Select Board Meeting

April 28, 2021

6:01 pm meeting called to order by Neil Oleson.

Select Board members present: Mike Bedini, Ericka Oleson, Neil Oleson.

Select board members absent: None

Others present: Jim White, Christine Dobbert, Vicki Winchell, Jon Oleson, Doug Miller, Kyle Kuczynski, Kendall Bell, Charlie LaBatt

Mike Bedini made a motion to approve the minutes from the 4/14/21 meeting. Ericka Oleson seconded. Unanimous.

Selectmen:

* Ericka Oleson made a motion to approve the business license for Daniel Luczynski, Luczynski Brothers Construction. Mike Bedini Seconded. Unanimous.
* Charlie LaBatt, representing Better Place Forests appeared to update the Selectmen on their progress.
  + Due to COVID there are delays renovating the house on the property.
  + The driveway is being upgraded. There is a temporary tent platform being constructed to welcome their clients, by appointment only.
  + They are planning (2) 9-day open house sessions 6/19/21-6/27/21 and 9/18/21-9/26/21 (tentative dates). Porta Pottys will be provided.
  + The signage they are planning meets the town bylaws.
  + Staff is going to start making trails soon.
* Mike asked Jim when the slabs for the walkway into town hall would be fixed. Jim stated they would be repaired in June or July. Ericka questioned if he could also address the drainage problem in that area at the same time. Jim said they would be correcting that as well.
* Kendall Bell represented the Highway Department Union in contract negotiations. Several changes were proposed to the current contract. They are as follows:
  + Article 1.2 – This says it lists Exhibit A but Exhibit A is not in the contract. Christine will send it to the union rep.
  + Article 1.3 – Adding information to be sent to the union upon their request (name, dues, employee identifier (agreed to use last 4 digits of ss#) and job description). Town will not give out address information. Union should have that information on file.
  + Article 2.2 – Eliminating the entire paragraph
  + Article 3.1 – Added wording “or in violation of MGL 151B”. This has to do with discrimination.
  + Article 4.1 – The union would like the base wage to start at $20.00 for all highway employees, regardless of licensing, qualifications, etc. The Board is not in agreement with this. This topic will be negotiated further. Also striking out the phrase “with step rates” as there are no steps. Also still negotiating % increases for each year of this contract.
  + Article 5.2 – Numeric numbers added in after written numbers
  + Article 5.3, 15.1, 16.4, 16.5, 27.2, 27.3 – Corrected Pronouns.

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Selectmen (continued):

* + Article 5.5 – Board would like language included that states overtime will be “divided as equally as possible” as it is not always possible to equally divide out overtime.
  + Article 5.7 – Include language stating all hours in excess of 40 hours physically worked in a week will be paid as overtime, except for in the case of call ins as defined in article 6.1. Paid time off will be calculated as hours physically worked.
  + Article 5.6, 25.1 – Adjusted wording of sentence to take out redundancy.
  + Article 6.1, 16.3 – Added spelled out numbers before the numeric number.
  + Article 9.3 – Board would like to change the word “recalled” to “offered”
  + Article 12.2 – Continuing to negotiate probationary period of new employees.
  + Article 13.1 – Continuing to negotiate wording from “maybe” to “will be” regarding grievances to be filed.
  + Article 15.3 – Continuing to negotiate birthday to be used as a paid holiday that can be taken on their birthday or as a floating day off. Added numeric 8 after word eight. Add in to prorate hours for employees who start mid-year.
  + Article 16.1 – Negotiating paid vacation time based on years as well as adjusting earned paid vacation time. Board would like to change the wording from 5/6th day per month to 4 hours as it is easier to calculate.
  + Article 16.2 – Board proposes changing wording of vacation time to be used during shut down from “will be” to “may be”.
  + Article 17 – Detailed the insurance benefits offered to town employees. Include language stating employee has 30 days from their start date to accept insurance.
  + Article 18 – Detailed the pension benefits offered to town employees.
  + Article 21.1 – Negotiating longevity pay as it was updated in 2014. Added wording “ten” before numeric 10.
  + Article 22.2 – Board would like to remove entire article as there is no Safety Committee.
  + Article 23.1 – Added language that the town will follow any and all laws regarding Workers Compensation.
  + Article 26.1 – Strike out the word “and”
  + Article 30.1 – Updated agreement to state it is a three-year contract vs the two years written as it has always been three-year contracts. Added the correct dates of the contract and included the wording “or email”.
  + Corrected date for the “in witness thereof” section.
* Christine will send the proposed changes to Kendall Bell. The negotiations will resume with Kendall Bell representing the highway union members at the May 26, 2021 Selectboard meeting.

Christine Dobbert, Town Administrator:

* Nothing new to report

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Jim White, Highway Department Supervisor:

* Cleaning swales
* Plowing snow
* Cleaned up the fire department parking lot
* Fixed the backhoe, replaced the tires on the 5 ton as well as replaced the rotted radiator in truck 10.
* Washing and greasing the trucks
* Cleaning up branches/limbs from the windstorms.
* Pouring 2 foundations in the cemetery next week
* There is a collapsed culvert on South County Road that needs to be replaced and is on order.
* Replaced guardrails on North County Road

7:39 pm Ericka Oleson made a motion to adjourn the regular meeting and enter Executive Session. Neil Oleson seconded. Unanimous.

7:54 pm Mike Bedini made a motion to reopen the regular meeting and adjourn at 7:54 pm. Ericka Oleson seconded. Unanimous.