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APPROVED
TOWN OF PELHAM
BOARD OF SELECTMEN - MEETING MINUTES
November 5, 2019
APPROVED – November 19, 2019

CALL TO ORDER - approximately 6:30PM

PRESENT: Mr. Doug Viger, Mr. Hal Lynde, Ms. Heather Forde, Mr. Kevin Cote, Town
Administrator Brian McCarthy

ABSENT: Mr. William McDevitt

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

MINUTES REVIEW:

October 22, 2019:

MOTION: (Cote/Forde) To approve the October 22, 2019 meeting minutes as amended.

VOTE: (4-0-0) The motion carried.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Willow Street bridge will open November 6, 2019. Striping will occur when the roads are dry.

OPEN FORUM:

No one came forward.

APPOINTMENTS

Karen Plumley – Zoning Board alternate applicant

Ms. Plumley came forward to discuss her application to volunteer as a Zoning Board alternate. She told the Board she had lived in Pelham for twenty years and would like to become more involved with the Town. She explained she followed discussions regarding a past Zoning Board case (DTB Tax on Nashua Road) and became interested in the process and the Town's zoning. She felt being an alternate was a good way to start involvement.

Ms. Plumley inquired how often the Zoning Board met. The Zoning Board meets the second Monday of every month. Mr. Viger discussed the benefits of regularly attending meeting and being involved. Mr. Cote noted periodically the Zoning Board conducts site walks in various areas that occur as needed.

Ms. Forde thanked Ms. Plumley for volunteering.

Mr. Viger asked if the position had been properly posted for the appropriate timeframe. Mr. McCarthy confirmed it had.

MOTION: (Cote/Forde) To appoint Karen Plumley as an alternate on the Zoning Board of Adjustment.

VOTE: (4-0-0) The motion carried.

Parks & Recreation Director Brian Johnson – New sign for Raymond Park Scout Lodge

Mr. Johnson informed the current sign at the scout lodge was rotted and falling apart. Scout leaders asked if he would consider replacing the sign. He provided the Board with a depiction and cost breakdown of a proposed replacement sign. He noted the position of the sign would be moved closer to the road for better visibility. He will meet with the Road Agent and abutter to make sure the new placement would be okay. The sign will match the other park signs in Town and be double-sided.

Mr. Johnson displayed a rendering of the proposed sign, which would be approximately 48"x72" with a height of 96" (some portion will be in-ground); the proposed location is on a hill and would be reviewed for appropriate height. He said they will possibly add the wooden banner (not included in the proposed cost) at the bottom of the sign to indicate the park is open dawn to dusk. The current cost is \$1,528 (installed) to be taken from the revolving fund. The wooden banner would be an additional cost. The Board agreed to the following 'not to exceed' amount so the banner could be included in the overall cost of sign and installation:

MOTION: (Cote/Forde) To authorize Mr. Johnson to move forward with obtaining/installing a sign at Raymond Park Scout Lodge at a cost not to exceed \$1,800.

VOTE: (4-0-0) The motion carried.

DISCUSSION

Setting the tax rate

Mr. McCarthy told the Board the IT Coordinator (Brian Demers) had worked with Mr. Lynde to create a spread sheet that uses assessing figures to calculate the tax rate based on what number the Board wanted to use. He provided the Board with four documents that showed where the tax rate would fall: 1) using no fund balance money, 2) using \$1 million from the fund balance, 3) using \$1.250 million from the fund balance and 4) using \$2 million from the fund balance.

Mr. Lynde explained the data and calculations used to create the spread sheet. He said the Board was given a table of information showing projected tax rates from \$19.90 down to \$19.20; this was done using estimates from the fund balance. He reviewed the spread sheet and noted they would need to deal with the Department of Revenue ('DRA') for the final number. Mr. Viger understood they were doing the math now to figure out where the Town would be, but the DRA backs them into the tax rate they will end with. Mr. Lynde stated the spread sheet gave the Board a picture of what the calculations would be. He read aloud a summary of the information he provided for review.

Mr. Viger preferred the figure to be \$19.40, understanding that the DRA would back the Town into that number based on the differences with the school's numbers. Mr. Lynde asked if the DRA had given the Town a date yet. Mr. McCarthy answered no. He understood both the Town and School District

87 had submitted their information; he was waiting for an email to go into the portal which would allow
88 them to set the tax rates.

