

New Ashford Select Board/MLP Meeting
New Ashford Town Hall/Teleconference
February 8, 2021

Board Present: Jason Jayko (Chair), Ken McInerney (MLP Manager), Mark Phelps
Others Present: Keith Lacasse, Lori Jayko, Richard George, Frank Speth
Call-In: Frank Youngkin, Sherry Youngkin, Stephen Demyer

Meeting opened at 6:30

1. Approve minutes from January 19, 2021: On a motion by Mark, seconded by Ken, the minutes from the January 19, 2021 New Ashford Select Board/MLP Meeting were approved. On a motion by Mark, seconded by Ken, the minutes from the January 19, 2021 Select Board Executive Session meeting were approved.

2. Public Comment: Lori reported that Free Cash was certified for \$319,688 and the MLP Enterprise Free Cash was certified for \$16,901. The Broadband Stabilization and Old Schoolhouse Stabilization funds were established.

Jason will work with Sherry to set up an e-mail list for seniors to distribute Council on Aging information. The Council on Aging would like to provide transportation, within a 15-mile radius, for seniors for Covid vaccinations, using the COA grant money.

Stephen Demyer said he has been the Town Hall Custodian since around 2003 and the Recycling Attendant since around 2010, without a raise. He asked if the Board would consider a raise. The Board will take his request into consideration. According to the budget spreadsheet, the Recycling Attendant stipend was increased in 2016 and the Custodial stipend has been paid in full as of two years ago.

3. Cemetery: Will be rescheduled to the next meeting.

4. Fire Department: Fire Chief, Frank Speth, has not heard from the Carpenters. Legal Counsel sent them letters on January 22, requesting Fire Department gear and equipment be returned or criminal charges may be filed. Frank will consult with Legal Counsel about which police department to file charges with.

Frank asked for an update on the dry hydrant. Keith said it would cost around \$2,500 to dig up and replace the dry hydrant, or slightly less if any of the pipe is salvageable. The price includes an aluminum strainer. Keith's pond needs dredging before placement of a dry hydrant.

Frank would like the town to consider funding new Fire Station doors. The middle door is not staying closed. Frank is getting quotes for two 10X24 doors and a 10X10. Ken will try to repair the door and Keith has leftover weather stripping he can use. Ken suggested trying for an energy efficiency grant for the door replacement.

The parking lot at the Fire Station needs to be paved. In the spring, the town can put paving out to bid for Ingraham Road, Old Route 7, near the Salt Shed, and the Fire Station parking lot.

Shakerly will provide Frank with a quote for repairs for Engines 2 and 4. The most pressing problem is a leaking pump on Engine 4. The Department is not putting any money into Engine 3 and next year Frank would like to apply for an AFG grant for a mini-pumper, hinging on getting the 5% grant match from the town, to replace it. A new mini-pumper costs between \$200,000 and \$250,000.

Frank would like to sell equipment that the Department cannot use, such as the light bar from the old Engine 2. Equipment can be sold on municipalbids.com, which is free to sellers and charges a 9% buyers fee, or on groups on Facebook. Money collected for sold equipment would go to the town

and need to be appropriated by town vote to the Fire Department. Frank wants to use the money to replace the AED's, which cost between \$3,000 and \$5,000.

The majority of the Department got their first Covid shots and are getting their second this week. Hedy Burbank left the Department \$3,000. She was a member for many years. Frank will get a memorial plaque for the station and one for each of her children. Frank sends his condolences to the family and appreciation for the gift.

Frank has a ledger of Fire Department funds, including the donations from the fund drive and donations made in Hedy's name. Frank and Stephen Jayko need to be bonded, as they handle the Fire Department money. Frank would like the town to create a stabilization fund for the Fire Department. There is about \$5,000 in the Department's savings account, once the tanker match is accounted for. Walker Haig will give Ken a quote for the instant hot at the Fire Station. If it exceeds the CARES act grant money we have, Ken can submit an invoice requesting money to cover the rest.

Frank is asking Ronnie's Warehouse to move their propane tanks as they are five feet away from the building and need to be 25 feet away. He will request an updated cage and jersey barriers.

5. Road Commissioner: There was a large hole on Greylock Road, about 3 1/3 feet in diameter, due to a broken pipe. Keith put 30 feet of 6-inch pipe through and filled it in. He expects this to hold until warmer weather when he will flush it out and stick a pipe through it. One side of the road is settling. An option in the future is to do a full depth reclamation of the road, add cement to the base, and roll it. It would not need to be paved over. A parent complained that her daughter was getting picked up by the bus on Route 7, instead of at the end of Mountain Pond Lane. The snowbanks on Ingraham Road need to be pushed back.

6. Tax Collector: Karla Bassette responded to the Select Board's e-mail expressing interest in the position. Jason sent her the job description. Ken will follow up with Karla and will call Joan for more information on the job.

7. Building Inspector: BJ Church, Building Inspector, sent a letter about the lot on Beach Hill Road stating her position that the lots were in common ownership. The lot does not meet zoning requirements. The Board will let the Building Inspector handle this issue.

8. Budget: The spreadsheet has been created. The Board will reach out to department heads for budget requests for FY22. The snow plow contract needs to be put out to bid this year.

9. Any other unforeseen business: Ken reported that Legal Counsel advised that the MLP can put a municipal tax lien against a property that owes money to the MLP. \$178 is owed by 207 Mallery Road. This process will be done through the tax collector. Ken thinks the Massachusetts general law needs clarification of one additional word. Mark will reach out to Senator Hinds and Representative Barrett about getting an amendment to the law. 332 Route 7 and 276 Route 7 requested internet service, but did not request the drop during the build out. Whip City will bill the owners for the connections. Renters will be shut off promptly after one month of no payment. A car hit a pole on Route 7, requiring a replacement pole. The town may put in a claim against the auto insurance for the cost of reattaching the fiber to the pole.

Mark is stepping down in his role as representative to the Mohawk Trails Woodland Partnership. The Board signed a thank you letter for Joan Wilkinson for her good work as Tax Collector.

10. Warrant: The warrant was reviewed and signed.

Next Meeting February 22 at 6:30, cemetery presentation on the agenda.

Meeting adjourned at 8:25