**Board of Selectmen Meeting Minutes**

**July 24, 2019, Fire Department Training Room, Community Building**

**Present:** Selectman Ribeiro, Selectmen Agoglia, Wanda Kelly-Outreach Worker, Council on Aging members Grace Dane, Kathy Martell, and Isabel Ryavec, Chief Thomann, Jose Cabrera, Sharrie Reydak, Rusty Rowell, Joe Larson, Ann Hondrogen, Judy Eiseman, Jim McPherson, and Susannah Carey.

**Absent:** Selectman Pearson

**Open:** Selectman Ribeiro opened at 6:05pm.

Motion to reorganize agenda, motion passes.

**Appointment of New Part-Time Police Officer-Gary Thomann**

Jose Cabrera will fill one of the part-time positions working day shifts which Chief Thomann has been trying to fill. He is a 2-year resident with experience and comes highly recommended from the Hadley Police Department. Motion to appoint Jose Cabrera, motion passes.

Other-Two battery operated portable speed signs are now located on Amherst and Harkness Road. The batteries last about five days. A solar sign would be more permanently mounted and it was agreed to be a valuable tool Pelham should purchase in the future.

**Chapter 90 Project Requests for South Valley Road, Butterhill Road, and Cadwell Street**

Motion to approve Chapter 90 project requests, motion passes.

**Requested Discussion with Kathy Martell and Council Members on Council on Aging**

COA members; Kathy Martell, Grace Dane, & Isabel Ryavec; discussed reasons why two members have recently left, retention of members, and recruiting new members going forward. Current COA members had previously decided to not communicate through email and understand that deliberation is not allowed by email according to Open Meeting Law. Also discussed was the difference between emails sent as part of an outreach campaign versus emails between Committee members. Deliberation between members can only occur during an open meeting or if a taskforce is created for a specific task assigned outside of an open meeting with the understanding to report back to the full Board/Committee with information.

Kathy Martell, COA Chair, delegated Ann Hondrogen and Ralph Faulkingham as a taskforce. That assignment was unclear to them although discussed at a COA meeting. Kathy reported that a COA survey created a few years ago and sent to all seniors indicated the majority would rather not receive information by email, along with other responses about the lunch program, newsletters, etc.

Ann Hondrogen and Wanda Kelly, Pelham’s Outreach Worker, attended a conference and reported back during a COA meeting with several new ideas. Wanda and Ann similarly felt the information they shared was not well received by the other members. Wanda had wanted to do a sumer hat contest and bereavement counseling and she felt both were not well received. Ann and Wanda stated Kathy Martell is extremely capable and knowledgeable of bylaws and Open Meeting Law especially because of her current job as Pelham’s Town Clerk, but Ann noted that this might actually pose a bias for the COA . A newsletter would be a great bridge to unit new seniors to the community as well as connect with those currently living there.

The Council on Aging voted against organizing an all-town picnic this year. A senior social has been scheduled in August, which will be more manageable given the timeline and Kathy’s schedule returning after her leave.

The Board of Selectmen previously authorized Ann Hondrogen to improve signage that belonged to the Town Clerk. This was not communicated with Kathy Martell first as she would have informed everyone that the wood signs (to be painted) will eventually be replaced with plastic signage, which is lighter and weather tolerant.

The role that the COA Chair performs in general includes taking minutes, posting agendas, assigning taskforce groups if necessary, etc. New COA members wanted to be included and be actively involved. The Board of Selectmen were glad to hear everyone’s perspective on these issues and wants all members to feel welcomed and involved and reiterate the importance of recruiting new members with new energy. 40% of Pelham’s population is seniors/elderly; age 60 and up.

Jim McPherson, Shutesbury Road resident present, did not appreciate the COA’s use of his private information and has since spoken with the Town Clerk who has removed his information.

Joe Larson reiterated the importance of following the State’s Open Meeting Law and not deviating from the law, which governs how boards/committees operate at the local level. Suggestion to hold an Open Meeting Law class in Town for all Board/Committee members to attend. KP Law has held a class in the past.

**Restrictions Town of Warwick, MA has Passed Regarding Toxins Used for Spraying**

The Town of Warwick, MA voted to restrict certain chemicals for spraying vegetation/roadway brush. The Eversource vegetation spraying management plan is a continuous program that occurs in cities/towns every 4 years. Judy Eiseman commented on Eversource’s long history using pesticides and the pesticide bureau’s long ties with Monsanto. The Pelham Board of Health found past conversations with Eversource regarding the subject matter difficult to manage as there is no oversight/monitoring in the field. Suggestion to speak to Legislators about this topic. Heidi Ricci at MA Audubon has successfully utilized goats for a non-pesticide brush management protocol.

