

SELECTMEN'S MEETING
February 19, 2019
5:00pm

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Selectmen Elise Miller made a motion to approve the agenda; seconded by Selectmen Kimberly Stacey-Horn. No discussion. All in favor. Approved.

2. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING:

Selectmen Elise Miller made a motion to table the minutes of the last meeting; seconded by Selectmen Kimberly Stacey-Horn. No discussion. All in favor. Approved.

3. DEPARTMENT HEAD / COMMITTEE CHAIR UPDATES:

(Animal Control and District 2 Roads Unable to Attend)

(Unable to Re-Schedule Cemetery Committee)

A. Mary Grant

Dan Krampetz, Mary Grant Committee Chair updated the Board that the committee (Dan Krampetz, Tammy Krampetz, Bobby Jo Rogers, Virginia Deboer, Linda Leck and Laura Daskoski) met a few weeks ago and set a schedule of events for this year:

- Spring Cleanup will be May 18, 2019.
- They are excited to do an organized story with the Library Board on June 22, 2019.
- Town-wide Picnic around July 6, 2019.
- Camping in the Park along with some stargazing – To be determined.
- Annual Pumpkin Carving on October 19, 2019.

Other than these events, the committee is looking forward to a fun year and getting the grounds into shape for another summer.

B. Recreational Committee

Chris Whitman approached the Board with the Recreation Committee update:

- The ice rink is now full and takes a little bit of work to keep it clear, but it is worth it. To maintain the rink, the rink needs to be shoveled off in sections after each storm. However, Mr. Whitman has acquired a snow blower which helps immensely. What used to take 4 hours every night to clear now only takes 45 minutes. Mr. Whitman also brings up in his truck with 20 gallons of water every night to fill in the cracks and smooth the rink.
- The bonfire and snack shack are successful with hot cocoa and cookie donations.
- Donations of ice skates have been helpful. Currently the ice rink has 4 pairs available to be borrowed; they are stored in the shack. All donations are welcome on both children and adult skates.
- Baseball sign ups are out. Ordered baseball equipment has arrived and is located currently in the Acton Fitness Center.
- Glow and Bowl will be tomorrow night.

4. OLD BUSINESS:

A. Road Account Standings

The Town Administrator presented to the Board a balance update for the Road's Accounts from the Treasurer:

- District 1 Plowing & Sanding: \$4,270.03
- District 2 Plowing: \$1,459.42; Sand & Salt is overdrawn at \$3,731.00 (due to a bill which has just come in.)

The Board will review the last 3 – 5 years with the Road Commissioners to see if these accounts need to be increased.

B. Action Plan Maine Municipal Association

- Fire Department has 1 item left to complete.
- Transfer Station Staff will be in on Friday to complete their required online training.

C. 19-20 Proposed Budget

The Board's thoughts regarding the Forester's line item is that it should be increased. The Board will provide their budget number to Town Administrator before the Workshop.

Selectmen Walsh needs to provide a Watershed Dam budget number to the Town Administrator after he reaches out to Sanford for their input.

D. EMA Director/E911 Operator Job Descriptions

The Town Administrator asked the Board to provide guidance on a job description for the EMA Director. As for the 911 Operator, is there a possibility that Code Enforcement can pick this up? Further research will be done by the Town Administrator and brought back to the Board next week.

E. Chain Bill / Cutting Edges

The Board requested of the Town Administrator to provide any costs related to Cutting Edges since July 1, 2018 to December 31, 2018; the answer was none was expended. As for the Chain, the Town Administrator reached out to Legal Council to verify whether the agreed upon portion of chain to be paid by the Town was acceptable. Council said according to the Warrant Article the answer is no. The Town Administrator will speak to the Treasurer and have that bill payment rescinded.

5. NEW BUSINESS:

A. Jeff Donahue's Concerns

The Town Administrator reported to the Board that Mr. Donahue emailed her and asked to be put on the Agenda but he was not present.

