

Approved Minutes
Town of Brookline Selectboard Meeting
Wednesday, July 15, 2020, 6:30 PM
(videoconference)

Present

Selectboard:

David Jones (Chair)
Gwen Tanza
Bruce Mello
Shelby Brimmer

Town Officers:

Guy Tanza (Town Clerk, videographer)
Mark Bills

Members of the Public:

Ed Scipione
Recorder: Peter Barus

(Meeting transcribed from sound recording)

Call the meeting to order

The meeting was called to order at 6:31PM.

Review changes to agenda if any

Add under New Business, after SLP painting, **Set Municipal Tax Rate**

Add under Old Business, after Tax Collection, **Buildings Update**

Scheduled members of the public

Archie Clark (not present)

Unscheduled members of the public

Mr. Scipione was introduced, a new resident on Ellen Ware Road.

Approve Minutes

Minutes from July 1, 2020 Regular Meeting

Corrections were made.

Mr. Jones moved to approve the Minutes for July 1, 2020 as corrected. Second by Ms. Tanza. The Motion was **Passed** with one abstention.

New Business

Road Project Discussion

It was noted that Mr. Clark would not be attending the meeting. Mr. Bills discussed about 25 trees marked for removal on Hill Road to improve the ditch where there is a ledge issue; some grant work, stone ditch lining on Parker Road; trees and a power line to be moved by GMP, followed by regrading under a Clean Water Act grant. Mr. Jones noted communications with Jeff Nugent indicating that the status of this Better Backroads grant is not clear. Mr. Bills discussed upgrading signage; a runoff from snow melt on Hill Road in the area of the Rogers driveway, which is outside the Town right-of-way, where the brook floods the Town road and erodes under the pavement, consultation with the property owner regarding improved drainage along the roadside with heavier stone; roadside work to be done near Johnny Swing's shop for better mowing access; other projects to improve snow plow access; discussed widening the road on Whitney Hill, where trees have already been cut by the power company, using hydraulic hammer on an excavator to remove some ledge and improve drainage. A culvert that stays flooded in Spring after Irene had been discussed with an engineer from ANR last year, who will return and show what is wanted, a one-day project in the range of \$1,200. Mr. Bills discussed seven to eight culverts to be improved, replacing linings, cleaning silt, correcting ditches; and the process of stone and gravel application; that Whitney Hill is completed but for about 300 feet, applying fresh gravel as and where needed for erosion and dust; and noted several additional trees for removal. There was discussion of crack sealing and costs; that it helps to save the roads; that planning ahead is prudent. There was consensus that Mr. Bills should continue to assess the need and make plans. Mr. Bills discussed road maintenance, culvert replacement, maintaining roads to state standards, upgrading signs. There was discussion of mowing, minor problems with delivery of the rental tractor; poison parsnip reduced this year, probably due to timely mowing the previous year; and discussions with landowner and Mr. Clark regarding about 100 feet of clogged drainage at the bottom of Whitney Hill, and the possibility of obtaining a machine to clear the blockage. A hole at the recycle area can be addressed now that the mowing is done.

Covid-19 Survey Responses

Ms. Brimmer discussed six to eight responses, some follow-up; concerns appeared to be about on a par with the region; there had been helpful suggestions (a "Happiness Bus") and a question about access to the Town Offices, as to policy. Mr. Tanza noted that the Governor has extended the emergency to August 16, and the Office is not open to the public; title searches are allowed one at a time, with precautions. This will be in place until further notice from the Governor. There are communications daily, and nothing that can't be handled by phone or email. It was suggested that an email broadcast be done to make the situation clear. Mr. Tanza noted that notices are currently posted on the door, the website, the bulletin boards in Town, the Clerk's, Listers' and Treasurers' offices. There was discussion. It was

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noted that many people are elderly and otherwise exceptionally vulnerable; that some openings have been premature; and that the policy will remain in place until the emergency is over; that there is very little necessity to enter the building when most functions are being performed online.

