

SELECTBOARD MINUTES
AUGUST 18, 2014

Meeting opened at 6:00pm

Present: Alan Vint, Chair; Howard Knickerbocker, Clerk; David DiNicola
Duane Pease, Administrative Assistant

Town Tax Title Attorney, Ron Berenson, and Treasurer, Jane Thielen, met with the Board to review properties in Tax Title and to explain options to sell properties of Low Value. Ron advised the Board the McGrath property has not been completely redeemed. \$61,000 in back taxes was paid but the 3rd lot still has back taxes owed. The TT Green property is still owned by the Town, that was taken a number of years ago. Howard said he had been to that property and it is divided by Town Hill Road. The portion on the river side is not buildable due to conservation issues and the portion across the road has a spring with excellent water and he would recommend the Town retain that piece. There is the possibility of donating the river piece to one of the Conservation/Preservation groups.

The 2 properties of low value that were identified were located on Chickadee Road and Warbler Road. Ron said these could be taken by the Town and the Treasurer could file the necessary paperwork. She would start with DOR to obtain a password to get into the Gateway System and he would then help her with the rest. With the filing fees and his costs, it would be around \$2,000 for him to handle each property. Jane could most likely do it for less than \$700.

The Haywood Property, old General Store and adjacent house, has not been taken and there was discussion regarding access to the property as it is not a Town property. Ron will contact the owner and obtain permission for the Town to enter the buildings. Prior to taking, the Town would like to have a Licensed Site Professional inspect the properties.

Jane was questioned regarding emails and phone calls that were sent to the Board from TD Bank advising one account being overdrawn. She explained she did not check the balance of the account prior to issuing checks, she transferred money to that account and there were no further problems. Jane is working on switching banks as TD Bank has undergone some changes and they will not pay interest on the checking account or Deputy Collector's account.

Lastly, Jane said she is not using the Softrite program as she has been unable to get the needed training, she will see that she gets the training.

At 6:30pm the advertised property at 92 River Road was auctioned by sealed bid. Two bids were received and opened: one from Jack Guyette for \$5,001 and one from Scott Churchill for \$1,111. Both bids contained the required \$500 deposit. The property was awarded to the high bidder on a motion by Alan, Howard 2nd, vote 3-0. Ron Berenson met with Jack Guyette separately to go over the procedure to take title to the parcel.

Steve Burke met with the Board regarding his property on Town Hill Road. He has placed a self-contained camper on the property and was seeking a camping permit while he builds a house. Various By-Laws were explained to him regarding camping and what he needs to do. He can request a Special Permit from the ZBA to keep the trailer longer while he is building. He currently is using spring water and empties his waste at a treatment facility. The property has been perced and Lebreque is doing a septic design for him. He plans on starting the building by the end of September. Alan motioned to grant the 24 day Camping permit effective 8/18/14, Howard 2nd; vote 3-0.

Payroll warrants of \$7,826.70 and \$12,100.81 were reviewed and sign as was expense warrant of \$163,481.70.

Minutes of last meeting were approved on motion by Alan, Howard 2nd; vote 3-0.

Howard advised that Don Munger, Town Handyman, had repaired the door lock on the Senior Center, fixed the railing and repaired the Playscape.

Highway Superintendent, Skip Savery, had the Board sign Chapter 90 paperwork for Root Road. He also said he had graded Reservoir Road and the new truck has gone out for repairs. The Bancroft bridge rating is being reviewed, any bridge repairs comes out of Chapter 85. There was discussion on future road projects; major repairs seem to be a lot to ask of a 3 man road crew. Howard suggested Skip obtain bids and then let him decide on the work versus the outside costs. Dave suggested Skip look to hire "summer help" for some of his labor such as weed whacking roadsides. He did not feel the roads were that bad but a balance needs to be found so regular road maintenance does not lag. Also, Skip just compile a list of future equipment needs and confer with the Board on future projects. Howard said he compared the 'cost per mile' with other Towns highway budgets and Middlefield was in the same costs as other towns and Middlefield had the best winter roads around. Skip advised the STRAP grant applications are due in the middle of Sept but the projects considered have to be "shovel ready". Skip has submitted the paving of Root Road and Chester Road to the Central Registry and is waiting to receive bids.

Health Agent, Jackie Duda, met with the Board and gave an update on the Hudson property. She is waiting for a Certificate of Compliance from the Building Commissioner (BC). The Order to Vacate she previously issued is still in effect. An email from Terry Crean advised the Hudson's were using the property in violation of her order. She advised the next time this occurs to notify the Police Chief and/or member of the Board of Health (BOH). She will then go to Housing Court to enforce her order. Jackie will send a letter to the Hudson's regarding inspection of the outhouses that had been ordered removed.

The Krassler property on Clark Wright Road was discussed next, Jackie felt since there were BOH and BC issues only one should have initiated action against the camper as each has to follow different rules. Alan disagreed and felt both should act as it was a multifunction violation. Howard felt each situation should be reviewed as they occurred.

Jackie has involved the Hilltown CDC and PVPC in an effort to aid Mr. Dowsey with his lack of water situation. She will be following up with him.

Sherri Venditti questioned if the Council on Aging (COA) historically provide help in obtaining aid for elderly citizens. Howard advised the COA did not have the expertise to assist and the citizen would have to request assistance.

The Fairground water was discussed next. There was extended discussion on the failure of the water testing and efforts to remedy it. Including the Fair going to another lab for testing. In prior years, no bacteria had shown up in the water so Jackie did not anticipate any this year. Next year the water will be tested earlier so a solution may be found if the water fails and it will not be a last minute frenzy.

A complaint about property, trailer and possible outhouse, on West Hill Road was given to Jackie; the complaint also falls under the BC jurisdiction as well. She will coordinate with the BC.

The Desault property on Skyline Trail was the last item discussed. A BOH hearing will have to be held in order for her to go to Housing Court. Allegedly, the owner claims he has photographs of Town Officials trespassing on his property and he will use these to fight any orders.

In Open Forum, Maryann Walsh, advised the Board SHEAC is looking to provide computers to the Town. They are currently looking to install 12 computers for resident use and the library will not accommodate that many. There was discussion about using the auditorium, questions of how to secure them from anyone just walking in and taking one, availability of electrical service. This will be further researched.

Alan motioned to adjourn, Howard 2nd; vote 3-0 and meeting adjourned at 8:52pm.

Minutes respectively submitted by:

Duane Pease
Administrative Assistant

Minutes accepted with/without changes by:

Alan Vint, Chair

Howard Knickerbocker, Clerk

David DiNicola