

New Ashford Select Board/MLP Meeting  
Teleconference  
May 18, 2020

Board Present: Jason Jayko (chair), Mark Phelps, Ken McInerney (MLP Manager)  
Others Present: Lori Jayko  
Meeting opened at 6:30

1. Approve the minutes from May 4: On a motion by Mark, seconded by Ken, the minutes from the May 4, 2020 New Ashford Select Board/MLP Meeting were approved.
2. Public Comment: None.
3. Tree Warden: Not present.
4. Covid-19: Phase one of reopening the state is beginning May 25. The Massachusetts Municipal Association said they will provide guidance to towns. The Northern Berkshire Regional Command Center will distribute PPE for the elections. MEMA will distribute reusable cloth masks for residents. Voters will be required to wear a mask.
5. Caucus: The Town Clerk posted the Town Caucus for May 23<sup>rd</sup> at 9:00 with the last day to register to vote on June 3 from 2-4pm and from 7-8pm.
6. Annual Town Meeting: The Annual Town Meeting is scheduled for June 23<sup>rd</sup> at 7:00pm. The meeting will likely be held outside with masks required. Jason will ask legal counsel if locations out of town are allowable.
7. Annual Town Warrant: The Board reviewed the Annual Town Warrant. Some budget increases have been lowered due to the uncertainty with revenue at this time. The budget is lower than last year's at \$749,168.  
The Board reviewed the Enterprise Fund budget. The retainer fee was set at \$2,000. The pole licensing line and Stripe Fees were increased to reflect known costs. Generator maintenance needs to be scheduled and was added to Miscellaneous Expenses. The Board considered potential costs associated with moving wires when a pole gets replaced and added that to the Miscellaneous Expenses. A hut upgrade will likely be necessary in five to seven years. The HVAC filters need to be checked/changed annually. The Board reviewed the propane usage. The Ninth item on the warrant establishes the Broadband Stabilization Fund and the Tenth provides it with an appropriation of \$1,000. The Enterprise Fund will be reconciled at the end of the Fiscal Year with its Free Cash getting certified. That Free Cash can feed the Broadband Stabilization Fund. The Eleventh article transfers \$35,000 to the Town's Stabilization account. The town recently received \$42,500 from the state through the MBI. The Twelfth addresses the revolving accounts, which are all the same. The Thirteenth changes the Town Clerk's position from elected to appointed. The Fourteenth establishes a local option meal tax of .75% in addition to the state meal tax. The Fifteenth establishes a local option excise on the retail sale of recreational marijuana of 3%. Jason is looking for guidance with wording for a chicken by-law. The Board may recommend that the Board of Health pass a regulation governing fowl instead.

8. Elections: Town Elections will be held on June 30.

9. Road Commissioner: Not present. Mark will call Keith Lacasse about pothole maintenance around town and addressing problems on Greylock Road. There is \$10,000 of grant money for the Bauer Road Trail, with a time extension allowed for completion. The FY21 grant can be applied to the snowmobile trail. There are other opportunities for necessary trail maintenance or adding trails in the same area. Ken will discuss this with the Mt. Greylock Advisory Committee. The Mohawk Trails Woodlands Partnership is looking into aid for the impact of Covid-19 on maple syrup production and on farmers' markets being shut down.

10. Community Host Agreement: Jason has not heard back from Hop Cultivators. Two separate individuals contacted him about growing cannabis. Legal counsel advised that cannabis growing is regulated by the Cannabis Control Commission and a prospective grower needs town and CCC approval. It is considered agriculture, allowed by right. A community host agreement is necessary. Checks for legal fees will be required up front. Ken abstained from the discussion.

11. Budget: Reviewed already.

12. Any unforeseen items: The Mohawk Trails Woodland Partnership has its first organizational meeting scheduled for June 9. Hank Art is the president. Mark offered to serve on the executive board. They are still looking for a clerk, treasurer, and executive director. The Board reviewed and signed the agreement for Emergency Communications Services for FY21, at a cost of \$8,516. Hancock did not respond to Ken about sharing an Animal Control Officer. The State did not respond with guidance for small towns.

13. Warrant: The warrant was reviewed and signed. The invoice for Patriot Properties will be held until FY 21.

Next meeting May 28 at 6:00  
Meeting adjourned at 8:32