BOARD OF SELECTMEN

P.O. Box 372
West Brookfield, Massachusetts 01585

BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 22, 2022

PRESENT: Ms. Diane Vayda; Chairman, Mr. David Pierce; Vice-Chairman and Roland Sickenberger, Clerk
ATTENDEES: Atty. Amanda Zuretti, James Daley, Tami Melanson, Kara Laporte, Chris McClure, Lester Paquette, Robert Benson, Barry Nadon, Kathy Landry

Called meeting to Order at 6:00 PM

JAMES DALEY – HIGWAY SUPERINDENTENT

Mr. Daley along with Tami Melanson, Highway Department Administrative Assistant spoke with the Board this evening regarding several matters. The first, being their computers. One is running Windows XP 2000 which Ms. Melanson cannot access many of the state's program and the other doesn't have Microsoft software. At one point, Mr. Gorham did look at them and his budget was charged $2,000, however the problem was never resolved.

The other matter is that of the traffic lights. The flashing beacons on the new section of road on Rte. 9 are solar powered, however require maintenance. There is an option from Arden for a preventive maintenance plan in the amount of $2,760. Or the town can go with a break/fit option. Mr. Dales wanted clarification as to who budget that should come from. Should it be the town's municipal lighting account or his budget. Mr. Pierce stated that in his experience, the town should go with the preventive maintenance program. Regarding the Shared Streets Program and the engineering can be paid from the grant. He (Daley) also reminded the Board that several years ago, there was an insurance claim for damages done to the fence at the garage. An insurance claim was submitted, however the funds from the claim went into the general fund. The accountant will be contacted for clarification.

KARA LAPORTE – McCLURE ENGINEERING – LELAND ROAD WATER PROJECT

Ms. Laporte and Mr. McClure were in attendance this evening to discuss the Leland Road Water Project. Thus far, the project has been engineered as close to Ware Point Road so both systems can "talk" to one another. The solid-state system needs to be upgraded for communication purposes. Currently, the Leland Road cannot be operated from Ware Point Road plant as the controls are obsolete. To this, they've suggested that Supervisory Control and Date Acquisition (SCADA) be included. Atty. Zuretti understood, however asked that be included in the proposal and provided to her to include into an actual contract. Ms. Vayda stated that much of the town's frustration is the lack of communication from their firm. (Mr. McClure left the room at this time and did not return to the meeting). Ms. Laporte acknowledged and apologized for that aspect. She cited a turnover of employees due to COVID and other unfortunate events that contributed to the lack of communications and takes full responsibility. Atty. Zuretti reminded all that the proposal signed by the Water Commission wasn't shared with the Board of Selectmen nor town counsel, which is in violation of the town's by-laws. Also, an invoice that was just received was for work that was performed in the prior fiscal year. Payment cannot be made on this

invoice without a vote of town meeting. Atty. Zuretti also cited that there are no deliverables or wetland delineation maps provided, which were billed for. Unless and until those documents are provided, the town cannot legally pay for "services". Mr. Garceau (Advisory Committee) requested that a timeline be provided, which Ms. Laporte was agreeable, however dates are not in concrete, they are projections at best. M.J. Haesche stated that a chart should be included (mid-point, contingency, escalation, etc.). In closing, Atty. Zuretti requested that any additional work (SCADA, hardware & integration) be integrated into the proposal and a contract with amendments will be provided. Ms. Laport will provide the information to the office which will be sent to counsel for action. She (Laporte) will also provide updates on the second and fourth week so they (Water Department) will have them for their meetings.

ARPA FUNDING

Motion to approve the expenditure of $22,000 ($20,000 for home test kits and $2,000 for labor) to be paid from the ARPA Funding made by Mr. Pierce; second: Mr. Sickenberger – unanimous.

DAN McCALL – WEST BROOKFIELD RESCUE SQUAD

Mr. McCall was in attendance this evening to discuss the possibility of entering into a contract with the town for emergency services. The WBRS currently has 2 ambulances on 24/7 and a third for transports. An ambulance service can be exempt under Chapter 30B, §1 (24). Mr. McCall stated that a contract protects both parties. Currently, they have no obligation to provide 911 services. Without a contract puts the town at risk. The WBRS is a 501 C3 organization which does 100% of the calls and transports. In 2021, they did 1,356 calls, 750 being 911 calls. In addition, the only time they can bill for services is if the patient is transported. If the patient declines transport, they cannot bill, however a cost is still associated with the time/labor involved. As with everything else, the cost of supplies has doubled. They also provide the AED maintenance and calibration for the town, which they never charge for. They actively pursue the subscription drive and do receive several donations throughout the year, however, is not enough to sustain the services. The WBRS should also be an ALS service next week. Ms. Vayda stated that although the past practice has been that the town provides their fuel which is billed back and paid by WBRS, it is not legal absent it being incorporated into a contract. Mr. McCall is seeking entering into a contract with the town with the town's contribution being $60,000. This matter will be discussed with the Advisory Committee as well.