SLP Exterior Painting

Mr. Jones explained that Mr. Mello had consulted with the maintenance person at SLP, and that person has agreed to do external painting in stages, vetted at each step by Mr. Mello, at a cost of \$3,000 to \$5,000. The question of whether to produce a RFP, whether the expenditure is within the Town Purchase Policy, etc., would be the focus of this discussion. Mr. Jones had reviewed the policy and found the Town is obligated to solicit two and preferably three competitive bids. The relevant parts of the policy were read aloud. There was discussion; that several vendors could be offered the work without an RFP, but that two or more estimates should be sought.

Mr. Mello will write up the details as discussed with the maintenance person, and named three other vendors to whom this work can be offered, and discussed other details of the work, some involving the rental of a lift for safety.

There was discussion of the additional scope of work needed, and the feasibility of getting the whole job done for an amount under the Purchase Policy limit. Mr. Mello will work up the offering.

There was discussion of insurance coverage; reviewing bids in August.

Set Municipal Tax Rate

Mr. Jones noted that there is no Education Tax Rate, but that the Tax Rate must be set.

Mr. Jones moved that the Municipal Tax Rate for FY 20201 be set at 0.4012. Second by Ms. Tanza.

There was discussion. Mr. Tanza explained that the approved budget, the separate school expense Articles are divided by the Grand List to arrive at the Tax Rate; that the Town has an approximate valuation of \$73,000,000. Of this three million dollars is allocated for land use, leaving about seventy million for this calculation, broken down to show recycling, highways and operation of the Town buildings.

All in Favor.

The Municipal Tax Rate was set at 0.4012.

Old Business

Tax collection update

Mr. Tanza reported delinquent taxes stabilized and a two month waiver had been provided; that the regular process of sending certified notes out to the remaining delinquent taxpayers that the town would take whatever action necessary to collect the tax.

Buildings Update

Mr. Mello reported meeting with Nancy Burke and Heather Collins regarding stability of the water system; that Ms. Collins had questioned a check valve in the sprinkler system in the basement; and that the building must be inspected on a certain schedule (not yet ascertained); and that further instructions have not been forthcoming. Mr. Mello discussed the window project, six yet to be finished, and other details.

Summary / Update / Reports

Guy Tanza – Town Clerk Report

Mr. Tanza noted that there were 157 requests for absentee ballots for the August Primary; no complaints from title searches; town is in good shape.

Highways & Roads

Mark Bills – Road Supervisor

Mr. Bills noted two calls regarding RFP; communication with Newfane regarding speed limit road painting and costs, and the good references for the vendor involved; that there is more traffic this year; that he had witnessed a race in the evening, and got a plate number.

SLP follow-up

Mr. Mello suggested that he look at the Round School House (following up on the powder-post beetle treatments) and BMH; and discussed possible grants to finish the BMH steeple.

Mr. Mello noted that there is \$26,672.00 (\$1,000 dedicated for the kitchen) in BMH, and 14,673.00 (not including the Capital Improvement fund of \$4,300.00) in the School Fund.

Mr. Mello reported spending \$300.00 on LED lights for the SLP building, expecting reimbursement from SLP.

Communications

Email

- Census indicates slight increase over 2010
- Building Communities Grants deadline September 15

Regular Mail (none)

Pay Orders

Payroll

Mr. Jones noted that Payroll Warrant was signed last Wednesday. Members were polled as to having reviewed the Payroll Warrant, and had no questions.

Mr. Jones moved to approve Payroll Warrant 2020-54 dated July 8, 2020, in the amount of \$1,319.53. Second by Mr. Mello. **All in Favor.**

Accounts Payable

Members were polled as to having reviewed the Payroll Warrant. Ms. Brimmer asked about the plowing exchange with Putney. Mr. Tanza explained that property taxes are forgiven in exchange for plowing. No further questions.

Mr. Jones moved to approve Accounts Payable Warrant 2020-55 dated July 14, 2020, in the amount of \$10,259.79. Second by Ms. Brimmer. **All in Favor.**

Set agenda for the next meeting – Wednesday August 5, 2020

- Opening Paving and Milling Bids
- SLP Exterior Painting

Adjournment

Mr. Jones moved to Adjourn. Second by Mr. Mello. All in Favor.
The meeting was Adjourned at 7:50PM.

Respectfully submitted, Peter Barus, Recorder, July 16, 2020