

TOWN OF ACTON SELECT BOARD MEETING

January 25, 2024

6:00pm

MINUTES

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Winchell, Jr. called the meeting to order.

2. WARRANTS/BILLS

Signed.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Norwood made a motion to approve the agenda; seconded by Walsh. All in favor. Motion carried.

4. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING – January 10 and January 17

Walsh made a motion to approve the minutes from January 10; seconded by Norwood. All in favor. Motion carried. Winchell, Jr. made a motion to approve the minutes from January 17; seconded by Walsh. All in favor. Motion carried.

5. TOWN ADMINISTRATOR WEEKLY UPDATE

Roux advised she is reviewing the upcoming elections for the town for the upcoming Town Meeting. The Road Committee, Warrant and Finance, and Conservation and Forest Committee: The Conservation and Forest Committee still has some openings. Currently, there are two vacant seats that were elected in 2022-2025. Brazier was elected in 22 and the seat is currently open due to resignation. The other seat was not filled previously. As they were elected seats, they need to be appointed by the Select Board. Collins will come due in June 2024. Vanesse took the seat of Ham, who declined, Vallincourt was then appointed and resigned. Ruma was appointed to fill a vacancy from 2021. Two seats will need to be appointed through 2025 and three seats will be up for election at the Town Meeting. Benjamin is on his original term from 2022-2025.

For the April 6 Town Meeting date, we need to decide if the meeting will start at 8:30 am or 9:00 am and determine if advertising and if a mailing will be used. The Transfer Station and Recreation Department will be closed for the meeting. Norwood, Winchell, Jr., and Walsh agree to 9:00am. Winchell, Jr. suggested a mailing should be done every year to encourage participation. Roux is in communication with a babysitter for the meeting as well. Roux questioned if Mary Grant would provide light hors-d'oeuvres. Krampetz indicated this was discussed and Mary Grant will provide hors-d'oeuvres for the Town Meeting.

The School Committee requested a meeting with the Board on January 31, to request a Special Town Meeting to request permission from the Town to transfer surplus funds from last year for a project.

Code Enforcement has posted a public hearing for the two zoning articles to be voted on in April. The meeting will be on Thursday, February 15.

6. DEPARTMENT HEAD / COMMITTEE CHAIR UPDATES

n/a

7. LIAISON UPDATES

McGurty: Municipal Management / Warrant & Finance, APAT, Cemetery

n/a

Walsh: Fire Department, Transfer Station, Lincoln School

The Fire Department had two applicants for the posted job and interviews occurred on Monday.

Roux questioned the status of the Lincoln School. Walsh advised nothing yet. Roux questioned a potential budget amount. Walsh suggested \$5,000 for painting the exterior. Winchell, Jr. would like a company to quote the painting. Walsh will reach out for quotes.

Norwood: School Department, Conservation / Forest, Mary Grant

Norwood attended the School Committee Budget meeting this evening and the Mary Grant Committee meeting this past weekend. Mary Grant has had one new member sworn in with one potential new member with interest.

Winchell: Roads & Road Committee, Recreation Committee

n/a

8. OLD BUSINESS

n/a

9. NEW BUSINESS

A. Flood Plain Management Ordinance

Jason Sevigny, CEO

The State sent a letter to the town this week, advising the Town must adopt the 2024 Flood Plain Management Ordinance or the town will forfeit the flood plain insurance for residents. All municipalities must adopt the ordinance. The State provided an ordinance for review. Sevigny reviewed the ordinance and made a few adjustments. Roux met with Sevigny and discussed options for adopting the Ordinance. Sevigny suggests adopting the Ordinance as written.

B. Budget Presentations

- Road Commissioner

Will Langley, Road Commissioner: presented 2024-2025 Budget and broke down special projects for District One and District Two.

Norwood questioned if these were the essential special projects. Langley confirmed additional details with County Road and H Road. Winchell, Jr. continued, reviewing proposed budget amounts: One project has two years to be completed.

Roux requested a copy of the survey for Hawk Road. Langley received a rough draft but will confirm the final survey.

Joyce Bakshi, Warrant and Finance Committee, questioned if the old gym and parking lot are tied to the paving bids. Roux advised those are a separate item that will be addressed later in the meeting.

Bakshi also addressed the potential of a new Road Commissioner and if that changes the proposed budget for the upcoming fiscal year. Roux advised that if Langley chooses not to run, the next Commissioner will continue with what was put forward by their predecessor. Winchell, Jr., and Walsh continued, explaining the process further.

Ray Lopez questioned if Buzzell Road was complete. Langley advised it will be completed this Spring.

Charlie Hydek questioned the \$250,000 limit for paving. Winchell, Jr. advised this not a limit and funds are increasing from years past. Hydek continued, he would like to see base and final coat in one year, due to potential adhesion issues. Winchell, Jr., indicated that base is done and final coat within the same or next season.

Norwood indicated that the \$250,000 reference was to explain what the new process will be and why the numbers will be different this year.

Winchell, Jr., and Hydek continued to discuss budget increases and financial sustainability within the town.

Lee Robator, Warrant and Finance, questioned if the funds for the two-year project are proposed to be raised in one year. Winchell, Jr., confirmed this is like a reserve for a project. It can be done in one year, but the funds will be available for two years, if needed.

