

BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
JANUARY 28, 2020

The regular meeting for the Board of Selectmen convened at 7:00 p.m. in the conference room in the Town Office Building at 110 Main Street. In attendance were John R. Morrell, Edward S. Harrison, and Dr. Richard M. Smith. Also present were Town Administrator Evan Brassard and the media.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**Acceptance of Meeting Minutes:**

Mr. Harrison made a motion to accept the meeting minutes of January 14, 2020 – open session. Dr. Smith seconded, and it was unanimously VOTED.

**Pole Petition #29369691 – Wales Road:**

Dr. Smith read the pole petition into the record, and noted the pole location was okay with both the Highway and Water/Sewer Departments. A woman in the audience questioned where the pole was going to be placed as she was under the impression it was going to be placed on her property.

Mr. Morrell noted the pole will be located on town property, she was notified because she is an abutter, and explained he checked it out; the town has an 80-foot right-of-way through there.

Mandy Patenaude, representing National Grid, said she put a stake at the location, and explained the pole is to service the Army Corp of Engineers who need power way down in the back at Conant Brook Dam. They will be doing an underground service from that pole.

There wasn't anyone else in the audience to speak for or against the pole petition.

Mr. Harrison made a motion to approve pole petition #29369691 as read. Dr. Smith seconded, and it was unanimously VOTED.

**Public Hearing – Liquor Application for Change of Manager For Monson Markets, Inc. d/b/a Adams Discount Liquors:**

Michael Butler approached the Board of Selectmen and explained the current manager at Adams Discount Liquors left about a year ago to work at the branch in Connecticut, and this application is to just change the manager position over to him. He noted he has attended a couple of training classes on being a manager.

Mr. Harrison made a motion to approve the change of manager on the local level, and to forward the application to the ABCC in Boston for their approval. Dr. Smith seconded, and it was unanimously VOTED.

**Military Care Packages:**

Karen King and Christopher Lynch approached the Board of Selectmen and explained about five years ago there was some discussion in town about doing more for our Veterans and those serving in the

military. They decided then to send care packages during Desert Storm, and now they thought it would be great to get a group of people together to send packages every year before Christmas, so they are timely for the holidays, sending some cheer to those serving over seas as well as Stateside. This is for active military and those deployed who have family in Monson. Ms. King said this is their fifth year doing this, with twenty-nine packages being sent this past year. Each person receives two packages, and Monson Savings Bank pays for all of the postage. They also raise money throughout the time leading up to it. This past year, they raised almost \$7,000 and each box contained a \$250 Amazon gift card that could be used on socks, etc., or even to come back home to see family members. The drive starts in October and runs to November 15<sup>th</sup>.

Ms. King said in 2018, Mr. Lynch, who is a Monson resident, was deployed from Westover.

Mr. Lynch said he was in the Air National Guard, and was deployed to Afghanistan from October 2018 to April 2019. He was gone for Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's. He was one of the recipients of the care packages over that time, and felt the work by Ms. King and all the volunteers in town was really outstanding.

Mr. Lynch said he actually had the opportunity to nominate the Monson Care Package program and the Town of Monson for a certificate of appreciation that is given out by the Commander of Reserve Forces and Absent to outstanding charities, organizations, or businesses that support deployed members. Mr. Lynch read the plaque he received into the record.

Ms. King said they felt it was important to proudly display this plaque here in the Town Office Building, to show the Town of Monson's support to our military. Mr. Lynch presented the plaque to the Board of Selectmen.

Mr. Harrison asked if they keep track of every resident serving in the military.

Ms. King said yes, they track it through their Monson Military Care Package Drive Facebook page, as well as getting information from the school's guidance counselors and family members.

Mr. Morrell thanked them for coming in, Ms. King for her work, and Mr. Lynch for his service and everyone who served with him.

**Board of Health Administrative Assistant:**

Autumn Bailey approached the Board of Selectmen, introduced herself, and explained a little bit of her background.