B. 146-025 Right To Redemption Letter

The Town has gone through the Foreclosure Process on all outstanding 2016 taxes. At the end of the period the Town had one property to foreclose on. Former practice is for the Board to send a Right to Redemption Letter to the Property Owner stating they will have 30 days to get the property deeded back in their name by paying off all of the taxes and the administration fees. The Town Administrator presented to the Board a draft of this letter with all back up material related to the property for their input. This letter will be posted in the newspaper because there is no good current address on the listing; belief is that it is a Trustee of someone who is deceased.

Selectmen Walsh read out the letter (excluding names).

Selectmen Miller made a motion to sign the Redemption Letter for Map/Lot 146-025; seconded by Selectmen Kimberly Stacey-Horn. No discussion. All in favor. Approved.

C. Warrant for the Special Town Meeting – 03/06/2019

The Town Administrator contacted the Acton School and reserved that venue for this Special Town Meeting. The Town Administrator read a draft of the prepared warrant which reads, “To see if the Town will change the position of the two Road Commissioners from Elected to Appointed effective July 1, 2019 for terms of up to 3 years each.” Mrs. Roux further commented this warrant guarantees that there will still be two Road Commissioners but allows for flexibility to stagger their terms if the Board so chooses. The Board needs to let the Town Administrator know of any changes to be made to the Warrant prior to next week as that is when the Warrant will need to be signed. Warrant & Finance has scheduled a meeting for Monday, February 25, 2019 at 6 pm to make their recommendation; this requires we requires a draft of the Warrant to be sent to them.

D. Capital Improvement Committee

Selectmen Stacey-Horn asked for this item be put on the agenda. Selectmen Stacy-Horn had discussions with the Treasurer which led her to believe now was the time to start putting monies away for future improvement projects. Mrs. Stacey-Horn's thoughts were to develop a committee that would be willing to look Town-wide and make recommendations for improvements. Areas to be included would be the Town Hall, Transfer Station, etc. The Road Committee, Selectmen and Road Commissioners can also work together to develop a Capital Improvement Account to put money aside for Road related projects like Bridges.

The first items for improvement that came to Selectmen Stacey-Horn's mind for the Town Hall were the heating system and/or roof leak (maintenance of buildings). Selectmen Miller added to also consider the kitchen and water quality which could also be improved.

The Town Administrator will start advertising for committee members, however, she suggests the Board start their checklist now because they are so close to developing the budget to wait for a committee.

E. Sanford Regional Communications

Sanford Regional Communications sent to the Town Administrator a drafted Communications Agreement (standard contract) for review. The cost of services is going up 13% for the next fiscal year (effective July 1, 2019) and will increase every year for the next 5 years. The services included in the Agreement are Dispatch Calls, 911, Fire & Rescues, etc. The Town Administrator also noted there was no other option than to accept the Agreement as written.

Selectmen Miller made a motion to sign the agreement between the City of Sanford and the Town of Acton for 911 Dispatch; seconded by Selectmen Stacey-Horn. No discussion. Approved and Signed.

F. Workshop Timeline

The Treasure scheduled a workshop for March 16, 2019; the schedule is as follows:

- 9 AM - Transfer Station
- 9:15 AM – Cable
- 9:30 AM - Fire & Rescue
- 10:00 AM - Roads

- 10:30 AM – Recreation
- 10:45 AM – Conservation/Forestry
- 11:00 AM – Cemetery
- 11:15 – Health & Welfare Dams & Public Safety
- 11:30 – General Government (everything else)

With the Board's approval, the Town Administrator will get this schedule submitted, the Department Heads can mark their calendars and she can notify Warrant & Finance.

Selectmen Miller commented that from last year, she remembered that people didn't think Roads had enough time; no one else remembered that. The Town Administrator recommended more time be put the budget details before their meeting.

The Town Administrator asked Warrant & Finance if they wanted to meet with Social Services. Mr. Waterhouse indicated if there were new applicants then yes, but if only former applicants then no.

