Select Board Meeting

June 9, 2021

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

Select Board members present: Mike Bedini, Terry Green, Neil Oleson.

Select board members absent: None (Mike Bedini left meeting at 7:06 p.m.)

Others present: Jim White, Christine Dobbert, Vicki Winchell, Stephanie Pare, Doug Miller, Kyle Kuczynski, Kendall Bell, Cindy Bosley, Ron Bosley, Susan Fulton, Rick Leclair, Eric Leclair, Bryan Foucher, Al Bedini, Tim Alexander

Mike Bedini made a motion to approve the minutes from the 5/26/21 meeting. Neil Oleson seconded. Unanimous.

Selectmen:

* Bryan Foucher, representing Wi-Valley attended tonight’s meeting at the request of the Selectboard to answer concerns brought forward by residents. Bryan started the conversation by informing the board he is aware of the many issues that have been ongoing, as well as newer issues that arose since last Christmas. They have not been able to find where the interference is coming from. The CBRS was never planned to fix all issues but once complete it should help many. There have been several tech and communication issues that have happened.
	+ Christine Dobbert brought up the fact that in the beginning they were told trees and foliage would not be an issue. Ron Bosley backed Christine stating he also recalls hearing this and now the installers are telling people it is an issue. Some installing have even said trees should be cut down, at the property owners’ expenses. Bryan clarified the signal can go through small amounts of tree mass, but it is more difficult the denser and more populated with trees the area is. He is hoping once the CBRS is installed on Whitcomb Hill Summit several issues will clear up.
	+ Christine Dobbert also pointed out there is no follow up or return calls/emails to residents when they reach out. Bryan replied there was an internal meeting last week which addressed many of the communication issues. They know there is a big issue with it and are working to rectify the problem and are keeping an active issue list to address those residents first.
	+ Rick Leclair asked if there is an anticipated end date. Bryan could not give a specific answer to this. He did discuss that one critical area to the project is Borden Mountain. This site is not built yet and may need to go through the state legislative process to get the permissions needed. It is an important part of the project. The thought is this will solve several issues. Until it can be completed other problems cannot be addressed as they feel Borden Mountain may fix them. Once it is running, they will know where to place any other needed poles.

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Selectmen (continued):

* + Christine Dobbert questioned residents not getting the service they are paying for. Also, the need for working service as many elderlies signed up for the telephone service as well. When the internet does not work, they have no way to contact 911 services should an emergency arise. Bryan said they will be prioritizing anyone with phone services that need repairs. She also brought up the fact that the installer was very rude to an elderly resident. Bryan apologized sincerely to the residents’ spouse and has offered to talk with her as well.
	+ Terry Green questioned what their plan is for people who have not signed up yet. When will they be contacted? Bryan stated they are working on a list; however, they are not making it a priority to connect new customers as it will only add issues to the infrastructure as it is still being built. Once the problems are resolved they will start contacting residents.
* Mike Bedini had to excuse himself from the meeting to leave for a prior commitment at 7:06 p.m.
* Terry Green made a motion to approve the business license for Travis Burdick. Neil Oleson Seconded. Unanimous.
* Terry Green made a motion to appoint Cindy Bosley as a representative for the MBRT. Neil Oleson seconded. Unanimous.
* Terry Green discussed a grant program to help municipalities build new Libraries. If approved, the state would cover 75% of the cost and the town would pay the remaining 25%. The board has given permission for the Library Trustees to look further into this program. If approved, there is no commitment, and the town can back out anytime.
* Bryan Foucher came back to the meeting to ask about taking down a tree at the Fire Station. Christine was not sure if it was on town or personal property. She will review the maps and let Bryan know. She did not foresee any issues removing it, if it is on town property, however she did want to contact the Fire Chief first as well.
* Kendall Bell represented the Highway Department Union in contract negotiations. They are as follows:
	+ Article 4.1 – The Union rejected the towns proposal of % increases and countered with a 3% increase for yr 1, 2.5% year 2 and 2% for year 3. The board will review with Mike Bedini at the next meeting as he had to leave early.
	+ Article 16.1 – The Union rejected the towns proposal to change the wording regarding earned vacation time from 5/6th day per month to 4 hours. Kendall did not feel this was agreeable as the employee is losing almost 2.5 hrs per month and would like to leave the previous agreement in place. The board will review with Mike Bedini at the next meeting as he had to leave early.
	+ Article 30.1 – Both parties agree the proposal should be for a 3-year contract.

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Jim White, Highway Department Supervisor:

* The town hall sidewalk, drainage and lawn just about completed. They just need to finish with grass seed.
* They have been working on mowing and installing culverts.
* Mass DEP inspected the landfill cap.
* Neil Oleson asked Jim if he received the OSHA email regarding training for the compactor worker. Neil also suggested sending a notice to all town departments regarding recycling.

Christine Dobbert, Town Administrator:

* Pole hearing to be held at the next meeting to place a pole on Blackstone and Tilda Hill Road.

7:46 pm Terry Green made a motion to adjourn the regular meeting and enter Executive Session. Neil Oleson seconded. Unanimous.

7:52 pm Neil Oleson made a motion to reopen the regular meeting and adjourn at 7:52 pm. Terry Green seconded. Unanimous.