

Approved Minutes
Town of Brookline Selectboard
Wednesday, August 7, 2019, 6:30 PM

Present:

Selectboard: David Jones (Chair), Gwen Tanza, Joseph Dutton, Bruce Mello, Shelby Brimmer

Members of the Public: Dave Taddei (Game Warden), Kerry Bourne, Lee Ann Parker, Archie Clark, Dan Towler, Mark Bills, Guy Tanza (Town Clerk, Videographer), Peter Barus (Recorder)

Call the meeting to order

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM.

Review changes to agenda if any

Address Bear Issue first (Scheduled Members of the Public)

Add Health Officer Update (Old Business)

Approve appointment to BMH Committee (New Business)

Move Approve Minutes after Scheduled Members of the Public

Unscheduled members of the public

Dave Taddei, Game Warden

Officer Taddei asked about concerns; Mr. Mello reported that plywood had been cut to fit and installed on the Dumpster with straps; the bear was seen by the children while they were walking on Grassy Brook Road. There was discussion. Officer Taddei noted that the bear has not shown aggressiveness; that it is probably a young male establishing territory; that there will be bears in the future; that hunting season may drive the bear away or remove it; and emphasized that good waste management practices are the most effective response.

Mr. Mello discussed how the area might best be cleaned up; in consultation with Mr. Bloom, an excavator had been considered; and that probably Fall would be the best time to clean out the area. Officer Taddei suggested that the bear probably accounts for most of the calls he has been receiving; and discussed the use of “brown matter”, such as wood chips, in compost.

The Board thanked Officer Taddei.

Scheduled members of the public

Lee Anne Parker & Kerry Bourne

New Business

Meetinghouse Bat Situation

Mr. Jones discussed conditions at BMH and inquired about remediation and research. Ms. Parker noted that the smell is an issue. There was discussion. A distinction was made between remediation and management; that 180 years worth of bat guano could be removed, and that there are about 40 bats, so managing their guano would be a much different and much simpler process. Other means of excluding the animals besides plugging all the holes were discussed, and costs of remediation. Mr. Mello noted that there had been estimates for lift rental from Agway (best offer) and from Brown (more expensive because of transporting fees). Ms. Parker suggested annual guano removal using plastic sheeting.

Mr. Jones asked about other concerns about the process of sealing the openings, from a historical building point of view. Mr. Bourne noted that historic restoration is the issue, and discussed projects that involve openings, which would be hindered by sealing those openings; and

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suggested cleaning up what is in the space, and capturing the guano that comes from the few bats that are still there; and noted that they are declining in number, and the cost of proposed remediation may be unnecessarily high. Mr. Mello suggested that \$6,700 over two years would end the problem.

There was discussion of remediation versus management; that after removing the accumulated guano the problem would not be very large; that managed on an ongoing basis it is not a hazard.

Mr. Dutton suggested the restoration projects could be done first, and the guano removed later. Ms. Parker suggested that the building could be cleaned up and would be more appealing to the public. Mr. Bourne noted that progress is important in the short term as well as the long term. Ms. Brimmer inquired about less costly alternatives. Mr. Towler suggested that additional estimates for remediation might be obtained; and that removing the centuries of built-up material would allow an accurate assessment of the continuing problem in the following year. Mr. Bourne noted that a couple of dozen animals would not make nearly the mess left by thousands over centuries; that bats are in decline; and that catching their droppings on a sheet of plastic would be an insignificant amount of work. Mr. Mello suggested addressing the issue quickly. Ms. Parker noted that there is a bid awaiting decision, and a BMH meeting tomorrow (July 18th). It was suggested that the BMH Committee's views should be considered. Mr. Jones suggested that management, following guano removal, would be best; there was discussion.

Approve Minutes

Minutes from July 17, 2019 Regular Meeting

Mr. Jones moved to approve the minutes minutes from July 17, 2019. Second by Mr. Mello.
Motion **Passed with one abstention.**

Financials review

Mr. Jones discussed the provided documents, noting that he had reviewed them without finding any errors; and discussed the \$5,000.00 donation from Ms. Massey; and suggested the Members review the documents and invite the Treasurer to the September 4th meeting. There was discussion.

Municipal Tax Rate Clarification

Mr. Jones cited email from the Treasurer about the emergency meeting on the Municipal Tax Rate; that the rate was not correct; that the correct rate was used on the tax bills; that the rate for FY 2020 is 0.4323, as reflected in the tax bill that went out. Mr. Tanza questioned this, citing a document; there was discussion.

Municipal Planning Grants

Mr. Jones reported that Mr. Kavet had noted an approaching deadline for Municipal Planning Grants, and a closer deadline for WRC assistance with the Planning Commission; that the PC has reported nothing requiring applications for these grants; he noted that previous experiences had not been very productive and invited discussion; and he would confirm that the Selectboard agrees that there is no current need.

Old Business

Health Officer Update

Ms. Tanza noted that the health officer is to fill in an inspection form for any house inspected, by Aug 1; and that Ms. Maggio had done this on July 19th.