MARK O'DONNELL – UNION REPRESENTATIVE

Mr. O'Donnell was in attendance this evening on behalf of the members of the AFSCME bargaining unit. There are several issues that they would like to see changed: Paychecks – they would like to go back to receiving paychecks in hand as was the practice prior to COVID. Many times, the checks/stubs are not received in a timely fashion. Ms. Vayda spoke with the Treasurer, and she is working on having payroll entirely online. This will allow all employees to log into their own account and upload their information. Mr. Sickenberger expressed concern over privacy issues. Mr. O'Donnell also stated that there is an inaccurate rollover of vacation/sick/personal time. Lastly, the issue of using sick time to cover lost time due to COVID. Mr. Pierce believes that it should be covered under the State of Emergency, however he will check into it.

CORWIN CASTONGUAY – 2022 PRIDE EVENT

Mr. Castonguay addressed the Board this evening to discuss the upcoming 2022 Pride Event. This year, the event will be held on June 25th (rain date: June 26th). He's been in touch with all relative departments; however, he hasn't heard back from the Board of Health. The Board of Selectmen are fine with the event, providing he receives all the necessary permits/signoffs.

FY 2023 BUDGET

Lori Loughlin and Ron Garceau were in attendance this evening. A member of the Advisory Committee resigned and will provide her letter to the office. A brief discussion took place regarding the concerns that the Advisory Committee has with the school's anticipated budget. They are currently looking for 1.2 million above minimum contribution. The school is on their (AC) agenda for April 12th. Concerns were also raised on how to get some of the West Brookfield members of the school committee to participate more.

APPOINTMENTS

Motion to appoint Rebecca Fay to the Cultural Council until June 30, 2025, and to ratify Kathleen Landry's position as the Administrative Assistant to the Water Department made by Mr. Pierce; second: Mr. Sickenberger – unanimous.

MINUTES – TABLED

WARRANTS & INVOICES

Motion to sign and approve Warrant No 22 W 17 dated February 24, 2022, in the amount of $96,371.37 made by Mr. Sickenberger; second: Mr. Pierce – unanimous.

Motion to sign and approve Warrant No 22 P 18 dated and 22 W 18 dated March 10, 2022, in the amounts of $83,709.82 and $59,726.36 respectively made by Mr. Sickenberger; second: Mr. Pierce – unanimous.

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY REPORT/CORRESPONDENCE

1. The office received a request for a Special Use Permit for Lake Wickaboag for the following dates:
    - April 3, 2022 – 413 Bass
    - May 18, 2022 – Wednesday Night Bass League
    - September 10, 2022 – 413 Bass

Motion to approve the Special Use Permit Requests as submitted made by Mr. Pierce; second: Mr. Sickenberger – unanimous.

2. The office received a letter from Arthur Tatro who after holding the position of Constable for over 4 decades has decided to retire and not seek re-appointment. He wishes to thank the town and all departments for our continued support over the years. In addition, we also received notice from Mary Burns-Jackson that she will be retiring from the Library on May 9, 2022. As with Mr. Tatro, she too has expressed her gratitude for being able to work with such an outstanding and dedicated staff. ***A note of thanks will be sent to Mr. Tatro as well as Ms. Burns-Jackson for their dedication to the town.***

3. Request for an Article to be placed on the ATM warrant to authorize a second request for special legislation to authorize change of use of a portion of land held by Mass Fish & Wildlife at 466 West Main Street. This is in conjunction with the Route 9 TIP Project. – ***Motion to approve the request made by Mr. Pierce; second: Mr. Sickenberger – unanimous***.
4. The accountant has asked that the BOS take a vote to allow the expenditure of ARPA funds for the purchase of COVID-19 home test kits. – ***Motion to approve the expenditure from the ARPA funds for the purchase of COVID-19 home test kits not to exceed $20K plus an additional $2K for labor made by Mr. Pierce; second: Mr. Sickenberger – unanimous.***
5. The office received a request from the Recreation Committee for the approval of the following:
    - Permission to approve residents & business owners in town to donate their time and equipment for future approved projects
    - To vote to create a gift account for the purpose of accepting monetary donations
    - To approve adopting fees for appropriate stickers for the usage of the town beach

The Board has requested that Ms. Sjoblom be invited to an upcoming meeting to discuss further.

6. BG Mechanical was on site last week to do an assessment of the town's buildings. They will be providing us with a proposal for a maintenance plan. I've asked for a cost breakdown by building as well as a proposal for all town buildings. The assessment and proposal are being done at no cost to the town. - ***Noted***
7. I spoke with Brad Green from Colonial Restorations regarding the front doors/casing on the town hall. He will come out and do an assessment and provide a proposal for work to be done. The assessment fee is $245.00 which would be credited to any future work done. Disclaimer – they are booking out 4 years. – ***Noted. Board will take under advisement***
8. A request from Sara Hunter regarding the possible foreclosure of a property located at 55 Cedar Drive. This would require an article and an affirmative town meeting vote. Is the board interested in moving forward? – ***The Board is ok with moving forward providing town counsel provides proper guidance.***

NEW BUSINESS - NONE

COMMENTS & CONCERNS – NONE

NEXT MEETING DATE: March 8, 2022 – 6 PM

Motion to Adjourn made by Mr. Sickenberger; second: Mr. Pierce – unanimous at 8:30 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca Acerra

Rebecca Acerra
Executive Secretary

Roland Sickenberger, Clerk

4-19-22

Date Approved