

New Ashford Select Board/MLP Meeting

Teleconference

April 6, 2020

Board Present: Jason Jayko (Chair), Mark Phelps, Ken McNerney (MLP Manager)

Others Present: Lori Jayko

Meeting opened at 6:30

1. Approve the minutes from March 2: On a motion by Mark, seconded by Ken, the minutes from the March 2, 2020 New Ashford Select Board/MLP Meeting were approved. On a motion by Mark, seconded by Ken, the minutes from the March 20, 2020 Emergency New Ashford Select Board Meeting were approved.

2. Public Comment: None

3. Fire Department: Wayne Buckley indicated to the Board that he does not know if he can do the Emergency Management Director position, due to having a new job. Jason will get confirmation from him. Jason has been on the briefing phone calls for the heads of towns and Boards of Health.

According to the Massachusetts General Laws, the Selectman's handbook, and Lanesboro's Fire Chief, all officers on the Fire Department get appointed by the Select Board. The Fire Department members will nominate the officers and give those recommendations to the Board. Dave Carpenter has been asked to remove his fire truck from the station's parking lot and his personal tools from the station.

4. Covid-19: Case numbers in the area are rising. Leslie Drager is a public health nurse acting on behalf of the town. She will contact Jason if any resident tests positive at BMC. Public testing is not open in Western Mass yet. The Board will draft an e-mail for residents detailing best practices to avoid catching/spreading Covid-19.

The Board will ask the Board of Health to contact the Recycling Attendant to discuss minimizing his contact with people.

5. Meetings, Elections, ATM, Town Hall: The Town Hall is closed to the public, as posted on the front door and the town website. An e-mail from KP Law indicated that the Board of Selectmen have authority to postpone the Annual Town Meeting and Elections. Mark made a motion to postpone the Annual Meeting and Town Elections, seconded by Jason.

Select Board meetings will continue to be held, with a call-in number provided to anyone wishing to listen in/participate.

6. Road Commissioner: Keith Lacasse was not present. Mark explained about a culvert under Smith Road, where the retaining wall is starting to fall away. There are two culverts. One is plugged and the upper one, handling the water, is a 16-inch culvert that drops five feet to the brook bed and dries up in the summer. Keith suggested putting in a 3-foot culvert, however a 24-inch may be adequate. There are a couple of two foot culverts, which Keith removed elsewhere, that may be reused there. Mark disclosed that both sides of the culvert are on his family's land. The Board will ask Keith to provide an estimate.

The Northern Berkshire Purchasing Group put out a request for information for Keith to fill out. The Mohawk Trails Woodland Partnership Grant is moving forward. The Board will ask Keith if he is available to do the Bauer Road trail work. Williamstown will change their plans for their usage of the grant money. They were looking into selling carbon credits, however the market went from \$27 to \$3 per credit.

7. Budget: The Board reviewed the budget line by line. Dues for the Northern Berkshire Purchasing Group are \$800. Animal Control Officer and Animal Inspector stay the same. Ken will e-mail the Board of Health to confirm expenses. Board of Registrars will be the same. Mark will ask BJ Church about the Building Inspector expenses. The Cemetery Account stays the same. Conservation Commission stays the same. Elections and voters account stay the same. The Emergency Management Director stipend will be \$500, with \$1,000 going to the Police Chief. Per an e-mail from Richard Demyer, the Northern Berkshire Solid Waste District is \$653.13, Recycling Account at \$3,000, Recycling Attendant is \$1,632 now, proposed at \$2,652. The Board will keep it at \$1,632. The Forest Warden expense is the same. Historical Commission is staying at \$250. If they do not use that \$250 in a budget year, they would like to keep it accruing in an account. Lori Jayko will ask DOR how to do that. Inspector Education Account – Mark will ask BJ what she needs and someone will ask the Plumbing Inspector. The Planning Board will stay the same. Jason will e-mail CHUBB to see what the Police and Fire Insurance Account is. The Reserve Account stays the same. Roads and Bridges will stay the same. Lori put in an estimated figure in for the School Committee, however they were unable to meet and do not know if Richmond is staying in the union. The Custodial Stipend stays the same. Town Hall Expenses will have the property mowing fees of \$1,600 removed to its own line item. The Select Board Expenses stays same. The Telephone Account will be changed to telephone and internet account of \$1,275. Ken will check with Michelle Singer about the Town Accountant expenses. The Assessor Account is \$13,050. The Town Clerk and expenses stay the same. Ken will get a quote for the Town Insurance. The Town Report stays at \$300. Town Secretary and expenses stay the same. Tax Collector stays the same. Treasurer stays the same. Tree Warden expenses stays the same and tree removal increases by \$400. The VSO account will be \$1,200, Vet Expense Account at \$500, and Chapter 115 at \$22,000. The Fire Department was at \$10,380 last year and requested \$12,680 for FY 21 citing costs for radios, propane, training, and repairs. When the MLP budget is done, insurance for the network is \$2525.

8. Any other unforeseen business: There is an error on the real estate tax bills that just went out. The Board may want to send an e-mail to residents about it.

Anthony Welch is working on his Eagle Scout project and would like to create an electronic plot plan of the cemetery. Also, his troop will do maintenance in the cemetery. The Select Board endorsed the project.

Whip City will not do installations inside houses because of Covid-19. The varied option is \$250 per customer.

9. Warrant: The warrant was reviewed and signed.

Next meeting April 21, 2020 at 6:30

Meeting adjourned at 8:08