

Town of Northumberland

Board of Selectmen

Meeting Minutes (Draft)

Date: Monday, December 21st, 2020

Place: Town Meeting Room – 10 Station Square

Time: 6:00 P.M.

During the meeting "social distancing" will be practiced and wearing of masks is strongly encouraged

Selectmen present: Michael Phillips, Chairman, Jim Weagle, William Caron

Others Present: James Gibson, Glenn Cassady, Reginald and Terri Charron, Peter J. Pelletier, Michelle Randall, Suzanne Batchelder, Mark Yelle

1. Chairman opens the meeting: Michael opens the meeting with request for motion to approve minutes with correction.

2. Acceptance of Minutes: Correction of spelling of Wemyss Drive. Jim makes motion to accept the minutes with the correction of the spelling of Wemyss Drive, William seconds, all favor, 3-0.

3. Selectmen Business:

a. Department Head Business: Ambulance and Police

Glenn give report: 545 calls answered, 13 more than last year at this time. Comstar commitments to date: \$207,994.80, \$178,388.42 received to date. Closeout for November.

Covid update: 1 active in town, 2 active in contracted towns.

Waiting to see what happens with building proposal and ambulance parking.

Michael asks the difference between Medicare/Medicaid payments for reimbursements versus private reimbursement.

Glenn says that Medicare/Medicaid pays 80%, commitments which is the allowed charge, and has to be accepted because it is a Federal program. For Comstar there is no percentage of coverage allowed, payment in full. Comstar also can use a collection agency to help recover funds.

No more questions for Glenn.

Peter Pelletier gives report for the Police Dept.

November report: 104 calls for service answered. 4 arrests made, 1 car crash investigation. Opened 11 new investigations and 33 car stops.

December report: 212 calls for service answered. 8 arrests made, 7 car crashes, 21 new investigations opened and 63 car stops.

Department is finishing up on training hours provided by grant. Officer Foster will be going to academy to take his fitness test. He has been helping write policy for the department and is getting ready for his fitness test. Very motivated.

b. Review/discussion/decision of Town Report Bid award

Michael reports that only 1 bid has been received. Smith and Town Printers. \$1,475 for 450 copies. Jim makes motion to accept Smith and Town Printers for

Town Report printing, William seconds, all in favor, 3-0.

c. Review/discussion/decision of Salt Shed Construction Bid award

2 bids for labor and crane have been received.

1st bid is from Raymond Simino for estimated \$68,000.

2nd bid is from Canton Construction for \$46,280 to \$56,560, depending on doors and other items done.

Discussion among Selectmen on budget, materials budget of \$50,000 and whether a buffer of \$10,000 should be asked for at Town Meeting for materials as the cost is going higher.

Suzanne Batchelder asks when construction will be starting. Material prices are going up.

Michael replies that construction will begin in the summer.

Glenn mentions that CDX should be put on the inside walls to keep material from going to sill.

Discussion starts on how to save money, maybe put off some items until later.

Jim makes motion to award bid to Canton Construction with maximum cost of \$56,560.

Will seconds, all in favor, 3-0.

d. Town water pressure complaint—Batchelder

Suzanne Batchelder explains costs of repair to a home she owns when the pressure of the water was too high. Other residents in the area have had the same issues. A new expansion tank and pressure valve were installed and paid for.

Reggie speaks at Michael's request on Town Policies that are in place. The Town owns up to the curb, and except for the meter, the resident owns the rest of the plumbing.

Suzanne says that no pressure relief valve was there previous to her having one installed.

Reggie continues to explain the importance of the expansion tank and how that is not the responsibility of the town for that.

More discussion on how there was no PRV installed currently but there is evidence that one was installed at one time. Meters are installed by the town and only suggestions can be made to the homeowner, the town does not do the work. State regulation requires less than 87 PSI be present, and pipe diameter can also be a concern.