89
90 Mr. Viger asked if the Board had any objection to using the figure of \$19.40. They could then determine
91 what would be taken from the fund balance and get the final tax bill out. There was no objection.

92
93 Mr. Cote inquired how often they took from the fund balance to contribute to the tax rate. Mr. Viger
94 replied every year. Mr. Cote asked if the contribution amount increased each year. Mr. McCarthy
95 replied it had been pretty consistent and believed they withdrew \$1.336 million last year to offset the
96 tax rate. Mr. Lynde believed using approximately \$1.56 million would be a decent figure to use since
97 they 'took a little hit' from the school side.

98
99 Mr. Lynde confirmed the \$108,000 (from the State) was put into the Town's revenues. Mr. McCarthy
100 said it had been.

101
102 Using the information provided to the Board, Mr. Cote understood if they used the \$19.40 figure,
103 approximately 66% wouldn't see an increase in taxes. Mr. Lynde replied they would see either a tax
104 decrease or no change. Mr. Cote asked for clarification of other information contained on the spread
105 sheet. Mr. Lynde discussed how the projected calculations were determined.

106
107 Mr. McCarthy told the Board the Town Clerk/Tax Collector liked to get the tax bills out by the end of
108 November. He said once they go to the DRA with the rate and they accept it, the Town will be okay
109 to proceed. He noted the State had already approved the MS535.

110
111 Mr. McCarthy stated they would use \$19.40 as the rate and take \$1,564,683 from the fund balance. Mr.
112 Viger commented that the \$19.40 figure was more important than the amount from the fund balance.

113
114 **Willow Street Bridge sidewalks**

115
116 Mr. McCarthy stated this item was on the agenda for Mr. McDevitt to discuss; however, he believed
117 the discussion was if the Board wanted to consider continuing sidewalks from to the Willow Street
118 bridge to Bridge Street, or from the bridge to Marsh Road. He felt doing so would be costly. He told
119 the Board Liberty Utilities would be giving a public presentation regarding the sidewalks along Marsh
120 Road at the next meeting. He understood the project would be costly based on the way the sidewalks
121 will be installed.

122
123 Mr. Lynde felt they should have the Road Agent obtain an estimate of the anticipated cost (for sidewalks
124 along Willow Street).

125
126 Mr. Cote understood that the sidewalks (along Willow Street) would need to remain shallow for water
127 runoff. Because of this he felt there was almost no point in having a sidewalk. He said he wasn't a
128 sidewalk person but understood the reason for having them by the schools. Mr. McCarthy noted the
129 Marsh Road sidewalks would be close to the ground for water runoff.

130
131 Ms. Forde questioned what foot traffic Willow Street had. Mr. McCarthy believed it was a fairly well-
132 traveled road by pedestrians. Mr. Viger recalled the concern for the sidewalks on the bridge was
133 because pedestrians and bicycles had no room to move further off the roadway for passing vehicles.
134 He said there was area on the road for pedestrians to move over. Mr. Lynde recalled, from a recent
135 Planning Board meeting, an abutter (on Willow Street) complaining about kids cutting across their
136 property to access McDonalds. Mr. Cote believed there was plenty of space for foot traffic to walk off
137 the road along Willow Street, except for the area on the bridge, which now had curbing.

Numeric tally for Town Warrant Articles in March

Mr. Cote stated people had approached him about warrant articles either ‘recommended’ or ‘not recommended’ by boards. He did some research and saw 2004 was the last time the Town boards showed the vote count for warrant articles on the ballot. He said for some reason they had gone away from showing the vote count and felt it was important for voters to see if a board wasn’t in complete agreement. He said it might give voters a reason to give a closer read to what is going on (with an article). He would like to see the numeric tally listed on the warrant for any board that is recommending/not recommending an article.

Mr. Lynde spoke of the time he was the Selectmen’s Representative to the Budget Committee. He explained he voted against an article as a Selectman but when he went to the Budget Committee, he carried out the wishes of the Board of Selectmen. He said people on the boards may have their differences; however, once a vote is taken a decision is made. He disagreed with listing the tally because once a vote is taken the action is done; a decision has been made.

