Draft

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Meeting Minutes

TUESDAY, May 16, 2023 – 6:00 PM

PRESENT: Mr. Roland Sickenberger; Selectmen Mr. Brad Merkel
ATTENDEES Town Administrator Ron San Angelo

1, **Call meeting to Order in Open Session 6:01 PM.**

2. **Discussion re: Lake Wickaboag Association. Discussion/ Possible Vote.**

   Discussion -Explanation of the Lake Wickaboag Association and what they do from members of the organization. The discussion centered around an account that they have which was intended to be used for dredging the lake. Numerous residents had contributed to the account for this purpose. The group, after extensive research found that it would be too expensive to do the dredging and could not find any state resources to help them get the work done. Currently they have $20,087.97 in the account and they would like to use the balance for general lake activities. The group intends to send a letter to all doners asking them if they want part of their contribution back or if it would be okay to use it for general lake purposes.

   Motion – Designate Trust Fund account for general purposes for lake health and water quality under the direction of the trustees.

   Motion Made by Selectmen Merkel
   2nd by Selectmen Sickenberger

   Motion carries 2-0

3. **Discussion Electricity Aggregation – Possible vote.**

   Discussion – An explanation was given by representatives of Colonial Power who works with the town to get the best price for electricity. They have been working with the town for a number of years and need the Board of Selectmen to give authority to the Town Administrator to enter into a contract when they believe the market will give us the best price. In the past this authority was given to the Executive Secretary. This is to the benefit of our Electricity Aggregation Program.

   Motion – To authorize the Town Administrator to enter into an Energy Aggregation Supply Agreement for a period of 3 years. The period beginning December 2023 for a term of up to 3 years with the priority of maximum price stability at the best price possible.

Motion Made by Selectmen Merkel
2nd by Selectmen Sickenberger

Motion carries 2-0

4. Approval of One Day liquor Licenses.

A) Ragged Hill Cider Company.
B) Hardwick Winery
C) Agronomy Farm Vineyard

Discussion – The Town Administrator explained that these are one day liquor licenses for the Asparagus Festival.

D) Motion – To approve one day Liquor licenses for Ragged Hill Cider Company, Hardwick Winery, and Agronomy Farm Vineyard.

Motion Made by Selectmen Merkel
2nd by Selectmen Sickenberger

Motion carries 2-0

5. Discussion of ARPA Funding.

The Town Administrator explained some of the items he believes the Board of Selectmen should consider for funding from ARPA Funds. These include two Articles that are currently on the Town Warrant for the Annual Town Meeting. Article 14 in the amount of $70,000 for temporary or permanent easements for the Route 9 project. Article 15 in the amount of $$530,000 for engineering work for the Route 9 project. This is the Towns contribution towards a grant program (TIP) in which the town will receive over $11 million dollars of work. In a few years the town will also have to make a further contribution to engineering costs that could be in the neighborhood of an additional $500,000. The Town Administrator also explained that the Bonus Pay for employees who worked during COVID would also come from this account. The amount for this is approximately $37,363.93. Other items that need to be considered include additional funding for the engineering costs for the Lealand Road Treatment System Upgrade, and repairing the roof and chimney for the fire house which is currently leaking water which can damage the foundation. Clearly these funds will go quickly.

6. **Bonus Pay. Possible vote.**

Discussion - This issue has been on the table for a considerable amount of time as the Board of Selectmen was determining how to apply the bonuses to each person, they believed to be eligible. We are moving forward and if problems arise, we can make future adjustments. The bonus pay is according to a sheet that was given to board members. The Town Administrator commented that Bonus Pay is not required to be paid by anyone. This was a decision made by the Board of Selectmen to thank employes for their work during a difficult period of time.

Motion – To utilize ARPA funds for the purpose of Bonus Pay according to the Excel Spreadsheet given to all members.

Motion Made by Selectmen Merkel
2nd by Selectmen Sickenberger

Motion carries 2-0

The Chairman of the Board of Selectmen asked for a motion to add the following 3 items to the agenda. All these items came up between the time the meeting was posted and the actual meeting. None are determined to be controversial in nature.

Motion to Open the Agenda and add the following 3 items. 6 A.,6B., and 6 C.,

Made by Selectmen Merkel
2nd by Selectmen Sickenberger

Motion carries 2-0

6 A. Contract with Collins Center

Discussion – Town Administrator explained that he had applied for a grant from the state Community Compact funds and was approved for $22,500 to have the Collins Center update our Compensation Schedules and job descriptions for all town employees. Other minor personnel items as well will be taken care of.

6 A. Motion to authorize the Town Administrator to enter a contract with the Collins Center for $22,500 for the purpose of developing new job descriptions and Compensation Schedules. Funding being utilized is a state Community Compact Grant.

Made by Selectmen Merkel
2nd by Selectmen Sickenberger

Motion carries 2-0

6 B. Town Administrator Authority to enter contract with Bishop and Associates for Assessment work for the end of FY 2023.

Discussion – The Town Administrator explained that the Board of Assessors wanted to enter a contract for inspections of town properties for the period ending June 30, 2023, with Bishop and Associates. This will occur if funding can be found with the Advisory Board through the end of the fiscal. year. It is believed that having a professional company do inspections would ensure accurate property values and result in an increase in town revenues.

Motion -To authorize the Town Administrator to enter a contract with Bishop and Associates for a maximum expenditure of $4,000 for FY 23 subject to available funding by the Advisory Committee.

Motion Made by Selectmen Merkel
2nd by Selectmen Sickenberger

Motion carries 2-0

6 C. **Parking enforcement on Maple Street –Police Chief.**

Discussion – The Town Administrator explained that the police chief was looking for a motion by the Board of Selectmen to suspend timed parking during the Asparagus Festival. This is to allow more parking for the festival.

Motion – I move that the Town suspend timed parking enforcement on Maple Street between the hours of 8am-6pm on Saturday, May 20th, 2023, to accommodate the many visitors for the Asparagus and Heritage Flower Festival.

Motion Made by Selectmen Merkel
2nd by Selectmen Sickenberger

Motion carries 2-0

7.0 Update Treasurer/Collector position.

Discussion – The Town Administrator explained that the Search Committee was interviewing candidates on Monday night for the open position.

8.**Discussion of Lealand Road Treatment Systems Upgrade. Status.**

Discussion – The Town Administrator told the board that he met with McClure Engineering and that he was confident that they could work with the Town to complete the engineering work for the Lealand Road Treatment System. He then asked the board if they had any concerns about continuing to work with them. The two board members expressed confidence that the Town Administrator could move the project forward with McClure.

9. Minutes approval of Special Meeting of 5/3/23 – Vote Expected

Discussion – the Board of Selectmen review the Meeting Minutes.

Motion – to approve the Meeting Minutes of 5/3/23.

Motion Made by Selectmen Merkel
2nd by Selectmen Sickenberger

Motion carries 2-0

10. Warrants & Invoices

Board members sign the Warrants and Invoices**.**

11. New Business

Discussion as to Warren and the School District meetings that the Town of West Brookfield has been invited to.

12. Public Comments & Concerns

Discussion – Only 1 member of the audience and no comments were made.

13. Next Regular Meeting Date: May 23,2023 at 6:00 PM.

14. Adjourn – Approximately 8:15 PM.

Motion to adjourn made by Selectmen Merkel
2nd by Selectmen Sickenberger