

Town of Petersham Massachusetts
SELECTBOARD MINUTES
Town Hall Upper Level and Remote Access
1 South Main Street
Tuesday February 23, 2021
5:00 PM

Present: Selectboard members Nancy Allen, Henry Woolsey

Present in Person: David Lockesmith; Lynn Peredina-Mahar and Center School Committee

Present via Remote Access: Jeremiah Casavant-National Grid Consulting Field Arborist; Jackson Denham -National Grid Western Region Supervisor; Ben Hause, Richard Longland, Michael Brennan-Birch Drive property owners; Dr. Liz Zielinski-School Superintendent; Michelle Tontodonato-School Finance Director; Maryanne Reynolds-Mahar School Committee; Rich Cavanaugh, Mark Bishop, Sandy Page-Advisory Finance Committee.

1. 5:00 PM Call to order.

Chair Nancy Allen called the meeting to order at 5:00 PM at Town Hall upper level.

2. New Business – Public Hearing National Grid Request for Roadside Tree Removal on Birch Drive

Nancy Allen open the Public Hearing at 5:00 PM for the National Grid (NG) Request for Tree Removal on Birch Drive for Installation of electric lines to new residence under construction at 95 Birch Drive. She noted that the Hearing had been posted with 14 day legal notices, abutters were notified, and project documentation was available on the town web home page. All present introduced themselves [as listed above]. Nancy and Henry Woolsey introduced David Lockesmith who is pending appointment to the Tree Warden position and had inspected the trees in person. All present had been on site, had photo documentation in hand recorded by Nancy, and had a construction plan provided by NG showing the overhead line path. NG Arborist Jeremiah Casavant described the project needs and NG's tree assessment. The Selectboard and David were in agreement with all aspects with the exception of two trees — Henry and David described a healthy large red oak and a small sugar maple which did not appear to impact the line installation. David reported he placed additional flags on those two trees. The Hearing was opened up to questions from the public with all questions answered; there were no objections to the project from the public. With review concluded, it was determined that two trees would be taken off the list and David and Jeremiah Casavant would schedule a date to meet on site for final project evaluation.

Henry moved that the Selectboard grant approval for removal of the marked public town trees on Birch Drive with the exception of the two as discussed – a marked red oak and a sugar maple. Seconded by Nancy. Voted unanimously in favor.

The Selectboard thanked David for his review and presence at the Hearing. The Board thanked the residents for attending and underscored the importance of monitoring public trees in their neighborhood and the Board thanked NG for their ongoing work for the town. The Hearing was voted closed at 5:35 PM.

Meeting with Town Tree Warden Candidate; Review and Appoint Tree Warden

The Selectboard met with David Lockesmith to review the open position of the Tree Warden. The Board was pleased by the positive response from David to accept the appointment noting his prior role in the position; his profession as a logger; and importantly, his keen knowledge of the towns roads, geography, trees, and residents. The Board and David reviewed the job description and stipend, the current Fiscal Year 2021 budget and Fiscal Year 2022 budget, an employment letter, and the general process for hiring contractors.

Henry moved that the Selectboard appoint David Lockesmith to the position of Town Tree Warden effective February 23, 2021 thru June 30, 2022. Seconded by Nancy. Voted unanimously in favor.

David signed the employment letter and all will make sure his paperwork is in good order with the Town Treasurer for payroll. The Board thanked David and emphasized that they and the Selectboard Office are available for support going forward.

Fiscal Year 2022 Joint Budget Meeting with Advisory Finance Committee, School Administration & Committee Members

The first joint session for Fiscal Year 2022 budget review was held with the Selectboard and Advisory Finance Committee meeting with administration and School Committee members from Mahar Regional School District (RSD) and Petersham Center School. Everyone had received drafts of the budgets and Dr. Zielinski and Michelle Tontodonato led the presentations of both.

The Center School Grades K–6 FY22 budget draft version #2 is currently showing a projected increase of \$65,429 for 3.22%. School successes were presented along with unbudgeted needs. Enrollment at October 1, 2020, is 123 students total. A quantity of 60 students choice-in to PCS for 48.8%. Both Boards asked questions and all was taken under advisement.

The total Mahar RSD Grades 7–12 FY22 school budget draft version #2 is currently showing a total projected increase of \$450,494 for both operating budget and debt expenses. The School presented successes along with additional needs not addressed in the budget. Enrollment at October 1, 2020, is 619 students total; with Petersham at 34 students for 5.5% representation. Dr. Zielinski and Michelle Tontodonato noted that they have not yet done the assessments showing breakdown of budget per town. Both Boards asked questions and all was taken under advisement.

All groups will stay in touch going forward and the Schools will be scheduling their Budget Public Hearings.

Fiscal Year 2022 Joint Budget Meeting with Advisory Finance Committee

Joint review of operating budgets continued for the Selectboard and Advisory Finance Committee with review of submissions from the Memorial Library, Animal Control Officer, Inspector of Animals, and Selectboard-Part 1. All budgets were taken under advisement. The next joint budget meeting was confirmed for March 9.

Review and Approve Care of Cemeteries Contract, Fiscal Year 2022–2024

The Selectboard reviewed an update from the Cemetery Commission re bidding process and recommendation for awarding a new Care of the Cemeteries Contract for Fiscal Years 2022–2024. The project bid package had been publicly advertised and available for several weeks via the State's Central Register and Commbuys site, and was advertised locally including on the Town web site home page. The bid deadline & opening date

was Feb. 9, 2021. The Commission recommended awarding the Contract to qualified low bidder Barnes Landscaping of Petersham noting it was the only bid received during the procurement period.