Ms. Forde stated she could see the merit in letting people know because she didn’t know if the meetings have the viewership they would aspire to have. She said it could be worthwhile (to list the vote tally) so people may backtrack and become more involved in the process.

Mr. Cote noted people always know the Supreme Court vote and felt it was important to know where the Town boards sit on items.

Mr. Lynde believed if the Board took an action, the members were all obligated to adhere to that action. He said he may disagree with the action, but majority rules. Mr. Cote agreed; however, he also felt if a decision wasn’t unanimous people should know there was some discussion within the board that would make people look closer at what they were voting.

Mr. Cote felt it was good discussion and reiterated when looking at the Supreme Court rulings people could see how they voted.

Mr. Viger stated he would accept a motion.

MOTION: (Cote/Forde) To list the vote tally on the warrant articles.

VOTE: (2-2-0) The motion failed. Mr. Viger and Mr. Lynde voted in opposition.

Proposed 2020 Warrant Article vote

The Board decided to review all the articles first and then go back and vote on each.

Mr. McCarthy reviewed the list of warrant articles which were in no specific order; numbers will be assigned at a later date. He told the Board the articles were forwarded to Town Counsel for reviewed/recommendations. The articles were amended accordingly.

(following is a summary of each article – full verbiage available by contacting the Selectmen’s office)

- 1) Operating budget – raise and appropriate \$17,461,162 / Default budget - \$14,161,833

BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING/November 5, 2019

- 186 2) 10-year lease/purchase (\$630,000) to obtain a new fire apparatus to replace Engine 1 and to
187 raise and appropriate \$73,444 for the first-year payment.
188
189 3) To expend \$630,000 from the unassigned Fund Balance to purchase a new fire apparatus to
190 replace Engine 1.
191
192 4) Fire union contract (*contract received back from legal; needs to be reviewed by the Fire union*)
193
194 5) Highway Block Grant – raise and appropriate \$336,185 to be offset by State Highway Grant.
195
196 6) Highway Building Capital Reserve Fund – raise and appropriate \$100,000 to be placed in the
197 fund.
198
199 7) Conservation – re-designate the following wetland systems as ‘prime wetland systems’ per
200 RSA482-A:15 – Harris Brook (22 acres), Mountain Orchard (16 acres), Cranberry Bog (20
201 acres), Dunlop (93 acres), Camp Runnels (29 acres), Upper Golden Brook (72 acres), Lower
202 Golden Brook (79 acres).
203
204 8) Conservation – re-designate the following wetland systems as ‘prime wetland systems’ per
205 RSA 482-A:15 – Sherburne Road open water (10 acres), Little Island Pond (17 acres), Pelham
206 Memorial School (36 acres), St. Patrick’s (18 acres).
207
208 9) Forestry – establish Merriam Farm Town Forest per RSA 31-10:113 (Map 39 Lot 6-181)
209 approximately 46.52 acres
210
211 10) Elderly Exemption – to replace the current exemption with a new elderly exemption based on
212 assessed value and qualified taxpayers.
213

214 The Board then voted – articles were considered on the floor.
215

- 216 1) Operating budget – raise and appropriate \$17,461,162 / Default budget - \$17,229,050
217

MOTION: To vote in favor of the article relating to the operating budget.

VOTE: (4-0-0) The motion carried.
218 -----
219

- 220 2) 10-year lease/purchase (\$630,000) to obtain a new fire apparatus to replace Engine 1 and to
221 raise and appropriate \$73,444 for the first-year payment. There was a consensus in favor of
222 expending from the fund balance. This article was removed.
223 -----
224

- 225 3) To expend \$630,000 from the unassigned Fund Balance to purchase a new fire apparatus to
226 replace Engine 1.
227

MOTION: To vote in favor of the article relating to expending \$630,000 from the unassigned
Fund Balance to purchase fire apparatus to replace Engine 1.

VOTE: (4-0-0) The motion carried.
228 -----
229

BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING/November 5, 2019

- 230 4) Fire union contract (*contract received back from legal; needs to be reviewed by the Fire union*)
231 -----
232

- 233 5) Highway Block Grant – raise and appropriate \$336,185 to be offset by State Highway Grant.
234

MOTION: To vote in favor of accepting \$336,185 for the Highway Block Grant.