Robator questioned what goes out to bid. Winchell, Jr. advised the Road Commissioner to do the reconstruction per the town warrant and equipment rates. Roux continued that paving goes to bid. Robator also asked if there are any State or Federal funds available to support infrastructure improvements. Winchell, Jr. advised no, as the town doesn't have grant writers. Roux advised per Covid restrictions; ARPA money was applied towards the West Shore Drive Culvert project.

Additional discussion occurred over the budget and town Warrants.

Leslie Berlan, Warrant and Finance Committee: announced she is in favor of the special projects proposal to create transparency with what the town is doing.

Does the town anticipate that these special projects will eliminate the excess funds that are being transferred over. Winchell, Jr., advised that by updating our budgeting process, the department can focus on spending money correctly throughout the year and assist in eliminating excess funds year to year.

- Rec Committee

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C. Old Fire Station RFP – Open Bids

Bids opened:

- Caleb Chesse - \$21,240
- Seth McCoy - \$64,000
- David Langley and sons - \$20,000
- Normand Enterprises - \$12,050
- Girard Excavation - \$29,000
- Charlie Plante - \$19,000
- Acton Excavators - \$27,900

- Foglio - \$38,250
- Curtis Earthworks - \$18,300
- Morin and Son Earthworks - \$24,000
- Gardiner Concrete - \$17,500

Roux will create an excel spreadsheet for review and decision-making next week.

D. Fire Department Sprinkler System Quotes

Roux advised there are two quotes. Winchell, Jr. advised that the Select Board will not review the quotes until they have received three. Walsh advised Ham was only able to obtain two quotes. Winchell, Jr. advised that Ham would need to reach out to the person/company that is contracted with the town and come back with three quotes for presentation.

E. Balch Dam EAP

Roux presented the EAP for Balch Dam which has been updated between the Town of Newfield and Acton.

F. Abatements

Roux advised four to five abatements have been received, and two denials. Two abatements will be reviewed tonight, the remaining were sent back to the Assessor to address questions. Abatements were granted due to the statement that “the lot is not buildable at this time.” Roux reviewed with the CEO and was advised that the lots are buildable.

The two abatements tonight were adjusted due to site improvements to change the grade of the property.

224-017 – Awarded an abatement of \$77. 40 due to a lower grade, from one to two, dropping the valuation by \$12,000.

153-054 – The land was reduced to table four and adjusted for frontage quality and the actual building location. Tax abatement in the amount of \$127,249 in valuation and \$820 in taxes.

220-006 & 220-006-001 - O’Donnell & Associates has reviewed the abatement application. They have referenced three properties they believe are similar in size and sale date and sale prices and have denied the request for abatement for both properties as they believe they were assessed properly.

Sevigny and Roux will meet with the Assessor next week regarding the additional questions.

Walsh made a motion to approve the abatements as read; seconded by Norwood. All in favor. Motion carried. Abatements signed.

Roux indicated that next week a spreadsheet will be presented with current budget numbers, as presented, we need direction from the Board as to what/if any salary increase will be applied towards the budget, what special projects we are moving forward, as we promised the Warrant & Finance Committee a Warrant by the first of February.

G. Executive Session MRSA 401 - 6 A Personnel

Norwood made a motion to go into Executive Session MRSA 401 – 6 A Personnel; seconded by Walsh. All in favor. Motion carried.

Norwood made a motion to come out of Executive Session MRSA 401 – 6 A Personnel at 7:38pm; seconded by Walsh. All in favor. Motion carried.

H. New Hire

Walsh confirmed interviews were completed on Monday for the Fire Department. Walsh would like recommend applicant A for the position.

Walsh made a motion to put applicant A forward as the next full time Fire Station employee pending the background check, and physical; seconded by Norwood. All in favor. Motion carried.

Roux received a call from a parent/coach with questions regarding a policy for canceling rec programs in inclement weather. Roux continued, stating the Board moved its meeting from Wednesday to Thursday due to the weather. Basketball was still on last night and there were concerns that it wasn't cancelled. Norwood was surprised that there was still practice at 7pm, especially due to the poor road conditions: also suggesting that if there is not currently a policy that one be created for inclement weather. Winchell, Jr., agreed that a policy should be created. When the Town Hall shuts down and after school programs are cancelled, the Rec Director should have contacted coaches to cancel practice and events. Roux will draft a policy for next week's meeting.

Hydek questioned if the town can do push notifications. Roux advised the town does not have the capabilities.

10. PUBLIC COMMENT

n/a

11. PENDING

- A. Sealed Bid – Gym Equipment Etc. 02/14/2024
- B. Mooring Ordinance
- C. Meeting Hall / Kitchen Upgrade
- D. Milton Mills School Traffic

Walsh made a motion to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Norwood. All in favor. Motion carried.

12. ANNOUNCEMENTS

On Website

13. MEMBERS PRESENT: David Winchell, Jr., Ed Walsh, Daniel Norwood, Jennifer Roux

14. ATTENDANCE: Jason Sevigny, Will Langley, Joe Ruma, Dam Krampetz, Joyce Bakshi, Leslie Berlan, Lee and Mary Anne Robator, Deborah and Ray Lopez, Charlie Hydek