Michael tells Suzanne that he is sorry but the Town can't help with this. A suggestion of sending a letter out with the water bills to remind people, especially with older homes about the importance of having system inspections and pressure relief valves installed.

Suzanne thanks the Board for their time and asks who does electrical inspections.

Reggie replies that the State does electrical, we do water.

e. Review/discussion/decision of accountant and auditor engagement letters for service in 2021

Accountant Letter of Engagement received from Cohoes Advisors. For 2020 the bill was for \$34,800, for 2021 the fee will be \$35,100.

Jim makes motion to accept Cohoes Advisors for accounting, William seconds, all in favor 3-0.

Auditor Letter of Engagement received from Plodnick and Sanderson for the 2021 year. Last year was \$12,000 for 2021 will be \$12,500. Jim makes motion to accept Plodnick and Sanderson for the auditor. William seconds, all in favor, 3-0.

f. Letter of Commitment – Coos Broadband Committee Participation Agreement

A representative from the town to help on this committee. Robin will be our representative. Need to sign the letter of commitment. Jim makes motion for Michael to sign the letter of engagement, William seconds, all in favor, 3-0.

g. Discussion/decision of Town Meeting time and date

Need to set the time and date of the Town Meeting, usually the first Saturday after the election. The School Board wants to have their meeting on March 6th. There are concerns on overexposure to Covid by having extra meetings.

Jim makes motion to set Town Meeting to March 13 at 10am. William seconds, all in favor, 3-0.

Further discussion on the need for more Supervisors of the Checklist if more rooms used. Now that the date and time are set, logistics to follow.

h. Discussion/decision to authorize the transfer of short-term funds to the general fund for payment of new Scada and equipment expenses.

Total invoices amount to \$50,384.66

Jim makes motion to ask the Trustee of the Trust Funds to transfer \$50,384.66 to general fund for payment of new Scada and equipment.

Will seconds, all in favor, 3-0.

i. Request to hunt on Town property by Dagan Stiles. He has done this previously. This is for night hunting of Coyote. Jim makes motion to allow Dagan to hunt on Town property for Coyote. Will seconds, all in favor, 3-0.

j. Michael gives Cash Summary for November, not reconciled.

Started the month with \$845,420.71. Received property tax revenue of \$979,605.85 from property tax payments, \$82,774.36 in other revenue for a total of \$1,062,380.21, \$565,897.59 in expenses, for an end balance of \$1,341,053.33.

4. Applications/Permits and Warrants:

Building permit for Richard Beek, moving of 10x16 shed with porch, fee paid, not signed by building permit facilitator.

Jim makes motion to approve with signature of building permit facilitator, William seconds, all in favor, 3-0.

Intent to cut for Joseph Keenan, Maps 256/255, lots 6&7, 1&2. Keith Evans, forester. Jim makes motion to approve, William seconds, all in favor, 3-0.

5. Public Matters To Be Addressed By The Board:

Town offices will be closed January 1, 2021 for the holiday and will reopen January 4th at 8am.

Robin Irving says she has a quote for an air cleaner that kills Covid that is paid for by a grant but needs to be signed. Requests a signature. Jim says he can do that. Jim makes motion to go into Non-Public session, Will seconds, all in favor, 3-0.

Resumption of Public Session:

Jim makes motion to approve tax abatement, William seconds, all in favor, 3-0.

Jim makes motion to approve the hiring of Aaron Gibson from part time officer to full time officer starting sometime in January. William seconds, all in favor, 3-0.

Adjournment: Jim makes motion to adjourn at 7:36pm, William seconds, all in favor, 3-0.

Next meeting, January 4, 2021

Respectfully submitted,
Pam Kathan
Select Board Minute Taker

Minutes approved by Select Board Members on _____

X

Jim Weagle
Northumberland Select Board Member

X

Michael Phillips
Northumberland Select Board Chairman

X

William Caron
Northumberland Select Board Chairman