VOTE: (4-0-0) The motion carried.
235 -----
236

- 237 6) Highway Building Capital Reserve Fund – raise and appropriate \$100,000 to be placed in the
238 fund.
239

MOTION: To vote in favor of raising and appropriating \$100,000 to be placed in the Highway Building Capital Reserve Fund.

VOTE: (4-0-0) The motion carried.
240 -----
241

- 242 7) Conservation – re-designate the following wetland systems as ‘prime wetland systems’ per
243 RSA482-A:15 – Harris Brook (22 acres), Mountain Orchard (16 acres), Cranberry Bog (20
244 acres), Dunlop (93 acres), Camp Runnels (29 acres), Upper Golden Brook (72 acres), Lower
245 Golden Brook (79 acres).
246

MOTION: To vote in favor of the re-designating the specified wetland systems as ‘prime wetland systems’.

VOTE: (4-0-0) The motion carried.
247 -----
248

- 249 8) Conservation – re-designate the following wetland systems as ‘prime wetland systems’ per
250 RSA 482-A:15 – Sherburne Road open water (10 acres), Little Island Pond (17 acres), Pelham
251 Memorial School (36 acres), St. Patrick’s (18 acres).
252

MOTION: To vote in favor of the re-designating the specified wetland systems as ‘prime wetland systems’.

VOTE: (4-0-0) The motion carried.
253 -----
254

- 255 9) Forestry – establish Merriam Farm Town Forest per RSA 31-10:113 (Map 39 Lot 6-181)
256 approximately 46.52 acres
257

- 10)

MOTION: To vote in favor of establishing the Merriam Farm Town Forest.

VOTE: (4-0-0) The motion carried.
258 -----
259

- 260 11) Elderly Exemption – to replace the current exemption with a new elderly exemption based on
261 assessed value and qualified taxpayers.
262

BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING/November 5, 2019

The Board reviewed an email provided by Mr. McDevitt that included an attachment from Senior Center Director Sara Landry. They spoke about the current and proposed exemption amounts. The decision was made to hold off taking action until Mr. McDevitt was present.

Ms. Forde questioned if there were any citizen petitions coming forward. Mr. McCarthy heard there were some coming, possibly two or three.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR / SELECTMEN REPORTS

Ms. Forde stated during the last Board meeting she offered to assist the Planning Department in its dry weather water sampling for the Environmental Protection Agency MS4 project in hopes to drive down the cost. She stated she would receive practice hours toward her masters in lieu of payment; it would be straight volunteer work. The position was posted and open to accepting volunteer applications; Mr. McCarthy stated there had been no other applicants. Ms. Forde asked to be appointed.

MOTION: (Cote/Viger) To appoint Heather Forde as a dry water sampling field personnel.

VOTE: (4-0-0) The motion carried.

Ms. Forde extended gratitude to the residents of Blueberry Circle and Falcon Drive for participating in the adaptive trick-or-treating. There were approximately 200 children that came through the neighborhood. They had a great turn out. This was the first time for some families to have children trick-or-treat with their siblings. Ms. Forde then reported she received the 'nod' from School Superintendent Bill Furbush to be able to go into the schools and speaking with juniors and seniors at the high school exclusively about the municipal warrant articles.

Mr. Lynde reported about the recent Planning Board meeting and the cases that were discussed.

Mr. Viger complimented the Fire Department on the recent Horribles Parade. He said it was very well attended and the volunteers did a great job.

REQUEST FOR NON-PUBLIC SESSION

MOTION: (Forde/Lynde) Request for a non-public session per RSA 91-A:3,II, a & e (personnel; consideration or negotiation of pending claims or litigation)

VOTE: (4-0-0) The motion carried.

It was noted that when the Board returned, after the non-public session, the Board would not take any other action publicly, except to possibly seal the minutes of the non-public session and to adjourn the meeting. The Board entered into a non-public session at approximately 7:41pm.

MOTION: (Lynde/Cote) To leave non-public session.

VOTE: (4-0-0) The motion carried.

The Board returned to public session at approximately 8:08pm.

MOTION: (Lynde/Cote) To indefinitely seal the non-public meeting minutes.

BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING/November 5, 2019

VOTE: (4-0-0) The motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:08pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Charity A. Landry
Recording Secretary