

Approved Minutes
Town of Brookline Selectboard Meeting
Wednesday, January 20, 2021, 6:30 PM
(videoconference)

Present

Selectboard:
David Jones (Chair)
Gwen Tanza
Bruce Mello

Town Officers:
Guy Tanza (Town Clerk, videographer)
Mark Bills (Road Supervisor)

Members of the Public:
Peter Barus (Recorder)
FACTV (Videoconference recording)

Call the meeting to order

The meeting was called to order at 6:33PM.

Review changes to agenda if any

Scheduled members of the public

Unscheduled members of the public

Approve Minutes

Minutes from January 6, 2021 Regular Meeting

Mr. Jones moved to approve the minutes for January 6, 2021. Second by Ms. Tanza. All in favor.

Minutes from January 13, 2021 Special Meeting

Mr. Jones moved to approve the minutes for January 13, 2021 Special Meeting. Second by Ms. Tanza. All in favor.

New Business

Roadside Tree Removal

Mr. Jones noted that a quote from Henry Carr had been circulated to members for \$2,500 per day, \$5,000 total, to trim and remove trees under Mr. Bills' direction. Mr. Bills explained that he had identified certain trees that appeared in danger of obstructing the road, some of which he could take down, some that the power company must remove, and some requiring a qualified contractor; and in consultation with Mr. Clark, and mindful of the purchase policy, Mr. Bills discussed priorities with Mr. Carr, being dead trees in town and trees on Hill Road where drainage would be improved by removal; landowners had given permission.

Ms. Tanza asked about details of the plan. Mr. Bills explained the sequence of work, beginning with a two-day contract; approximately 100 trees of varying size, many dead elms that continued to drop branches, two days' work would provide a sense of the cost of the entire job. Mr. Bills confirmed that these trees would not be handled by GMP.

Mr. Jones asked if there were any ash trees on the list and asked that ash trees be documented where found, in case funding might become available in light of potential insect infestations. There was discussion. It was suggested that elm should be burned to limit the spread of elm disease.

Mr. Tanza asked about funding sources. Mr. Bills explained that this would be from the Contract Services funds. Mr. Mello expressed approval of Mr. Bills' due diligence. It was noted that Mr. Carr's insurance binder was in hand.

Old Business

Town Meeting Warning

Mr. Jones noted that two members were not present, but there was a Quorum. Mr. Jones explained warning each of the appropriations as a separate article, based on state guidance; and noted slight changes to the wording of those Articles.

Mr. Jones read the Warning aloud. There was consensus that the title and introductory language of the Warning was appropriate. Mr. Jones observed that other examples (including from VLCT) use one Article for all elected offices, listing each position and term of office. Articles 5 to 26 of the 28 Articles were listed as separate Articles for each of the appropriations.

Mr. Tanza noted that the Warning should reflect the ballot, according to consultations with the state. Mr. Jones noted that Article 2 was to accept the Auditors' Report; Article 3 listed the taxes to be raised. It had been noted previously that the numbers had not been audited to date, but were not expected to change significantly; that the surplus could be changed if the auditors deemed this necessary; that if the surplus was changed significantly, a special meeting would be required to change the Warning, timed to meet the posting deadline.

Mr. Jones read each Article and invited members to comment. There was consensus that listing the appropriations separately would be clearer to voters.

There was discussion of vote-counting procedures. Mr. Jones noted that specific Warnings for informational meetings were required no more than ten days prior; that polling times and locations would be listed in the Town Meeting Warning. There was discussion of potential changes to the date of Town Meeting by the state or municipality.

Ms. Tanza moved to adopt the Town Meeting Warning with the addition of polling time and location. Second by Mr. Jones. All in favor.

Australian Ballot/Informational Hearing Details

Mr. Jones explained that recent legislation allowed the Secretary of State to issue some procedural changes, including waiver of the deadline for filing paperwork (January 18), could be changed by a town; that all positions other than the Listers had been nominated, and that it was unlikely that there would be more nominations. Mr. Tanza noted that the information about consent forms had been widely disseminated.

