

Town of Petersham, Massachusetts

Selectboard Minutes

Tuesday, April 24, 2018

Present

Selectboard (BOS) Members: Nancy Allen, Henry Woolsey, Rick Marsh

Advisory Finance Committee (AFC) Members: Ross France, Paul Youd, Richard Cavanaugh, Mark Bishop,
Don Clarkson (Don arrived at 6:30)

Town Treasurer and Capital Improvement Project Committee (CIPC) Chair: Dana Robinson

Petersham Police Department: Chief R. Dana Cooley

Planning Board: Fraser Sinclair (arrived at 7:00)

Roy Nilson – Petersham Common Website

Resident: Marie Erie

1. Meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Selectboard Chair Nancy Allen.
2. Minutes of April 10, 2018 and those of April 17, 2018 held until end of meeting.
3. Chairman Dana submitted the following CIPC recommendations to the Selectboard:
 1. Fire Department Hose Replacement - Year 5 of 5 in the amount of \$5,000.00.
 2. Fire Department Turnout Gear - Year 2 of 2 in the amount of \$25,000.00.
 3. Highway Department – Ford F550 Truck with dump body, plow and sander in the amount of \$80,000.00.
 4. Handicapped Lift – Matching Funds in the amount of \$20,000.00.
 5. Brick Building Painting and Repair in the amount of \$15,700.00.

Noted that the Highway Truck could not be funded from Chapter 90 as it is under the 26,000 pound threshold.

Items not included in the CIPC recommendations for Fiscal 2019 were replacement of the 2010 Crown Victoria Police Cruiser and Paving and Landscaping around the Town Hall. Requested for Fiscal Year 2020 was replacement of the 1980 Fire Engine at an estimated cost of \$200,000.00.

The CIPC primarily relied on the amount of Free Cash that could be available after any Snow and Ice deficit had been covered. The use of the Stabilization Fund was not discussed by the CIPC.

The above recommendations were taken under advisement.

4. Police Chief Dana discussed his submitted budget and his request for an additional full-time officer. Noted that his first of four budgets totaled \$228,827.00 and that the fourth budget totaled \$282,033.00 principally because of an additional officer. The Chief took the position that it is better to be proactive than reactive and that his Department is faced with an unknown situation so far as the needs of the Heywood Group - Quabbin Retreat are concerned. Nancy pointed out that Heywood has greater resources than the Town and that the security of their facility rests with them. Much discussion ensued between all Members present. Henry asked if the Chief could use present part-time officers instead of a new officer. The Chief allowed that he could at times but not consistently because of their other work schedules. The Chief stated that should the BOS and the AFC support budget number one (amount of \$228,827.00) and not budget number four (amount of \$282,033.00), he will accept that decision.
5. The AFC was advised that the BOS had previously voted that the wages of the Treasurer, Animal Control Officer (ACO), Board of Health Office Assistant, Building Inspector Office Assistant and Selectboard Office Assistant were reviewed and that they be increased as follows: the Treasurer by the Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) plus \$1000.00, and that the ACO salary be increased by COLA plus \$1000, and that the hourly rate of the Board of Health Office Assistant be increased by COLA plus \$0.50 per hour, and that the hourly rate of the Building Inspector Office Assistant be increased by COLA plus \$0.50 per hour, and that the hourly rate of the Selectboard Office Assistant be increased by COLA plus \$0.75 per hour. The salary of the Tax Collector was not acted on as the Collector also receives fees. Information on the salary status of the Building Inspector (BI) was unavailable because the BI receives payment from more than one Town. COLA has yet to be determined for all wages.
6. Nancy suggested that the Town Hall Custodian salary be capped at the present rate and that no COLA be extended to this position. Board Members agreed. Capping the salaries of other positions will be considered.
7. Ross asked the Treasurer how he planned on borrowing to fund the Nichewaug Inn Abatement Project and the Broadband Project. Treasurer Dana said that since Eastern (a lending firm) is no longer available, he will look elsewhere and that he expects that the rate will be 3 to 3.5 percent plus transaction fees.
8. Nancy noted that a full-time Town employee recently requested family plan insurance coverage. A new figure will be submitted next week.
9. The AFC went into recess to continue their meeting in the BOS office.

10. Planning Board Chair Fraser proposed a Warrant Article reorganizing the Town's Bylaws. The proposal will separate the General Bylaws from the Zoning Bylaws and will include a Table of Contents for each document. This was taken under advisement. A Public Hearing will be held at a later date.
11. Discussion continued regarding the Police Department budget. Nancy asked each Board Member what their thoughts were. Henry allowed that there remains to be seen if an additional Full-Time officer is needed and that the Town budget is very tight. We should wait one year and see how the Quabbin Retreat works out. Rick answered that he felt that an additional officer is desirable and may be needed but that the Town cannot afford it at this time. The upcharge for an additional person is not a one-time charge but will have a negative impact on the tax rate going forward. Nancy agreed and that we will continue to be fair and equitable and work with both Heywood and our Police Department. All appreciate the hard work performed by the Chief and his Officers. Noted that the Police Chief said he may retire in two years.
12. The BOS reviewed the CIPC report and recommendation regarding the paving and landscaping at the Town Hall. Nancy advised the Board that the pavement on the North Side parking area was in disrepair and needed to be addressed because that is a Handicapped person access point and those using that entrance could be at risk. She further stated that there have been concerns raised by members of the Council On Aging. A site visit is scheduled for April 27, 2018.
13. Henry motioned to approve the one-day Liquor License request from Mark Wright for the North Quabbin Chamber of Commerce Annual Dinner to be held at the Quabbin Retreat on May 22, 2018. Motion seconded by Rick and passed unanimously.
14. Henry motioned to approve the request from Karen Regan, on behalf of Saint Peter's Church, to place signs around town advertizing a yard sale to be held at the Church on May 5, 2018. Motion seconded by Rick and passed unanimously.
15. Henry motioned to approve the request from Nichole Ruggles, of Petersham Center School, to place two signs on the Town Common advertizing the Spaghetti Supper to be held on May 4, 2018. Motion seconded by Rick and passed unanimously.
16. Henry motioned that the minutes of April 10, 2018 be approved as amended. Motion seconded by Rick and passed unanimously.

17. Henry motioned that the minutes of April 17, 2018 be approved. Motion seconded by Nancy and passed unanimously.
18. The 'Notice of Intent to Abutters' of a DCR Forest Cutting Plan to landowner Bonefant was received. A copy will be made and forwarded to the Conservation Commission.
19. Next meeting at 5:00 p.m. on April 27 at the Town Hall North Side parking lot. This Site visit to ascertain degree of pavement degradation and need for repair.
20. Next joint meeting Monday April 30, 2018 at 6:30p.m. in the Town Hall lower level.
21. Rick moved to adjourn at 8:47 p.m., seconded by Henry and passed unanimously.

Respectively submitted



Fredrik A Marsh, Clerk