Mr. Morrell asked Ms. Bailey about her hours.

Ms. Bailey said she works Monday 8 – 4:30, Thursday 11:30 – 4:30, and Friday 8 – 12:30, for a total of 18 hours. The office is closed on Tuesday and Wednesday.

Mr. Brassard explained it's been working out very well. We used to have only morning hours and now we have afternoon hours as well.

Mr. Brassard explained the position was posted with 181 applications received. They were narrowed down to the top five for interviews, with Ms. Bailey being chosen as the best candidate. She has been working in the Board of Health office for three weeks now; she has picked it right up and everything is running smoothly.

Dr. Smith asked Ms. Bailey if she is a Monson resident.

Ms. Bailey responded yes; she has lived in Monson pretty much her whole life.

**Budget Review:**

Mr. Brassard explained handouts he had given to the Board showing the preliminary, preliminary budget, and noted it's very early in the process. A total of eleven out of fourteen budgets have been finalized; two are hung up because we are waiting for one final number so he hasn't been able to approve them yet, and the other is the School Dept. and it's too early in the process for them to submit it, however they are working on it.

Mr. Brassard said it looks like the budget will grow by .7% and that stems from the Board's desire to keep everything level funded with the exception of salaries.

Mr. Brassard noted the only major change is in the Police budget. We are in a cruiser replacement year and the shift will be away from the Dodge Charger and into most likely the Ford Explorer, which he feels is a smart move given the fact Monson is a hilly town with a lot of snow, dirt, etc.

Mr. Morrell asked if the Fire Dept. budget was going to be the same with the dept. using some of the money from the ambulance fund.

Mr. Brassard responded yes, there will be no change.

Mr. Brassard said they are working on some cost saving measures in the budgets as well, that might offset some of the salary increases.

Mr. Morrell asked about the capital.

Mr. Brassard said the capital probably won't be in for another two weeks, but feels we are in good shape.

Correspondence was read and completed.

**In Other Business to Come Before the Board:**

- Police Chief Stephen Kozloski approached the Board of Selectmen with Derek Bedard.

Chief Kozloski explained the Board has previously met Tyler Wilk about a year ago. Mr. Wilk is scheduled to attend the full-time academy on February 10<sup>th</sup>. Chief Kozloski is asking the Board to appoint Mr. Wilk as an interim police officer to extend his time with the department until he successfully graduates.

Chief Kozloski said Mr. Bedard has been working as a full-time dispatcher since the later part of 2017. Mr. Bedard has always had a desire to become a full-time police officer, and Chief Kozloski offered him the next full-time police position. Based on his scheduled attendance at the academy on February 10<sup>th</sup>, he is being brought in to be introduced as the next full-time police candidate, and Chief Kozloski said he anticipates Mr. Bedard will be graduating successfully in the early part of July.

Mr. Bedard explained his background.

Mr. Harrison made a motion to appoint Tyler Wilk, who is currently employed under a waiver, and will be reappointed as an interim full-time police officer through the completion of the academy, and upon his successful completion of the academy on July 10<sup>th</sup>. Dr. Smith seconded, and it was unanimously VOTED.

Mr. Harrison made a motion to appoint Derek Bedard effective on the start date of the Full-time Western Mass. Police Academy. Dr. Smith seconded, and it was unanimously VOTED.

Dr. Smith asked how we will be doing in dispatch since we will be losing Mr. Bedard.

Chief Kozloski said he is still actively looking at various options, of possibly replacing these locally with per diem, as well as the possibility of regionalization, based on the better fit for the community. He is anticipating being down two positions in dispatch out of the four, Mr. Bedard's and possibly one other full-time position who has expressed an unofficial notice to him of their intention to take a full-time dispatching position in another community for about \$7 an hour more.

- Jessica Groleau of 101 Stafford Hollow Road, approached the Board of Selectmen and handed out a paper, as attached, explaining her proposed thoughts on cannabis growing by the farmers in town.

