**Board of Selectmen Meeting Minutes**

**9/23/2019 Rhodes Building 6:00PM**

**Present:** Selectman Ribeiro, Selectman Agoglia, Bill & Kathy Martell, Kestrel Land Trust-Paul Gagnon and Chris Volente, Joe Larson, Dave Hawkins, Eversource Rep. Barry Krook, Gale Hubley, Rusty Rowell, Fred Vanderbeck, Arlene Carmichael, Stanley Mokrzecki, Dan Robb, Jo Leslie Hirsch, Dana MacDonald, and Susannah Carey.

**Open:** Selectman Ribeiro opened the meeting at 6:00pm.

**Tree Hearing for Amherst Road 6:00PM**

Pelham Tree Warden, Dave Hawkins, informed the Board of Eversource’s enhanced tree trimming on Amherst Road between Route 202 and Harkness Road on the side of the distribution lines. The trees marked with orange, which are within the right of way, were marked by the Tree Warden. If the Board of Selectmen approve the tree hearing this evening then the trees owned by the Town and marked with blue will also be taken down. Dave has done field work measuring from the center line and identifying trees. Lewis Tree Service has been performing the tree trimming. A handful of residents from Amherst Road were present and in favor of the work. This trimming maintenance occurs on a four-year schedule. Motion to approve the removal of blue tagged trees, unanimously approved.

**Local Occupancy Tax**

Information has been posted on the town website and will be added to the next Slate Newsletter. The Board of Selectmen will send out information by mail to ‘landlords’ by using data captured on sites like Airbnb and VRBO. Motion to send local occupancy tax mailer to ‘landlords’ in Pelham, unanimously approved.

**2.5% Increase in Capital Stabilization for FY2020**

2.5% increase vote each year to build up reserves, which is State law maximum. Increase would only affect the tax rate by pennies every year and keeps the Town from paying interest. If Board of Selectmen did not vote to increase, the Town would have less money to spend for capital equipment.

Selectman Agoglia moved to assess an additional $231,938.70 plus 2.5% for a total assessment of $237,737.17 in real estate and personal property taxes for the purpose of funding the Capital Equipment and Expenditures Stabilization Fund, to be expended for the purpose of purchasing capital equipment for the Town and to fund other necessary capital expenditures as needed for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2019, unanimously approved.

**Appointment of Tracy Osbahr to Council on Aging**

Motion to appoint Tracy Osbahr to the Council on Aging for 3-year term, unanimously approved.

**Review and Sign the FY2020 Veterans’ Services Inter-Municipal Agreement**

Motion to sign the FY2020 Veterans’ Services Inter-Municipal Agreement, unanimously approved.

**Finalize Fall Town Meeting Warrant, Articles, & Review with Moderator, Dan Robb**

After consulting with town counsel, the Board of Selectmen received response back that Town Meeting could be legal and official without having any warrant articles.

The first article for consideration for the warrant was created by Selectman Agoglia and reviewed by counsel; enforcement bylaw. The Board of Selectmen will also add ‘Zoning Board of Appeals’ to the listing of enforces within the article read aloud. Motion to approve the enforcement bylaw article with edits from town counsel for the Fall Town Meeting warrant, unanimously approved.

A second article for consideration on the warrant was created and brought forth by Moderator Dan Robb. This article will be sent to town counsel for review.

Motion to approve the vote method article for Moderator as read aloud and send to town counsel for review, unanimously approved.

Motion to vote the Fall Town Meeting warrant as amended and sign when completed, unanimously approved.

**Update on 31 Boyden Road**

Jo Leslie Hirsch presented updated maps of her property and how the Buffam Brook Conservation Area boundary lines cross over her property line and right along to the back of her shed. Ms. Hirsch was advised outside of this meeting that a land swap would be possible. Dana MacDonald, Conservation Commission Chair, was unsure if a land swap was permissible due to the multiple agreements with the Federal Government, State, Kestrel Land Trust, and Pelham Conservation Commission as well as grant monies exchanged for creation of the Buffam Brook Conservation Area. Chairman MacDonald will investigate if the Town can set limitations and permit signage for access near the area close to Ms. Hirsch’s property and buildings. Chairman MacDonald will also contact the forest service to see if there are any other options with this situation. The Board of Selectmen supports solutions and is hopeful for forward progress.

