

New Ashford Select Board/MLP Meeting
New Ashford Town Hall
March 18, 2019

Board Present: Jason Jayko (chair), Ken McInerney (MLP Manager), Mark Phelps
Others Present: Richard Demyer, Richard George, Tom Matuszko, Wayne Buckley, Lori Jayko

Meeting opened at 6:30

1. Approve the Minutes from 3/4: On a motion by Mark, seconded by Jason, the minutes from the 3/4/2019 Select Board/MLP Meeting were approved.

2. Mohawk Trails Woodland Partnership (MTWP): Tom Matuszko gave an update on the MTWP, a program designed to capitalize on woodlands using federal and state resources to promote better management of forest land and offer support to landowners. Legislation was enabled by the state to establish the MTWP, an area comprising 21 towns in Berkshire and Franklin Counties. The next step is for municipalities to opt in by either a vote of the Select Board or at town meeting. Adams, Peru, Conway, and Shelburne have opted in. Once 11 towns have opted in, the MTWP will receive funding. A partnership board will be formed to make decisions with representatives from each community. There is no financial obligation or commitment required from the town, and the town will need to appoint a representative to the partnership board. Landowner participation is voluntary. Once the partnership has an investment fund established from state and federal funding, the plan is to operate off the profits of the fund, supplemented by grant money. The partnership would like to set up a revolving loan program for businesses – for example a woodworker could get funds to set up the framework of a business and/or buy equipment. There is a provision in the law that if 40% of the land in a town is already protected, the Select Board can veto more land going into protected status. Mark suggested that the Select Board make the decision to opt in, as there is no commitment of town funds. Tom has the specific wording necessary to make the motion to opt in and he will e-mail it to the Select Board so they can review it and vote on it at the next meeting.

3. Public Comment: Richard Demyer, Northern Berkshire Solid Waste District (NBSWD) Delegate, will e-mail the board with the upcoming waste collection information. In April, Dick will hold a computer collection in town. There will be a paint collection in Adams. Cloth is currently earning twenty-two cents a pound. Richard will have a clothing collection bin put in at the recycling area.

Richard, Veteran's Services Officer, requested an additional \$5,000 be added to the veterans' budget as a benefits recipient was awarded \$4,700 yearly for fuel assistance.

4. Fire Department: Wayne Buckley, Fire Chief, is waiting to hear back about the third bid for the heating system. He will also get another bid for the garage door. The Fire Warden position needs to be changed from elected to appointed.

5. Road Commissioner: Not present. Ken expressed concern over Ingraham Road's being open during mud season, with access to Bauer Road.

The town received a letter from MASSDOT about necessary repairs for a bridge on Lanesboro Road. Jason will call the Road Commissioner, Keith Lacasse, for advisement. Ken will cite it in his application for the culvert grant.

6. Driveway Permit Bylaw: Jason will draft the bylaw changes and send it to legal counsel and the Select Board for review.

7. Budget: The Board added the additional veteran money to the budget spreadsheet. The School Committee Chair turned in an unofficial budget number that is down by more than \$100,000 from last year. The Committee still needs to vote on it. The Board needs budget numbers for Roads and Bridges, Winter Roads, and the Town Insurance.

8. Broadband: Jason is meeting with the Whip City project team on March 19 to look at the IT Room and placement for two poles, one on Mallery Road and one at the Town Hall. They will also look at the underground connection on Route 7 that will require a MASSDOT permit. There is a delay with Verizon. They anticipate being finished with their pole work in May, as they are currently working in Tyringham. There are 56 households signed up for Broadband service and 19 more for the drop only. (There may be a couple of duplicates in those numbers.) There will be a phase II of construction, at which time households not signed up to get the drop will be responsible to pay for their own connection.

9. Unforeseen Business: Berkshire Regional Purchasing Group sent an e-mail that their costs may increase to \$800-\$1,000. The state sent a letter requesting notification of who the animal inspector is.

10. Warrant: The warrant was reviewed and signed.

Next meeting April 1, 2019

Meeting adjourned at 7:57