Mr. Jones suggested that the informational meeting would have to be scheduled Wednesday, February 24, and would have to be decided immediately so that it could be in the Town Report; and that there were other factors that brought uncertainty in any case. There was discussion. It was suggested that Mr. Parker would be available to act as Moderator for the Informational Hearing.

Mr. Jones moved to hold the Town Meeting Informational Hearing on Wednesday, February 24, 2021, at 6:30PM, by videoconference. Second by Ms. Tanza. All in favor.

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Mr. Jones noted that the Informational Hearing must be posted at least ten days in advance; and ballots must be produced by February 9; that next meeting the ballot must be finalized, and the Informational Hearing Warning posted.

Mr. Tanza will circulate the nominees' names for inclusion on the ballot.

Mr. Jones will draft and circulate a ballot prior to next meeting for members' perusal and subsequent approval.

There was discussion of early voting and absentee ballots. Mr. Tanza had posted an announcement that ballots would be available on request, and will verify the relevant dates and statutes for the meeting February 3, 2021.

Town Report

Mr. Jones will circulate a brief draft version, and asked Mr. Tanza for a copy of the Voter Checklist with mailing addresses. It was noted that the Secretary of State would reimburse the town for postage costs.

Building Update

Mr. Mello discussed the lease language, and noted that heating work had been completed and bills were expected; and discussed water system maintenance, training, more expensive alternatives (such as a UV system), water system alarms, a water shutoff during the recent snow; and suggested that Mr. Bills had been consulted about being trained on water system emergency service; and explained a bill listed on the A/P Warrant.

Summary / Update / Reports

Guy Tanza – Town Clerk Report

Mr. Tanza reported increased property refinancing; and noted that dog registrations could be completed by dropping off a check with the dog's and owner's names, and the certificate would be returned by mail.

Highways & Roads

Mark Bills – Road Supervisor

Mr. Bills reported that the salt and sand shed was full, repairs to washouts from Christmas had been completed, branches and debris removed from the roads; and that a lot of road debris was to be expected after the snow melts.

Communications

Email

- Resignation note from Marcia and Sheila, as of first Tuesday in March. (The board expressed appreciation for their service.)
- Dept of Taxes re: CLA down to 100.45. (As this was more than 5% change, reappraisal may be indicated; it was noted the last reappraisal was 2007. Mr. Tanza noted that the town is on a waiting list for reappraisal.)
- WRC (Margo Ghia) re: certification of right-of-way required from attorney based on complete plans. (Federal grant requirements.)
- WRC re: Bike and Pedestrian Grant program.

Regular Mail

- VLCT Newsletter.
- Community Leadership in Action booklet.
- Comcast re: network support contacts.
- Resignation letter from Marcia and Sheila. (Hard copy)
- Sam Bourne re: proposal to move driveway right-of-way. (Mr. Bills had discussed with Mr. Clark; forward to Mr. Bills.)
- Ms. Maggio re: dog bite report from Grace Cottage. (Can follow up re rabies and licensing; it was noted that this was forwarded for meeting minutes. Owner Colby White bitten by own dog.)

Pay Orders

Payroll

Mr. Jones invited questions on the Payroll Warrant. (None heard.)

Mr. Jones moved to approve Payroll Warrant 3 2021-03 dated 1/20/21, in the amount of \$1,133.64. Second by Mr. Mello. **All in Favor.**

Accounts Payable

Mr. Jones invited questions on the Accounts Payable Warrant. None heard.

Mr. Jones moved to approve Accounts Payable Warrant # 2021-04 dated 1/20/21, in the amount of \$14,145.89. Second by Ms. Tanza. **All in Favor.**

Set agenda for the next meeting – Wednesday February 3, 2021

- Town Meeting Ballot.
- Informational Hearing.

There was discussion of state reimbursement for printing costs; it was decided to print at the office.

Adjournment

Mr. Jones moved to Adjourn. Second by Mr. Mello. All in favor.

The meeting was Adjourned at 8:44 PM.

Respectfully submitted, Peter Barus, Recorder, January 21, 2021