

New Ashford Select Board Meeting  
New Ashford Town Hall  
January 22, 2019

Board Present: Jason Jayko (chair), Mark Phelps, Ken McInerney  
Others Present: P.J. Pannesco, Keith Lacasse, Richard George, Richard Demyer, Wayne Buckley, Lori Jayko

Meeting opened at 6:30

1. Approve Minutes: On a motion by Mark, seconded by Jason, the minutes from the 1-7-2019 Select Board meeting were approved.

2. Public Comment: P.J. Pannesco, Lanesboro Firefighter, praised the New Ashford Fire Department and Chief on an outstanding job at the recent automobile accident in town, and the professional manner they handled the very stressful situation. Mark mentioned the trouble our department is having recruiting new volunteers and P.J. agreed that is a common problem everywhere.

Richard Demyer, Veterans Services Officer, turned in January's veterans' benefits payments for the warrant. He mentioned having trouble getting necessary information from the veterans' benefits recipients.

Richard reported that he sent the Northern Berkshire Solid Waste District paperwork for the \$500 grant, for the new shared roll-off, to Lori Jayko and she put it on town letterhead and mailed it to Boston. He will give the board FY20 budget numbers for the veterans and NBSWD next month.

3. Road Commissioner: Keith Lacasse reported that no trees have fallen recently. The school bus got stuck at the top of Beach Hill Road. The road salt is not activating as well as the previous year's. He has used a lot due to the frigid temperatures and will salt heavily before the next storm. He will also plow the recycling area. He may need to buy more sand. There is a ditch problem on Greylock Road that is causing ice on the road. He will dig out the ditch in the spring (it is  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the way up the hill on the left). Kathy Stevens from MASS DOT retired.

4. Budget: The board is starting the FY20 budget. The snowplowing contract will be done this year. Berkshire Regional Planning sent their budget number. Considerations will be made for any broadband expenses. The school budget is anticipated to be lower due to more children graduating than enrolling and lower special education costs. It's time to look at the Community Compact Grant options for the next round of grants.

5. ATM: Jason will start drafting up the annual town meeting warrant. The school budget will be separated to its own article. The board discussed the process for granting driveway permits and if it should be the jurisdiction of the Planning Board (current method), Select Board and/or the Road Commissioner. The board will see how other towns do it. Mark would like updated job descriptions for town positions. He will talk to the Town Clerk in Lanesboro to see if she is paid extra for her work on elections.

6. Building Commissioner: The Interim Town Administrator from Adams called and said everything is the same after Don Torrico's resignation. Residents should e-mail the building inspector in Adams, as the new inspector is not in the office all the time.

7. Broadband: Jason and Lori attended two meetings with Whip City. On February 9, Whip City will come to the Town Hall to hold an informational marketing event and sign-up session. Residents will be able to sign up for internet service through a website being designed by Whip City. The New Ashford MLP needs to determine the rate for services. Considerations are Whip City's fee (\$36.24/per subscriber), back haul (\$1,200/month), reserves for depreciation, pole licensing, insurance, billing fees, etc. Commercial rates also need to be decided. Static IPs will be offered. The town treasurer will set up an account for broadband transactions, that will be affiliated with a Stripe account. Residents will pay broadband bills online and can set up autopay. If an account is thirty days past due, the customer will be given ten days to pay and then service will be shut off. There is no reactivation fee (the town can set one) and service is restored when payment is received. There is no obligation for customers to lock in for a specific length of time. Basic phone service is offered by Whip City for \$12.95 and customers can keep their current phone number. It is not recommended for customers with medical devices or alarms. Standard internet installations are done on the first floor of the dwelling. If a customer wants installation elsewhere, the customer will bear the cost. There will be no trenching allowed through roads. Some adjustments are being made to the Intermunicipal Agreement. Westfield will have a truck available for every day repairs. However, if there were a large-scale outage, Westfield's primary responsibility is to their gas and electric customers in Westfield. They recommend the town keep a repair company on retainer for such occurrences. Spare parts will be stored at the Town Hall. The utility companies should be done with their work by the end of February and then Sertex will begin the build out.

8. Unforeseen Items: Wayne Buckley, Fire Chief, said the heaters in the fire station need to be replaced. He requested quotes from H.A. George, Walker Haig, and Greg Voci. H.A. George said it would be \$12,000-\$13,000, Walker Haig \$10,000 and no quote was received from Greg Voci. Wayne is also looking into a grant to get a clean air system.

9. Warrant: The warrant was reviewed and signed.

Next meeting February 4, 2019 at 6:30

Meeting adjourned at 8:17