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Approve Appointment to BMH Committee

The Selectboard discussed the appointment of Sara Wiswall to the BMH Committee; there was discussion; it was noted that Mr. Noga will stay on.

Mr. Jones nominated Sara Wiswall to the BMH Advisory Committee. He asked for other nominations. Hearing none, nominations were closed. Ms. Wiswall was unanimously appointed to the BMH Committee.

Town Building Update

Mr. Mello discussed certain carbon monoxide detectors that are defunct; that he had given approval for Code 3 to replace the four detectors as out of date and not functional; and discussed the good relationship with SLP staff; and expressed gratitude for Mr. Bovat's pro bono work; and noted that he had spoken with Dave Zelesko about the soffits and fascia boards facing the BMH; and with VLCT about how to enroll volunteers for BMH projects; and noted that there is liability insurance (\$50,000) available from VLCT; that no one may be hired without liability insurance; and discussed volunteers doing the painting and staining, while professionals do the rest; and reported that he had called Mr. Momaney for a quote on exterior painting work; and noted that Mr. Momaney had just finished painting the Dummerston church and cited others in the area as examples of Mr. Momaney's work.

SLP Water System

Mr. Jones reported that the Drinking Water and Groundwater Protection Division has not yet clarified whether a "deficiency" must be addressed or not; whether completing the engineering report and design of a new system is necessary or not; and noted that the UV system had been fixed while alternatives were being pursued, leaving a functioning UV system, and a "deficiency" in the planned alternative system; that all this must be reviewed and decided; that the DWGD has not called back to date, despite continuing attempts to call them; there was discussion.

EMP compliance for SLP Building

Ms. Brimmer reported that Laurie Garland and Chris Medina are researching this and so far find no records. There was discussion of whether there had been lead disclosure at the time of acquisition of the school building.

Road Equipment Purchase Committee Update

Mr. Dutton reported that the Committee is ready to make its recommendations; that every member will be prepared to offer their opinions to the Selectboard whenever this can be scheduled.

Mr. Jones will place this on the agenda for the 21st.

The Committee's consensus was noted, noting that the Selectboard must make the ultimate decision, based on the information that they have gathered. Mr. Clark suggested that if a piece of equipment is considered, it would probably have to follow procedure and go out for bidding; and that it should go back to the Town for a vote. It was noted that there are differences of opinion among Committee members.

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Summary / Update / Reports

Guy Tanza – Town Clerk Report

Mr. Tanza reported that the office has been busy with new tax bills, a number of questions about the new format (state mandated); and that Ms. Tanza has reached Book 23, hand-entering what had been missing; that she has now completed about twenty years of records, all backed up and readily accessible; that dog lists have been given to Ms. Maggio, including one complaint in Papoose Lane; and noted an upcoming Australian Ballot vote on September 10th.

Highways & Roads

Guy Tanza – Road Commissioner Report

Mr. Tanza reported that the crack-seal crew had to stop after one and a half days because of rain; there was discussion of the locations that had been addressed.

Mark Bills – Road Supervisor

Mr. Bills reported that the state is also applying crack-seal on Rt. 30; and that the Salt and Sand Shed on track, and the deed had been found; that there had been a call from WRC informing that the Town is eligible for another Water Erosion Grant, and he is determining the best locations; that the mowing is done, gravel application is progressing where needed, and that there had been some occasional storm damage; and noted several long-term plans for improvements.

Mr. Mello and Mr. Bills will arrange to deal with filters at SLP.

There was discussion of the guardrail at the new box culvert; the projected cost of \$2,500.00.

There was discussion of safety issues at that location. Mr. Tanza noted a state mandate if there is more than a five foot drop. There as discussion of budget concerns; that this could be part of the \$36,000.00 state funding that has to be applied to highway structure; and it was suggested that the drop be measured; that the guardrail might not be necessary. Mr. Bills discussed certain challenges to installing the guardrail; Mr. Jones inquired about other vendors.

Communications

Email

- New water testing (Ms. Burke will know what to do)
- Nuisance dog complaint

Regular Mail

- Windham County Sheriff's office (Introducing Mark Anderson)
- VTRANS (Trainings)
- ANR (Drinking Water and Groundwater Protection Dept)
- VLCT periodical
- VLCT Health Officer webinar

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Pay Orders

Payroll

Mr. Jones moved to approve Payroll Warrant #2020-04 dated 7/23/19 in the amount of \$1,622.23. Second by Ms. Tanza. **All in Favor.**

Mr. Jones moved to approve Payroll Warrant #2020-06 8/3/19 in the amount of \$2,730.07. Second by Mr. Mello. **All in Favor.**

Accounts Payable

Mr. Jones moved to approve Accounts Payable Warrant #2020-05 8/6/19 in the amount of \$4,390.83. Second by Mr. Mello. **All in Favor.**

Set agenda for the next meeting – Wednesday August 21, 2019

- Road Purchase Committee Recommendations
- Traffic Safety

Adjournment

Ms. Brimmer moved to Adjourn. Second by Mr. Dutton. All in Favor.

The meeting was Adjourned at 8:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted, Peter Barus, Recording Clerk, August 12th, 2019