**Supporting CPA Funding Across State with Letter to Editor**

Currently the State matches CPA funding; Pelham gets 1 for 1 currently. Suggestion to hold off on the letter so as not to alter any funding Pelham is receiving.

**Letter to DOER on the Proposed Changes to the Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard (RPS) on Biomass**

Selectman Ribeiro gave testimony at the State House for 100% Renewable Energy. The State is attempting to recommend biomass fuels as form of renewable energy next to solar and wind. Biomass has been shown to be destructive to carbon footprint. Kathleen Theoharides, Secretary Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, also testified about the plan for 80% renewable energy in MA by 2050, including biomass. DOER head, Mike Judge, has recently left and moved to the DPU.

**Country Lane Fence Removal letter & Families Letter Requesting Hearing**

Motion to send letter to family about counsel advising the Town on the issue and the current letter stands, motion passes.

**Appointments for PVPC Representative, Judy Eiseman, & Alternate Representative, Lexi Dewey**

Motion to appoint Judy Eiseman and PVPC representative and Lexi Dewey as PVPC alternate representative, motion passes.

**Review & Approve Fall Town meeting Calendar & Format Discussion**

Motion to approve option 2 presented for the Fall Town Meeting Calendar, motion passes.

**MMA January Conference Follow-Up Discussion & Review**

The roundtable would be a good place to have this topic brainstorming discussion. Review after next year’s conference.

**Review Town Volunteers Survey-Strengthening Communications with all Boards and Committees**

Item to be added to the 8/7/19 agenda.

**Town Officials**

Joe Larson reiterated communication through emails is considered deliberation and is not allowed.

Judy Eiseman suggested that it may be useful to speak with legislators about revisions to the Open Meeting Law that falls more in line with how small towns operate. Selectman Ribeiro will share how to help small towns like Pelham with a representative from Governor Baker’s office on August 13th.-

**Public Comment**-none.

**Liaison Reports**

**Highway;** Selectman Ribeiro; Community Hall is open and ready to be used. A message will be added to the website. Catch basins have been cleaned and repaired, replacement windows have been installed in the Rhodes Building, a painter will be starting on the outside of the Rhodes Building, the bathroom in the town offices is also progressing. Chapter 90 request signed this evening for paving on South Valley, Butterhill, and Cadwell Street. Packardville and the Gate 8 section of Packardville are next on the list of roads to be paved.

**Town Offices;** Selectman Agoglia; Tax bills have a new format allowing for integration of Collector/Treasurer and Assessor’s office. The Summer Slate is currently at the print shop. Information about the Local Occupancy Tax for short term rentals will be written and included in the Fall Slate edition and posted on the website.

**Fire Department**; Selectman Agoglia; monthly report submitted and appears on the FD website.

**Police Department**; update earlier in meeting.

**Old Business**

Update from 22 Amherst Road-updated proposal plan with map shared for redevelopment of site for affordable housing building to now include the street level abandoned house and barn in order to have a lower grade driveway and additional units.

Hemp Farm-339 Amherst Road-Notification from MDAR that a resident was issued a license to grow hemp. Key issues include use of any pesticides, water supply land surrounding site, and State’s lack of notification/involvement with key Town Officials; Planning Board, Board of Selectmen, Conservation Commission, etc.; and abutters.

**Time Reserved for Topics the Chair Did Not Reasonable Anticipate**

Selectman Ribeiro mentioned that Pelham’s flag was not represented in Boston’s flag room. Joe Larson will be consulted further here to revisit conversations about designing a Pelham flag.

FCC-Susannah Carey and Selectman Agoglia will compose a letter to FCC regarding third order that would affect Franchise Fee funding, which is due July 25th.

Cell Tower-FCC new law for installation of small towers but large towers would still remain. Proposal indicates increase to 5G network and possibly mounting network onto existing utility poles.

Motion to adjourn, motion passes at 7:49pm.

**Documents Examined**

Jose Cabrera resume, CPA funding article, Chapter 90 project requests, Fall Town Meeting calendar, DOER article announcing public hearings on RPS, letter from Wasserman/Plotkin family.

Respectfully Submitted, Susannah Carey