Ms. Groleau explained, she is a Monson resident, born and raised here. She has a horticulture degree from UMass. She was the assistant head grower at Holistic Industries here in town for eighteen months. While she was working there, she said she learned everything she needed to know about cannabis and all about the regulations and bylaws from working with the CCC (Cannabis Control Commission).

Ms. Groleau said she has spoken with Mr. Brassard about a business plan that is fully funded and just needs to be licensed, starting at the town level. She doesn't believe it should be by right as the CCC is the ultimate ruler over any establishment that grows cannabis. She feels it should be by permit. She also feels some of the things in the original bylaw need tweaking, bringing a lot more support from the town.

Ms. Groleau said she would like to open a genetic warehouse here in town. She is currently working with four in other areas along the east coast. Her plants have virtually no flowers, so there is very little

security risk and there is also no smell; a vegetative plant does not produce the smell that has been so offensive to the town residents. She would flower in small quantities, which would allow her to test them in a lab for potencies to be prescribed for specific medicines.

Ms. Groleau said she has presented the plan to Mr. Brassard, and presented a power-point presentation that she would like to present to the Board of Selectmen at the next meeting, and she would like to volunteer to sit on the advisory panel as a resident, a farmer, and a cannabis professional.

Mr. Brassard said the outcome of the last meeting on creating a new Marijuana Bylaw Committee was unclear what that committee will be doing.

Mr. Morrell said when Ms. Hull was here at the last meeting, the Board agreed to have a committee with five members.

Mr. Brassard said the Planning Board has the legislative authority, and wondered if this separate committee is advisory, or a sub-committee.

Dr. Smith said personally he was thinking it's giving the committee's perspective to the Planning Board.

Mr. Brassard clarified, it's an advisory committee where the people would get together with their ideas, and then bring them to the Planning Board saying this is what we feel is important.

Ms. Groleau added, and to ask the Planning Board to draft it, so it's not a citizen brought bill, and that it actually has legal verbiage that could pass at this level.

Mr. Morrell asked about the distance from the road.

Ms. Groleau said what she felt was unfair about the farming bill was not necessarily the abutters distance or the road distance; she is proposing 200 feet from the abutter or the road. What she feels is more important is how many acres is really considered a farm. She would want anyone applying for a cannabis license to be an actual farm.

Dr. Smith asked Mr. Brassard if anyone has expressed interest in volunteering to serve on the committee.

Mr. Brassard responded, no, but he hasn't pushed it out there anywhere, so it would have only been the people watching the meeting. Mr. Brassard said he will put it out there so the Board could appoint members at their next meeting.

Dr. Smith asked about the Planning Boards meetings.

Mr. Brassard noted the Planning Board already had their initial meeting with the requested information from Town Planner Dan Laroche, and didn't feel that was mutually exclusive to what the Board of Selectmen is trying to do.

Dr. Smith said he just didn't want the Planning Board to be done by the time the advisory panel is formed.

Mr. Brassard didn't feel this would be a problem since the Planning Board is meeting just once a month.

Mr. Harrison noted the Planning Board will have the public hearing, so the advisory panel could present their information to the Planning Board at that time.

Mr. Brassard felt a list from the advisory panel on input they feel is important would be wanted by the Planning Board prior to the public hearing in order to be incorporated in it.

- Dr. Smith wondered what the latest on the Fire Chief hiring process was.

Mr. Brassard responded, the Finance Committee meets on Monday, next week, and he will be approaching them for the financing. Everything else is ready to go, it's just securing the funding.

- Mr. Morrell said he won't be here for the next meeting or so because he is going in for surgery.

At 7:52 p.m., Mr. Harrison made a motion to adjourn from open session to go into executive session to discuss strategy with respect to non-union personnel pursuant to M.G.L. Chapter 30A Section 21 (3) and collective bargaining or litigation pursuant to M.G.L. Chapter 30 A Section 21 (3), not to return to open session. Dr. Smith seconded, and it was unanimously VOTED.

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Dr. Richard M. Smith, Clerk