**59 Meeting House Road Discussion**

Ann Marie Cunningham, Alice Ann Partridge’s cousin, was present. Board of Selectmen motion to allow Alice Ann’s Attorney, Damien Martin, to participate via phone, unanimously approved. There seemed to be confusion as to who currently owns the property. The Bank is currently in the foreclosure process. If the Town of Pelham took ownership of the property then could, with the help of the Board of Health and Quabbin Health District, place a ‘clean and lien’ on the property to have the outside cleaned up. Ongoing issues at hand at the site include large amounts of garbage collecting outside the property, garbage burning, as well as removal of three vehicles. Alice Ann Partridge is in agreeance with the plan to move forward. Attorney Martin was unsure if a storage lien could be placed for removal of the vehicles. The Town of Pelham has superiority even if the bank currently owns the property and therefore will not change the ‘clean and lien’ process. Alice Ann would like to see the property conserved or for the house to become an ecology education center. The Kestrel Land Trust may have interest here though there is nothing concrete at this time. Motion to approve the clean and lien order and fund with appropriate monies, unanimously approved.

**Amethyst Brook Apartments Housing Project Updates**

Selectmen Ribeiro noted that 22 Amherst Road had been acquired, and 18 & 20 Amherst Road are under contract. A close eye will need to be kept on the project when it comes time for the Selectmen to initiate the 30-day comment period for townspeople for a planned public forum. Bill Pula, Board of Health Chair, submitted several questions to share; forum type, multiple tax rates, CPA funds, where existing funds will come from, what if project does not go through, plan for meeting with residents. Dana MacDonald, CPC Chair, spoke about financial commitments from the Town, municipal bonding, viability of Pelham without the affordable housing project; and about environmental items related to the project as the Conservation Commission Chair. Question raised by Judy Eiseman on what amount the State would be funding for this housing project.

**Assessment Services Ending December 31, 2019 with Town of Amherst**

Rusty Rowell, Board of Assessor Chair, present. Board of Selectmen tasked Assessors to come up with a plan and share out; idea to partner with other towns as option, what other towns are doing on their own, approaching Amherst Town Manager for additional support for Pelham, could PVPC be possibly helpful in any way. Large item that Pelham may not have access to after December is web access to data/maps; GIS program which is very expensive. Lori Turati, Assistant Assessor, is retiring from Amherst in December and may be interested in working part-time but this idea is still developing. Planning Board, ZBA, and Conservation Commission all request abutters’ lists for permits, etc. By continuing to have an Assessor in the town offices on January 1st would cause the least amount of disruption for this department and would still serve the townspeople on a part-time basis.

**Update on Meeting with Patrick Carnavale and Selectman Ribeiro**

Question on how Governor Baker Administration could better serve small municipalities in the Commonwealth. Selectman Ribeiro shared Open Meeting Law constraints, upgrade to 5G network and the impacts on wildlife and humans, continuity amongst all Board/Committee groups and establishing protocols for term limits, online access, agenda template, etc. There are currently six persons on the Lieutenant Governor’s advisory team from Western MA.

Rusty Rowell would like to see time and place of meetings in E-Subscribe alerts and agendas to be sent to the Town Clerk in pdf form.

**Roundtable Planning-Ramsdell Room October 2**

Possible agenda items to include:

-issues Board/Committees working on right now

-best practices/protocol for Board/Committees operation

-feedback on the SLACK program, using as a communication tool, and possible SLACK demo

**Town Officials**-none

**Public Comment**-Dan Robb would like to see the lighting changed at the Safety Complex. Not only are the lights a hazard, but the current lighting violates Pelham’s Code (bylaws). If it was possible to use separate timers and dimmers with the new led lighting. There were no problems with the previous lighting that was replaced with the new led lighting thanks to a Green Community grant received early in 2019.

**Liaison Reports**-

Highway-Selectman Ribeiro; Rick will be attending an expo in Foxboro on how to incorporate nature-based solutions into local municipalities/Public Works departments. Reclaiming pavement in place will extend our roads life significantly.

The Culvert Report will be shared with Dana MacDonald.

Judy Eiseman discussed parking areas in town, jobs that Rick may do that are not within his job description, and Planning board will be getting involved with Amherst on their sewer project.

The storm water drains on South Valley Road need to be more strategically placed and maintained as there is a lot of runoff that bypasses them altogether.

**Town Offices**; Pat Olanyk has returned but is having medical issues.

**Fire Department**; Monthly report has all the information.

**Police Department**; no report.

**Old Business**

-Site on Country Lane with fencing that the Board of Selectmen asked to be removed has not been done. Cul-de-sac is town property and should remain so. Tabled until later date.

-Alisa Pearson resigned from Board of Selectmen 9/23/2019. A citizen’s petition must be received with 200 signatures of registered voters in order for Board to call a special election to fill vacancy. If nothing is received then the Board will have to proceed with the remaining members until the May local election.

-Request for Board of Selectmen to stick to a consistent day/time for their meetings.

**Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn at 9:02pm, unanimously approved.

**Documents Examined**

Draft Fall Town Meeting Warrant, 31 Boyden Road Maps & Information, 2.5% vote on Capital Stabilization language, Veterans’ Services Contract, local occupancy information for mailer.

Respectfully submitted,

Susannah Carey