

SELECTBOARD MINUTES  
NOVEMBER 19, 2018

Meeting opened at 6:00pm

Present: Judith Hoag, Albert Sirard; David DiNicola arrived at 6:08  
Duane Pease, Town Administrator (TA)

Tax Classification Hearing:

Assessors present: Laura Lafreniere, Chair; Tamarin Laurel-Paine  
Assessors presented to Selectboard the options for the tax classifications, since the town's commercial is only 8%, DOR would not approve a split rate between residential and commercial. After brief discussion and explanations Judy motioned to accept the single rate, Al 2<sup>nd</sup>; vote 2-0 with Dave abstaining as he arrived late. Next to be decided was to see if there would be a Residential Exemption; Small Commercial Exemption and an Open Space Exemption. After further discussion, Judy motioned to not have any of the exemptions, Al 2<sup>nd</sup>; vote 2-0. Anticipated tax rate for FY19 would be \$18.02, a \$.04 increase over last year. Board thanked assessors for their hard work.

Minutes were approved on motion by Judy, Dave 2<sup>nd</sup>; vote 3-0.

Warrants were reviewed and signed; Payroll: \$14,481.58; Expenses: \$123,506.53 and \$2,735.58.

Dave signed the finance agreement for the purchase of the new highway truck being paid for with Chapter 90 funds.

Yearly report for the original Green Grant was signed and TA will forward to DOER.

Mail: new State Representative, Natalie Blais, sent card to Board and is available to meet with Board.

First item on agenda was warrant for a Special Town Meeting (STM) for voting on high speed internet proposals. Judy felt it was too soon to have the STM on December 5<sup>th</sup> and that there was a need for more information for the residents and that the meeting should be tabled until after more information

is provided. Dave agreed and said he would put together an informational handout for the residents. Dave will schedule with MBI for a meeting. He will attempt to have Bill Ennen and Peter Larkin of MBI be present to answer the questions resident may have regarding both proposals, also a lawyer from KP Law will act as moderator. This lawyer is very familiar with the issues as he handles the contract negotiations for a number of towns that are obtaining broadband service. There was continued discussion with a proposed date for the STM on 12/20/18. There would be 2 articles on the STM warrant: one for accepting Whip City's proposal and the 2<sup>nd</sup> accepting Comcast's proposal. Discussion continued regarding make ready cost, per cent of coverage and financial impact on the town's budget. Dave motioned to set the STM for 12/20/18 at 7pm, Al 2<sup>nd</sup> vote 3-0 and STM will be 12/20/18.

Next discussed was the draft letter from Town Counsel in response to the Open Meeting Complaint filed by Maureen Sullivan; only change was on page 2 and TA will advise attorney of change.

Broadband Committee was next. Al felt the Board had gotten all the information we need from the committee. There was continued discussion and it was noted the committee had provided invaluable information on the possible providers for the town. Al motioned to dissolve the committee, Judy 2<sup>nd</sup>; vote 3-0. Jay Swift felt there should be an evaluation showing the difference rate payers would be paying. Maureen Sullivan would like the committee to be able to review the Selectboard handout prior to it being presented to the residents. Dave said all the information would be vetted by MBI to make sure it is correct.

New business: TA requested the Town Hall be closed the Friday and Saturday after Thanksgiving; there are no warrants that week. Board agreed and TA will notify employees and have it post on website.

Judy questioned if the Finance Committee should be involved in the broad band info meeting and if the microphones would be available in the auditorium. TA will make sure they are working. Judy also advised of the STM on November 29<sup>th</sup> regarding the Marijuana Bylaws.

Howard Knickerbocker suggested the informational meeting be videotape if possible and put on the website.

Sherri Venditti wanted to know the status of the PVPC funding for the demolition of the former General Store and adjacent house. Dave said PVPC was not given a clear reason why the grant was denied and suggested members of the Town Center Committee write a letter to the Lt. Governor.

Sherri's 2<sup>nd</sup> question was the Comcast rebuttal to the informational handout given to residents by members of the Broadband Committee, when she requested a copy from the TA, he did not have it. Dave said the info was confidential and he would have to check before giving it out. Maureen said once it was read during the meeting, it was no longer confidential and became public information. Brent Lebeau said when he read the rebuttal; he read it word-for-word.

Dave said the information he is putting together will be discussed and reviewed by the Selectboard. Judy added they will ensure all of the questions are answered at the informational meeting.

Jay felt the town needed more time to digest the information, be able to talk among themselves and then decide what it is they want, there is not need to rush to a decision.

Al motioned to adjourn, Dave 2<sup>nd</sup>; vote 3-0 and meeting adjourned at 7:20pm.

Minutes respectively submitted by:

Duane Pease  
Town Administrator

Minutes accepted with/without changes by:

David DiNicola, Chair

Judith Hoag

Albert Sirard