

TOWN OF ACTON SELECT BOARD MEETING
May 10, 2023
6:00pm

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Tom McGurty called the meeting to order at 6:50pm.

2. WARRANTS/BILLS

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Selectmen Winchell made a motion to approve the agenda; seconded by Selectmen McGurty. All in favor.

4. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING - Tabled

5. TOWN ADMINISTRATOR WEEKLY UPDATE

- The Town Administrator presented a proposed budget from the Treasurer for review; will be brought back next week for discussion and approvals. Note the following changes: School did agree to move funds from their unassigned fund balance and thus that article was changed as well as all the Article numbers were removed. Updated copies will go to Warrant & Finance before Monday.
- Absentee ballots are available starting on Friday.

6. DEPARTMENT HEAD / COMMITTEE CHAIR UPDATES

A. Will Langley, District 1 Road Commissioner and Adam Doliber, District 2 Road Commissioner

The Road Commissioners jointly approached the Board to discuss paving. F.R. Carroll (long standing pavers) asked if the Road Commissioners were going to continue working with them another year or go out to bid. Mr. Langley indicated he responded to the paver that it was past practice to go out to bid but he was willing to bring it up to the Selectmen for a discussion. Discussion ensued. Outcome was it would be in the best interest of the Town to go out to bid; this will happen next week.

The Road Commissioners continued and updated the Select Board about the work they did with all of the washouts from the rain. Discussion ensued about Hussey Road, which washed out and the emergency repairs needed for accessibility of Emergency services. A contingency fund (separate from Road Commissioner budgets) needs to be put into place for future issues and will be a topic for further discussion of the Board because this affects private roads which should be maintained by their road associations.

B. Robin Ham, Transfer Station

Updated the Board regarding his conference attendance and topics covered which included: Grants and funding from the state for transfer stations, demo coming into transfer station; universal waste training, operating core training - how to operate a transfer station efficiently, etc. In attendance was DEP's representative and Mr. Ham was asked about the upcoming transfer station project. The DOE

representative saw no issues but wanted to come to Acton to discuss the project, future projects and train Mr. Ham as he is new to the position. Board told Mr. Ham to schedule the meeting and involve Sebago as well.

7. LIAISON UPDATES

Tom indicated that spent some time with the Warrant & Finance committee and the Capital Improvement committee. There was nothing to report except that both committees were working on what they needed to do for town meeting.

David had no update.

8. OLD BUSINESS

A. Engagement Letter was worked out with Talbot.

Selectmen McGurty made a motion to sign the agreement to engage Barry Talbot Roy as of July 1st for a fee of \$65,000; seconded by Selectmen Winchell. No public comment. All in favor.

B. Road Survey Follow up

Mr. Langley was tasked with making some calls. Mr. Langley confirmed that he made a few calls yesterday and today and received one callback who indicated they would have a price for him next week. He was unable to reach Line Pro and was waiting for a callback. Mr. Langley asked the Board to hold another week.

9. NEW BUSINESS - This section was done out of order

C. Executive Session 405 6 - A - 1 Personnel

Selectmen McGurty made a motion to go into Executive Session 405 6 A.1 - Personnel; seconded by Selectmen Winchell. All in favor.

Selectmen Winchell made a motion to come out of Executive Session 405 6 A.1 - Personnel matter; seconded by Selectmen McGurty. All in favor.

D. APAT Budget

Selectmen McGurty made a motion to utilize \$1,488 from the emergency fund due to reduced level of funding from the franchise fee for APAT; seconded by Selectmen Winchell. All in favor.

Selectmen McGurty made a motion to move \$686.36 from the APAT Equipment account to the APAT Operating account to cover the cost of equipment purchased this year.

There is still a balance of \$1700. This amount will support the video taping of only 2 meetings per week through June 30th so as to not overspend this budget. The Board of Selectmen meeting will be filmed and all other committees will need to petition the Town Administrator to have their meeting filmed when there is important business occurring which needs to be filmed. Plus, the meetings will be limited to 3-hours only because after that, the stipend goes up. This will be in effect until June 30th.

Public Comment:

Nancy Ruma approached the Board to clarify this was only to the end of the fiscal year (June 30th) or was it all next year too? The Board responded until June 30th. There has been an increase in events being broadcasted; growth was exceeded. Stipend doubled after 2 hours.

Mr. Dennis Long's concern was that there was one more W & F meeting to occur and did not expect it to finish in less than 3 hours. The Town Administrator will work with APAT on set up and break down.

Mike Cory, Department Head indicated they will try to stay status quo and he will do his best to cover the meetings

Budget discussion continued: The budget for next week will need to be adjusted and given to W & F before next week to include in the meeting. One of the adjustments was the stipend amount increased to \$275 and due to loss of franchise revenues has gone down about 3,000 per year and the budget was reduced because of that impact but APAT was going to ask to have raised and appropriated \$21,086.

