the near future as the budget figures need to be sorted.

Highway Department; Select Board member Robert Agoglia; ERV system continuing to be evaluated with temperature inside Rhodes. Exterior lighting request from Select Board member David Shanabrook was discussed with Highway Superintendent. Rick will obtain quotes from electrician for motion light install.

Police Department; Select Board member David Shanabrook; Monthly reports are being sent electronically.

Town Offices; Select Board member Robert Agoglia; VRF/HVAC upgrade for Community Building contract still outstanding for the Clerk of the Works and date from Adams Plumbing & Heating, Inc. for the Notice to Proceed. George Kicza, appointed Clerk of the Works, did not accept the contract presented to him and his concerns are being addressed. Collector/Treasurer reconciled Free Cash through November 2020 with the Town Accountant. Town Clerk was working on bylaw submittals with the AG's office, FY22 budget, and future replacement for the Clerk position. Susannah has been working on grants, IT paperwork & old issues, Clerk of Works contract, 2020 Town Report, and FY22 budget. Winter Slate will be sent to residents this week.

Tree Warden; Select Board member David Shanabrook; Conversation with Dave Hawkins who works mostly with Highway Superintendent on tree issues. Future updates to come.

Old Business

IT Statement-Created in December by the Select Board to clarify what the process is for IT support/assistance as well as noting that the infrastructure inside the town offices requires formal request of the Select Board going forward. It was noted that programs like VADAR, etc. used by the Collector/Treasurer and VISION used by the Board of Assessors and Assessor's Assistant were not serviced by Tech One Computers. The statement was drafted following discussions for improving the town's record keeping and need for employees and board/committee members to have a set of guidelines to follow. Edits were suggested by Robert Rowell so that the statement more specifically matches what the Select Board Administrative Assistant handles related to IT in the town offices with Tech One Computers rather than the entire town offices.

The State's Community Compact Best Practice grant would offer Pelham the chance to have an IT evaluation, and the consensus of the Select Board was that it would be great to apply. Pelham lacks an IT Department with policies and a manager, so the service calls, tracking, and upgrades, etc. falls to the Select Board Administrative Assistant.

The town received free used computers from Smith College back in November 2020 which needed to be updated to Microsoft 10. Otis Rowell of Quabbinwood Computing provided the Select Board a free IT Assessment of those free computers and installed Microsoft 10 on all prior to formal approval. While the assessment was appreciated, the Select Board would like everyone to follow the same protocol going forward and if decided, coordinate efforts if that is what is best for the town.

The previous IT Committee focused mainly on the need for a new website then disbanded. The Select Board identified a need for more IT support with possible future re-appointment of an advisory level IT Committee.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 9:08pm, aye Robert Agoglia, aye Tara Loomis, aye David Shanabrook, roll call unanimous.

Documents Examined

2021 ATM & ATE Calendar, minutes 1/6/21, Proposed language for new dog bylaw.

Respectfully submitted, Susannah Carey