Upon discussion, Henry moved that the Selectboard accept the low bid and sign the Contract for Care of the Cemeteries with Barnes Landscaping for three-year term an an annual fee of \$21,822. Seconded by Nancy. Voted unanimously in favor.

The Contract will next go to Town Accountant for her signature then to Barnes Landscaping for signature.

Review approve Fiscal Year 2021 Snow & Ice Account Deficit Spending

Per an update from the Highway Superintendent regarding status of the Snow & Ice Account, the Selectboard agreed to approve deficit spending. Henry moved that the Selectboard approve going into deficit spending status for the Fiscal Year 2021 Snow & Ice Account. Seconded by Nancy. Voted unanimously in favor.

Nancy noted that overall the budget is in good shape and shows that the Superintendent and crew have done a good job with managing costs under unpredictable winter conditions.

Continue review of Selectboard Fiscal Year 2022 Budgets

Nancy distributed a second batch of FY2022 Selectboard budgets for review; each was at either flat-funded or budget reduction status. Henry and Nancy reviewed and agreed to release the budgets to the Advisory Finance Committee for joint review at next meeting of March 9.

Review Local Business Permits

Permits applications were received for two local businesses. Upon review, Henry moved the Board approve three year Business Permits for Pro V Painting, 28C West Street, and Clukey Construction, 147 Hardwick Road, effective to February 2024. Seconded by Nancy. Voted unanimously in favor.

3. Correspondence

Nancy summarized aloud the below items in the Selectboard correspondence folder:

- Public Hearing posting information for National Grid Public Hearing at 95 Birch Drive
- Tree Warden Job Description draft
- Tree Warden Letter of Employment
- Tree Warden FY22 budget sheets
- Selectboard FY2022 budget sheets – Part 2
- Budget sheets for the Schools and other Depts. as submitted
- Highway Dept letter re guard rails at 46 & 68 New Athol Road
- Exec Office of Eneregy & Enviro Affairs (EEA) Grant Award for Center School Freezer
- MassDOT Chapter 90 transportation aid funds notice for Fiscal Year 2021
- Care of Cemeteries Contract 2022-2024
- Treasurer's Monthly Cash Book for December 2020
- US Census Bureau 2021 Government Units Survey request
- MRPC notice of Paved Trails and Bike Lanes Surrvey
- MRPC notice of Clean Energy Program for Low-Moderate Income Populations

K&P Law memo re recent Mass. Police Reform Legislation
Mass. DEP memo re cybersecurity and public water supplies
Mass. COVID-19 information
MIIA notice re OSHA programs
Monthly newsletter from Mass. Municipal Association '*The Beacon*'
Monthly newsletter from MassDEP '*Drinking Water Program*'
Monthly newsletter from MA Dept. of Local Services '*City & Town*'

4. Questions from Public and Press

No questions.

5. Minutes

The Board agreed to put review of Minutes on hold to the next meeting due to the late hour.

6. Next Meeting

The next regular Selectboard meeting date was confirmed for Tuesday, March 9, 2021, 6:00 PM.

7. Adjournment.

There being no further business, Henry moved to adjourn at 9:10 PM. Seconded by Nancy.
Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



Nancy Allen

Final Minutes as approved at Selectboard Meeting of March 23, 2021.

AGENDA
Petersham Selectboard Regular Meeting
Town Hall, Main Level, 1 South Main Street and Via Remote Access
Tuesday, February 23, 2021
5:00 PM

Remote meeting access is available via GoToMeeting

by Internet at:

<https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/561795741>

or by Phone at:

Tel: 1-646-749-3122 / Access Code: 561-795-741

Additional remote telephone access is available

By phone at: 605-475-4082 / Dial in Access Code: 338505 #

1. 5:00 PM Call to order.

2. New Business - Meetings

5:00 PM Public Hearing: National Grid Request for Roadside Tree Removal/Pruning

RE: Public Hearing to review request from National Grid for roadside tree removal/pruning of 14 trees of various sizes for the purpose of electric line installation to a new residence at 95 Birch Drive.

5:30 PM Meeting with Town Tree Warden Candidate

RE: Review Tree Warden position.

6:00 PM Meeting with Schools – To Review Fiscal Year 2022 Budgets

RE: Joint Meeting of Selectboard and Advisory Finance Committee with School Committee and Administration for preliminary discussion of FY 2022 Mahar RSD and Center School budgets.

RE: Continue Joint Meeting – To review Fiscal Year 2022 Budgets

Memorial Library / Animal Control / Animal Inspector / Selectboard, Part 1 / Other budgets as available; and general discussion of the FY2022 budget.

3. New Business

RE: Review and appoint Town Tree Warden.

RE: Review and approve Care of Cemeteries contract.

RE: Review approve Fiscal Year 2021 Snow & Ice Account deficit spending.

RE: Continue review of Selectboard Fiscal Year 2022 budgets.

RE: Review sign local Business Permits, as available.

4. Next Meeting

Next Selectboard meeting date Tues, March 9, 2021, 6:00 PM, and at the call of the Chair as needed.

5. Adjourn

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