

Selectboard Minutes
April 23, 2012

Meeting opened at 7:07pm

Present: Noreen Suriner, Chair; Alan Vint, Clerk
Duane Pease, Administrative Assistant

Mitch Feldmesser arrived at 7:10pm

No warrants to review

Minutes were accepted, 3-0.

Board of Health minutes were accepted 3-0.

Mail was reviewed.

Building Commissioner, Gerry Garner, was present to give the Board an update on his activities.

Alan questioned Gerry on his proposed budget for the next fiscal year and why it had increased from his initial request.

Gerry explained the cost rose due to a computer program he needs. This program ties into the assessor's program and the initial cost is \$500. He also needs to purchase some office supplies including 60 weight paper that is used to print the permits he issues.

There was a general discussion about 5 properties he is currently addressing for various zoning issues. Many of these also relate to the Health Agent, Jackie Duda, and he has to speak with her on these.

Eric Weiss was present to discuss the proposed PV solar installation.

Alan questioned why the array went from 7KW to 9KW and the associated cost increase. Also the same company that gave the estimate for the Green Grant was the only one to bid. Eric explained DOER required a real cost estimate for the grant application and Northeast Solar provided that. Alan also followed up with some of the installer that did not bid the contract and got varied responses, some do not bid on government contracts and others said they did not see the request or were not interested. There was a discussion among the Board and Eric regarding different ways to bid under Ch 30b, 25a or 149. 30b would require the Town to accept the lowest bid, 149 is more in line with new construction and the contract has to be very specific and requires engineering or architectural drawings to be supplied with the bid specs. 25a is specifically for energy projects and gives the most leeway. Eric said he could work with the bidder on a smaller array that could be installed and that would lower the costs or the entire project could be re-bid. Alan was not comfortable with just one bid. Noreen said the Townspeople had input when the Green Grant was discussed in a meeting when the Grant was received. If the Town went with the current bid, it would put other agreed upon projects in jeopardy. Noreen said that Town input was important and needed to be considered in the Green Grant projects.

Alan also questioned why the administrative costs had more than tripled. Eric said PVPC did not allow enough for the costs and was under the assumption DOER would continue to provide extra funding for the costs on top of the award to cover some of the costs but that did not happen. He also felt the board would not have done its own due diligence if the bid was accepted.

Alan motioned to re-bid based on the need for public input, excess cost and lack of bids. Noreen 2nd and vote was 3-0 in favor of re-bidding.

Eric will contact Northeast Solar and advise them of the Board's decision. Eric will also draft a letter to Northeast that will be sent under the Selectboard's letterhead.

Eric said in the Green Grant projects, the most important issue is the payback period. Any project with less than 10 year payback is excellent, 10-15 years is okay and 20 years or more, the Town most likely would not get their investment back. He is looking into a wood-fired boiler that would heat both the Town Garage and Fire Station.

Before Eric left, Noreen questioned him on the cost of renting another large bin at the Recycling Center rather than alternating the metal and bulky collections that are being done now. Eric said he would work with Joe Kearns on a long term plan but another bin could be rented for any length of time.

Noreen said she has pretty much prepared all the information for the Town Report and will be sending it to the printer shortly.

Alan commended Noreen on her work on the report.

The Board next reviewed the Annual Town Meeting Warrant. There was a discussion on the Tax Title and Legal Expenses for the Treasurer. It is currently at \$10,000 and Alan had a discussion with Ron Berenson, Tax Title attorney that is handing it for the town. Ron felt \$7,500 would pretty much cover the fiscal year. Noreen felt the amount should stay so there would be no need to come back and request additional funds before the end of the year.

Sherri Venditti questioned what was appropriated last year. It was explained \$4,500 was appropriated, another \$1,500 was used from the Tax Collector's Tax Title account and then \$4,600 was also added by the Special Town Meeting and use of the Reserve Fund.

There was heated discussion on Articles 14 & 15 regarding the Gateway Regional School requests for \$47,910 in above minimum contribution in Article 14 and \$112,637 for the Town's share of the Non-Foundation portion. **Alan** felt the Board should leave their recommendation blank. **Mitch** said he would recommend but it was the Town's decision. Noreen motioned to recommend the amount, Mitch 2nd; vote was 2-1 with Alan against recommending.

Sherri Venditti spoke of the money that has been set aside for kitchen improvements and suggested an Ad Hoc Kitchen Committee made up of representatives that use the kitchen such as the Middlefield Fair and Grange. They could work on a plan and then run it by the Health Agent. The committee would need a deadline to achieve their plan.

Eleanor Doyle requested use of the kitchen by the Fair on May 6th. Noreen motion to allow, Alan 2nd; vote was 3-0 in favor.

Under Old Business, **Mitch** commented that the By-Law that says businesses must register with the Town does not say it has to be an annual registration.

Alan also stated the Personnel Policy needs to be addressed. Noreen and Mitch both feel there needs to be a committee set up to draw up the policy and then have the Board review it.

Highway Superintendent, **Skip Savery**, advised the Board the shoulders on Becket Road have been widened. He is half way done with grading the dirt road and is ahead of schedule due to the mild winter and warm spring.

Noreen discussed getting involved in some of the road meetings that are held in the area. Most of the planning is 5 years out and we may not get any monies but it may be worth a shot. Skip said if someone wanted to attend, that would be okay with him.

Noreen motioned to go into Executive Session to discuss recent correspondence received from Town Counsel regarding Harry Pease Road and not to reconvene the open meeting. Mitch 2nd. Vote was Noreen, Aye; Alan, Aye; Mitch, Aye.

Open meeting was adjourned at 8:40pm.

Minutes respectively submitted by:

Duane Pease
Administrative Assistant

Minutes accepted with/without changes.

Noreen Suriner, Chair

Alan Vint, Clerk

Mitch Feldmesser