6. PUBLIC COMMENT:

Leslie Berlan approached the Board regarding her opinion on changing the auditor. She took it upon herself to do some research and wanted to share her findings with the Board regarding an article from Ernst & Young and a comprehensive study they performed regarding Auditing Services. Points she shared were:

- Audit rotation imposes periodic breaks of auditor and client and is intended to avoid excessively long periods between them which is believed to damage the quality of the audit. It enhances audit client independence which is closely linked to audit quality. When the same audit firm carries out its services for a long period of time, it may fall into a sort of professional routine. The auditor may be tempted to rely increasingly on previous audit tests and may overlook certain accounting areas that had been considered as correct in previous audits thus potentially missing material errors, errors and mistakes. As time passes, auditors begin to unconsciously feel as part of the client management team and this may impede the auditor from impartially assessing the transparency and reliability of client's accounts. Moreover, a long term relationship between a single audit firm and an auditee may cause reasonable people to conclude the auditor would not be capable of acting without bias thus impacting the appearance of independence.
- The American Accounting Association states, an auditor firm rotation, years of employment may negatively affect the audit quality if it reflects management entrenchment (which is called audit firm complacency).
- Governing.com which exclusively deals with Municipalities, recommends (Mrs. Berlan was not recommending) an independent audit committee, as someone should audit the government auditors. As Public Finance becomes ever more complex, even small governments need a competent, vigilant, independent and expansive voice to make sure the public money is managed prudently.
- Lastly, from tax auditors as to what a municipality should require from their auditing firm, they need a statement of audit firm's qualifications along with a copy of the firm's peer review letter and a letter of finding if any, and these must be clean. The audit firm must also be a member of the Government Audit Quality Center which is established by the American Institute of CPAs.

In conclusion, Mrs. Berlan stated she believed the Board really needed to think about what they are doing and not pass it if because it was only a recommendation not a requirement.

Susan Meehan approached the Board to state she was in total agreement with Mrs. Berlan and that if the Town is putting this out to bid the current company should not be a part of the bidding process. The Board should really look at a new auditor. It is recommended and Mrs. Meehan knows the Board said it's only a recommendation and not the law, but Mrs. Meehan states she could give the Board many examples of things that were recommended but were never the law. Examples presented by Mrs. Meehan which were recommendations and not law requirements were: Women couldn't vote and Children could drive in the back of an open truck. Mrs. Meehan was trying to emphasize these were now law and just by saying something is not the law, is no a reason to not change the auditor.

Further comments from Mrs Meehan were:

- The Town has had the same auditor for 14 years and it is way overdue for a change.
- The Board is thinking it is a different accountant that will be looking at our accounts, but it is not a different accounting company.
- The Town's current auditors will not be insulted by this decision as it happens all the time.
- Rotation happens all the time.
- The Board really needs to reconsider. It's the Board's job to make sure the taxpayers money is being taken care of and she would appreciate the accommodation.

The Board responded that they never stated that they would not consider not using the current auditor during the selection process, however they also look at all factors for selection including cost.

Joyce Bakshi, approached the Board she stated for a different subject, but proceeded to recap on what was said earlier indicating that she understood that when you go out to bid for anything, the highest bid and the lowest bit should be tossed out and the middle bid would be awarded the bid.

The Mrs. Bakshi stated her reason for approaching the Board was to discuss the Capital Investment Plan. As Chairman of the Planning Board, during their research of the Comprehensive Plan, she came across the following:

- Under the Capital Improvement section there is a list of things already slated as improvement projects. One of the items listed was that sometime between 2001 and 2010 there should be an addition put on the school. She recommended to the Board that this Capital Investment Plan would be a could place to start in developing their own list.

Mr. Robin Ham asked the Board if whether they wouldn't rely on Department Heads (who know their own areas) to provide capital improvement items to be done in their areas? The Board agreed.

7. ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Meetings are on the website
- RFP for Auditing Services Available Until 03/12/2019
- Nancy from Families First will be here tomorrow for story hours with a parachute activity.

8. MEMBERS PRESENT:

Selectmen Ed Walsh, Selectmen Elise Miller, Selectmen Kimberly Stacey-Horn and Town Administrator Jennifer Roux.

9. OTHERS PRESENT: