

BOARD OF SELECTMEN
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2016

The regular meeting for the Board of Selectmen convened at 7:00 p.m. in the Public Meeting Room in the Town Office Building at 110 Main Street. In attendance were Dr. Richard M. Smith, John R. Morrell and Edward S. Harrison. Also present was the media. Town Administrator Evan Brassard was not present.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Acceptance of Meeting Minutes:

Mr. Harrison made a motion to accept the meeting minutes of February 9, 2016 – open session. Mr. Morrell seconded and it was unanimously VOTED.

Discussion of Fee Increase for Plumbing, Gas, and Electrical Inspections:

Monson Building Inspector Brenda “BJ” Church approached the Board of Selectmen on behalf of Plumbing Inspector Kevin Biermann and Electrical Inspector Gerald Weston, and provided an overview of the request.

Ms. Church explained her office has undertaken a review of the electrical, gas, and plumbing fees charged by the Town, since this hasn’t been done since 2007, while the building permit fees were reviewed and updated in 2012. The Board of Selectmen had copies of the current fee schedule as well as the proposed fee schedule, as attached.

Dr. Smith questioned the electrical permit fee, and said when looking at the plumbing permit fees new residential and new commercial is the same, but when it comes to the electrical permit fees, new residential is cheaper than the commercial and wondered why, noting it bothers him when the small business are charged more than the residential.

Ms. Church responded the code always dictates that difference, and commercial property is a lot more involved with more detail and stringent regulations, whereas residential property is much easier to calculate. The proposed increases are in keeping up with the surrounding towns and what they are charging.

Mr. Harrison made a motion to approve the new schedule of fees charged by the town for plumbing, gas, and electrical, effective immediately. Mr. Morrell seconded and it was unanimously VOTED.

Parks and Recreation Building Completion:

Monson Parks and Recreation Director Timothy Pascale submitted reports to the Board of Selectmen prior to the meeting, as attached, as he was not able to be in attendance.

Dr. Smith explained the former storage facility for the Parks and Rec. Department that was located here in Veteran's Field was lost on June 11, 2011 as a result of the tornado. Since that time, Parks and Rec. have been working out of storage containers that have been very poor for both the equipment and the employees. The new storage facility is located down by the Highway and Fire Departments.

Mr. Pascale was given the keys to his new storage building on February 16, 2016. There are still some finishing touches to be completed in the spring such as, pave an apron in front of the building and finish concrete work on the bollards. This is a 30 X 30 butler building with a mezzanine to increase storage space, grey in color, with a single bathroom, hot water, and a slop sink. This building was funded 100% by insurance money, with the exception of the heat which will be installed in the coming weeks.

Dr. Smith thanked Town Administrator Evan Brassard, Town Planner Dan Laroche, Tom Donaldson of the Town's insurance provider MIIA, and Associated Builders for their assistance in seeing this project to completion.

Mr. Harrison noted this is quite an improvement over the previous building.

Dr. Smith congratulated Parks and Rec. on their new building.

Mr. Morrell added it is nice to have Parks and Recreation down by the Highway Department and noted it's very convenient for servicing equipment, as the Highway does the maintenance work on the tractors getting them ready for mowing, whenever they have the time to work on them.

Request for Purchase of Chairs for Memorial Hall:

It was noted Mr. Brassard received quotes for folding chairs for Memorial Hall. The chairs Mr. Brassard suggested going with are from Uline. They are black padded metal folding chairs with a weight capacity of 300 pounds; 152 chairs are requested for a total of \$3,078.00. Mr. Brassard is also seeking to purchase three movable trollies for total of \$705.00 to assist with moving the chairs and enable proper storage. The grand total requested from the Gifts to the Town Account is \$3,783.00.

Mr. Harrison made a motion to allocate \$3,783.00 from the Gifts to the Town Account for the purchase of 152 chairs from Uline as stated, as well as the three movable trollies. Mr. Morrell seconded and it was unanimously VOTED.

Initial Budget Discussion:

Dr. Smith said there are some early budget projections, and it is looking pretty close to level funded services, and wasn't sure how much above that the town could do once the numbers firm up.

Dr. Smith said his priorities, to pass on to the Finance Committee, remain the same; public safety, Police, Fire, and Highway to some degree, and Dr. Smith noted the budget already reflects this as that's been the priority over the last few years.

Mr. Morrell noted there are new accounts, Maintenance and Salary for a Part-time Conservation agent, and improvements to the Moore property.

Dr. Smith said this is above level service.

Mr. Morrell said he thought this was pretty much taken care of by the Moore's.

Dr. Smith said to make note of it so Mr. Brassard and Town Accountant Mary Lauria will be aware of it.

Mr. Harrison said he assumed the improvement to the Moore property was a one-time capital expense rather than an on-going expense.

Mr. Morrell felt in looking through the budgets, everyone has been good at trying to submit budgets as requested, and everyone was very reasonable.

Dr. Smith noted the budgets also include the salary and classifications study implementations to bring everyone up to competitive rates, subject to a union vote.

Mr. Morrell inquired on how to go about going through the budgets, and if they wanted to invite everyone in or only certain departments they had questions for.

Mr. Harrison responded there are certain areas in the budget the Board of Selectmen are responsible for, such as the Selectmen, Police, Fire, etc.

Dr. Smith said if all of these departments are going in to meet with the Finance Committee, you don't really want to keep duplicating, and said personally speaking if the Board of Selectmen can get the information from asking Mr. Brassard or Ms. Lauria that's great, and if they don't have the answers, then that department could be invited in. In the past the Board has more set the priorities for the budget, maybe the overview, but a lot of the line items are left more to the Finance Committee, Mr. Brassard and Ms. Lauria.

Mr. Harrison said the item that interests him is how much the Town is going to receive from energy savings, and the best leverage the town can receive from the low prices of heating oil, diesel and gasoline.

Dr. Smith said right now he would be looking mostly at level services, and if we see the numbers change or firm up the revenue, we can look at anything above the level services.

Correspondence was read and completed.

In Other Business to Come Before the Board:

- Mr. Morrell noted there was a public concern from residents regarding traffic at the intersection of Munn Road and East Hill Road. The Highway Department installed a yield sign there recently and since then there hasn't been any complaints. A sign was also installed the other day at King Street and East Hill Road, and again, there haven't been any complaints so far.
- Mr. Morrell said the Highway Department made up four new signs for "Parking for Voters Only". Two will go on the east side of Main Street and two will go on the west side of Main Street, in front of Memorial Hall. The twenty-two election workers will park down below by the Highway Department and Fire Station, making sure they don't block something and try to work with that.
- Mr. Morrell said the message board will be out and programmed to notify residents' voting's been moved to Memorial Hall and that voting for the Presidential Primary will be held on Tuesday, March 1, 2016 from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.
- Mr. Morrell said there is a little problem with the winter overnight parking ban. Chief Kozloski is looking into the amounts of defining the ticketing fines, and speaking to surrounding towns to see what they charge for parking fines, blocking sidewalks, driveways, etc. to be consistent. This will also include not abiding to the winter parking ban.
Mr. Morrell said he can ask the Police to tow vehicles if they are hindering what his department is trying to do and if it's a safety hazard, otherwise it's up to the Police Officer whether or not a vehicle is towed or just ticketed.

At 7:43 p.m., Mr. Harrison made a motion to adjourn from opens session. Mr. Morrell seconded and it was unanimously VOTED.

Edward S. Harrison, Clerk