A. Warrant & Finance Questions Submitted

1. They are correct; we've made that change
2. The proposed changes: The CEO has already sent the Town Administrator the previous public and current public hearing. Both documents will be sent to W & F.
3. The balance on the Cemetery fund: We will send that to W & F.
4. Why aren't the following two accounts listed - Bridge Culvert Capital Reserve and West Shore. The Town Administrator responded that this was the first year they were being rolled over. The West Shore Drive account was just created last year. The Town Administrator will run this past the Treasurer about adding the funds to the Warrant.
5. Why is \$10,000 from unassigned being placed in the Town Hall Capital Reserve account? It was a decision the Board made to help engage someone to do the engineering work which was not previously considered.
6. Why is the Town setting pay rates for private businesses? These are the road rates.
Response: Unless you go out to bid, we are not going to have them come in and just name prices. Mr. Long approached the Board to clarify W & F's question. It was pointed out that we were going to give a 5% increase to the part that was employee rates. He's a private business, why are we given 5% pay increases in the rates for a private business plus the \$6 an hour increase for the equipment itself? Discussion ensued. A rate is set through Town vote so that these people will come work with us; in recognition of an increased cost of business. A cap is in place to manage these costs. The Board will welcome any suggestions in improving this practice.
7. What is exact mileage: which will be put in the warrant. Why not finish Hussey Hill Road; will the money be offset by the money spent on Peck road? Response: It was a budgetary decision and a private road with only two houses on it.
8. What is the delivery cost and installation of the containers; what size are the containers? The math will be worked out and emailed to W & F. The \$10,000 was the 2 bids received for the 40 x 40 feet containers - no delivery or installation fee.
9. Why is \$10,000 being placed in the Cemetery Reserve account? That is for tree cutting.
10. There's been no information from the recreation department. What is the plan; what is the shed size; what is the playground size; and does it meet ADA standards? Response: This

information will not be known until the engineer gets in and is able to determine the land area that can be devoted to those things.

11. Why are we spending \$10,000 for information we already have with the RSMS? System has not been utilized. Professionals will be going out and give us an unbiased opinion on what should be done. Professional services is the best option for this work. Sebago has a great reputation and references; money well spent.

Selectmen McGurty suggests the Road Committee take on and debrief why RSMS did not work for Acton.

12. Why is the \$25,530 from ARPA not being placed in the existing West Shore Capital Reserve fund. The Town Administrator indicated it was and the same wording was used from last year's warrant.

13. Can the Town spend money out of a reserve account without approval at town meeting; Asking for 5 years of expense accounts and current date year-end reports. Mr. McGurty this question was not critical for what the committee was doing with regards to the warrants that need to be brought to the upcoming town meeting and the Board will respond at a later date. As for the financial information requested, it can be found on the website.

Joyce Bakshi, Capital Improvement Chair: Going back to the Cemetery and the reserve account. The Cemetery committee needs that money now for tree removal and that was why we asked the question. Town Administrator indicated she was working with Mr. Driscoll and there was one tree to be removed and this year's budget could handle it.

A. Fire Department Request -

The Fire Chief reached out to request approval to order personal protective equipment PPE that is used to enter a building or car crashes to protect us and use it . Discussion ensued regarding items needed, compatibility requirements for clothing/PPE matches, companies that supplied components, etc., The Selectmen reiterated this was the reason exceptions to the purchasing policy came through them; otherwise everyone needed to follow the policy.

Selectmen McGurty made a motion to waive as cited by Fire Chief in email; seconded by Selectmen Winchell. All in favor.

E. Personnel Update

The Town Administrator interviewed candidates for the 2 open positions - Office Assistant and Deputy Clerk. There were 3 top candidates and the Town Administrator asked for permission to move forward and make offers The Board was in agreement.

10. PUBLIC COMMENT

Dennis Long asked the Board if the answers to the questions would be emailed to the W & F committee. Mr. McGurty offered to assist and work with Mr. Long.

Mr. & Mrs. Denekamp approached the Board to update them about the success of the annual clean up in Acton. There were 25 to 30 people scattered around town doing a town wide clean up. There were 144 contractor bags of trash collected. The Board asked for a list of names to thank those involved.

Mr. Robin Ham asked if the Board could purchase orange vests for participants of the road clean up. It is a nice thought but the Town can not get involved due to liability issues. It is done by volunteers.

Nancy Ruma approached the Board to ask about cemetery upkeep for veterans and other cemeteries in disrepair that no one knows ownership of. Discussion ensued regarding the current laws in place; it is allowed but not required. Thank you to all who volunteer to do this work.

11. PENDING

12. ANNOUNCEMENTS

05/15/2023 W/F 6pm

05/17/2023 Select Board 6pm

05/18/2023 Planning Board 6pm

05/22/2023 Capital Improvement 5pm

05/24/2023 Select Board 6pm - tentative

05/25/2023 Mary Grant 6pm

05/31/2023 Select Board 6pm

13. MEMBERS PRESENT

Selectmen Tom McGurty, Selectmen David Winchell and Town Administrator Jennifer Roux. Selectmen Kimberly Stacey-Horn was absent.

14. ATTENDANCE: Adam Doliber, Will Langley, Robin Ham, Hope Denekamp, Jon Denekamp, Mike Corey, Joe Ruma, Dennis Long, Susan Meehan, Judy Shain

Selectmen Winchell made a motion to adjourn; seconded by Selectmen McGurty. All in favor.