

Select Board Meeting
February 16, 2022

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

Others present: Jim White, Christine Dobbert, Ron Bosley, Vicki Winchell, Ryan Perkins, Jon Oleson, Donna Randall, Donna Estes, Pam White

Terry Green made a motion to approve the minutes from the 2/2/22 meeting with suggested corrections. Mike Bedini seconded. Unanimous.

Selectmen:

- Mike Bedini made a motion to appoint Ryan Perkins to the Finance Committee. Terry seconded. Unanimous.
- Several Finance Committee members attended the meeting at the request of the board.
 - Neil would like to set up joint meetings with the Finance Committee to set the budget for FY23. Christine will email information to the committee to review.
 - Several requests have been received to date however still waiting on the budget requests from the Library, Assessors, Board of Health, School and Fire Department.
 - Terry asks what the process was for the finance committee. Jon Oleson responded that the requests are reviewed from each department. They meet with the departments individually, if needed. If there are no changes or large requests then it is not necessary to meet with the departments. Neil suggested if the Finance Committee does need to meet with any individual departments it would be good practice to do so in a joint meeting with the select board.
 - Ryan was informed he would need to abstain from voting on the Fire Department budget because he is a member.
 - Donna Estes asked if it is ok to email with questions and when should the entire budget process be completed by. Christine said yes to emailing and the budget should be set by the end of May.
 - Neil let the Finance Committee know they can get together whenever they would all like. They set their first meeting for Wednesday, February 23, 2022 at 6pm.
- Mike Bedini made a motion to accept the business license for John S. Fields Sales and Service. Terry Green seconded. Unanimous.
- Neil signed off on a Fire Department grant for \$10,500 that will be used to purchase fire safety equipment.
- Neil looked into a Samsung 36" gas range for the senior center. The cost was under \$2000 and could be delivered within 5 days from date of placing order. Christine said due to Covid (the center was not open often at the start of the fiscal year) there is enough money remaining in their budget to purchase this. All board members agreed it would be ok to purchase. Christine will order it when Sue Olsen brings her the information.

Selectmen (continued):

- Jon Oleson submitted his letter of resignation from his position with the Highway Department. Christine placed an ad and received 2 applications. Mike brought up the fact that Jon turned in his resignation on a Tuesday and only Neil knew about it as his wife was at town hall when Jon did it. Mike and Terry were not notified until Friday, by Christine, after an ad had been placed and at least one candidate had applied. Neil had discussed Jon's resignation with Jim stating there were some viable candidates before Mike and Terry knew he had resigned. Terry pointed out that the guidelines dictate the entire board should be informed immediately and they will choose to schedule an emergency meeting to discuss the resignation in question and the details of the ad to be posted. Christine said she was trying to be proactive as it is winter and they could need the help. Mike felt it is not right when there are applicants applying for a job before the Select board even know the job is open. Mike also asked if they don't have a person hired, is it possible to use part time help to fill in for plowing in case of a large storm? Jim is going to reach out to people and see if there is any interest to help if needed. He will create a backup plow list.
 - Mike Bedini made a motion to accept the resignation of Jon Oleson from the Highway Department. Terry Green seconded. Neil Oleson abstained. Unanimous.
- Terry discussed the Library Payroll issue for back Covid pay for Molly Lewis. There was to be a payment for back Covid pay for Molly Lewis when she was sick (in November 2021). There was some confusion on the payment. Molly was sick and Heidi signed off on the payroll. Terry was also sick so she did not have a chance to review it. She assumed Molly had submitted for Covid payment. Molly did not and it was just realized recently. Christine will add it to the next warrant for payment.

Jim White, Highway Department Supervisor:

- Snow plowing, tree work
- Pushing back snow banks and punching holes on the road sides.
- Doug working on a metal box for wood.
- Repaired the fuel pump on the diesel.
- Worked at cleaning around the compactor and pushing the boxes down.
- No problems with anyone taking excessive amounts of sand. He is keeping an eye on how much they refill the sand pile.
- Fixed swale that water was jumping out of on Central Shaft Road.
- Washing and greasing equipment.

Christine Dobbert, Town Administrator:

- Dental is down 6.5% and the Health is up 7.5% for FY23. Christine will research other insurance options that other municipalities use who have lower rates.
- Schedule A is approved by the state.
- Wi-Valley is looking for the second half of Phase IV payment. The next meeting will be at town hall on 2/17/22 at 4:30 pm. If Wi-Valley can prove to the state they met the milestones then the state will approve the payments even if towns do not sign off on it.

Public Comment:

- Ron Bosley said he has received calls from towns people wondering if the town is looking into fiber and if there was to be a committee put together of residents to research further. Christine thought people were interested in forming a committee and they should come to the board.

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Public Comment (continued):

- Donna Randall appeared to place a complaint about the speed limit on Route 2, at Stryker Road. When you are entering Route 2 from Stryker Road (taking a left off of Stryker Rd) it can often be dangerous as the speed limit increases from 30 mph to 45 mph. There is a slight curve and cars tend to speed there making it dangerous to pull out onto Route 2. She was almost hit one morning. Neil stated that maybe they could check with North Adams as they would be the ones who need to research it further. Donna would like to see the speed limit decreased to 35 up to Dobberts Recycling. Neil felt there was criteria for the speed limits. Christine will send an email to David Stokes to inquire.

7:15 pm Mike Bedini made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Terry Green seconded. Unanimous.