



Board of Selectmen
Minutes
Monday, November 21, 2016 at 1:00pm
Town Hall Meeting Room

The meeting was called to order at 1:00pm by Chair Ken Swanton in the Town Hall Meeting Room. Selectmen Ron Ricci, Stu Sklar, Lucy Wallace and Alice von Loesecke were in attendance as well as Town Administrator Tim Bragan.

Town administrator report

Bragan reported Planner Bill Scanlon is working on the bike rack purchase program. Wallace suggested maybe one near Town Hall.

Bragan said information has been provided from the Mass Department of Transportation on changes to speed limit regulations.

Bragan received a request to install a stop sign at the end of Warren Ave near Tahanto Trail.

Bragan has invited Sarah Concannon from the UMASS Collins Center for Public Management to return and finish the final section of her report on the Fire and Ambulance Departments. She will also answer questions. Both departments will be included allowing for further discussion on the report and its findings. The meeting will be held in the evening the first full week of December.

Bragan distributed information to consider with respect to the recent passing to legalize marijuana. He has shared copies with the Town Planner.

Town hall acoustics

The board members agreed changing the orientation of the meeting table along with having the partitions on three sides to enclose the meeting area has improved the acoustics. Before moving forward with hiring an acoustic engineer the board members decided to try a couple other methods to further improve the situation. Von Loesecke recommended adding drapes to the windows. Ricci suggested moving the table back a bit and then moving the speakers forward.

Next steps on maintenance of public buildings

Bragan has advertised for a new Public Works Director highlighting the facility management portion of the job. He will bring in a person or company to prioritize issues in each building and create a working database to be utilized moving forward. Von Loesecke said the Division of Local Services through their best practice program offer a facility review free of charge. Bragan envisions the director having the primary responsibility with an employee within the department being tasked with doing smaller jobs and then contracting out for larger projects. He said hiring a part-time person to assist with office administration will help to alleviate some duties from the director allowing for more time to focus on facility management.

On a Ricci/Wallace motion, the board voted unanimously:

- to hire DPW Director responsible for facilities management
- Immediately hire administrative support for the DPW Director

- Contract with an individual or company to develop a facilities management plan including building assessments and priorities for implementation.
- Use DPW employee so designated to handle minor or corrective maintenance items.

Fire station capital request

Sklar encouraged the board to consider putting the fire station study back on the capital plan for fiscal 2018. He said with the recent zoning change allowing housing on the Hildreth House site now is the right time to understand the future of that building. He said the building is overcrowded and does not meet modern standards. Wallace agreed a comprehensive study is important. On a Sklar/Wallace motion the board voted to discuss reinstating for fiscal 18 \$20,000 requested to capital by the Fire Chief. Further discussion ensued on when is the best time to have an assessment done and if the study should include considering another location for the fire station. Wallace noted the concern of several committees with traffic flow around the Town Hall, from the Hildreth House and to be generated by future housing adjacent to the Hildreth House. With the recent report from the UMASS Collins Center the board decided to defer any decision until after the Fire and Ambulance departments meet with the board to hear the conclusion of their report. Sklar withdrew his motion.

Electric Aggregation

On a Wallace/von Loesecke motion, the board voted unanimously to authorize Tim and Marie to contract with appropriate party to do electric aggregation.

Goals

Swanton reviewed goals coming up for the month of December. He admitted December will be another busy month therefore some goals moved out to January.

Selectmen reports

Ricci suggested the board develop a short policy for responding to letters from the public.

Wallace said the Old Library Accessibility Committee is meeting tonight to continue their work on attaining quotes for the Finance Committee when considering their reserve fund transfer request for developing better cost estimate for accessibility renovations.

Wallace reported Rick Maiore will serve as chair on the Housing @Hildreth House Committee.

Von Loesecke reported on the high cost of requests before the Capital Planning & Investment Committee for consideration. She said some requests will be staggered over the new few years. The board members talked about utilizing borrowing instead of free cash to fund capital projects. Wallace asked if there was any consideration to requesting an override to build up the fund.

On a Wallace/Sklar motion, the board voted to extend the current Bare Hill Rowing Agreement.

Sklar said the Suburban Coalition is holding a meeting on November 30th. He also reported the War Monument Committee is off to great start.

Swanton asked when a quad-board meeting should be held. The board members decided early January is best. Bragan will discuss with Finance Committee Chair.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:30pm.