

Draft Minutes
Town of Brookline Selectboard
Wednesday, September 4, 2019, 6:30 PM

Actions:

- Ms. Maggio was appointed to the Meetinghouse Committee.

Present:

Selectboard: David Jones (Chair), Gwen Tanza, Joseph Dutton, Bruce Mello, Shelby Brimmer
Members of the Public: Archie Clark, Mark Bills, Guy Tanza (Town Clerk, Videographer), Peter Barus (Recorder)

Call the meeting to order

The meeting was called to order at 6:32 PM.

Review changes to agenda if any

BMH Grant application not being pursued this year; Dan Towler will not appear.

Move road equipment just after minutes approval.

Scheduled members of the public

Dan Towler (canceled)

Unscheduled members of the public

Approve Minutes

Minutes from August 21, 2019 Regular Meeting

Mr Jones moved to approve the minutes for August 21, 2019. Second by Mr. Mello. **All in Favor.**

Road Equipment – vote(s) on recommendations from advisory committee

There was discussion; that the matter should be considered for a vote; that the matter should be brought before Town Meeting. Mr. Clark and Mr. Bills were welcomed; Mr. Dutton noted that a stipulation had been that the Committee members would be present to voice their opinions in more detail; and encouraged the other members of the Selectboard to attend the next Committee meeting.

Mr. Jones invited Mr. Clark and Mr. Bills to speak. Mr. Clark expressed a concern that procedures be followed, the purchase be put out for bids; that many avenues should be explored, and that the result would save money and be beneficial to the Town.

Mr. Mello noted that he had watched a video in which it was pointed out that the excavator is no longer manufactured, and that other dealers sources should be consulted; Mr. Clark noted that Terex is in business but no longer making that piece of equipment. Mr. Mello asked whether the seller had given assurances about replacement parts; Mr. Tanza noted that such assurances had been give repeatedly, and that Able is an old company with a good reputation.

Mr. Jones clarified that the Selectboard will task the Committee with further development of sources. There was discussion: that the grader (John Deere) is still made and parts are available for it. Mr. Jones asked whether there was information not reflected in the summary documents (there was not); Mr. Bills observed that the Committee is in agreement that a piece of machinery would benefit the town greatly, and that the Town should approve any purchase.

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There was discussion of maintenance cost estimates; that a specific number was not reliable, but it probably would not exceed what is done with the grader.

Mr. Jones invited other questions about the Committee.

Mr. Dutton noted that the Committee's report is relatively un-opinionated, and contains different scenarios; that his personal opinion was that the decision could have gone either way; that it would help with the roads, but there was doubt as to savings. There was discussion; that there are residents whose educated opinions are that the Town should not own such equipment. Mr. Dutton expressed faith that the purchase would be managed properly if done, and could save the Town a good deal of money, and that he supported purchase. Mr. Bills observed that it would be of great help in getting work done.

Mr. Dutton moved that the Selectboard vote to issue a RFP regarding purchase of equipment for the Town.

In discussion, Mr. Dutton observed that when the committee was formed, there was not consensus on purchasing the equipment; that now there is not consensus on buying any equipment.

Mr. Tanza noted that the previous Selectboard had unanimously voted to purchase the equipment, and put an article before the Town Meeting. He noted that he had just cleaned up the Town Yard after several tons of rubble were hauled away; that prices for mowing and other work are escalating; that there is a budget of \$39,000.00 of which half could be saved if the Town owned its own equipment; that the Selectboard is responsible for the safe maintenance of the Town roads; that the Selectboard should vote on whether to purchase equipment, and then determine what equipment to buy.

Ms. Brimmer observed that there is consensus that some equipment should be purchased, but there has been only one piece of equipment considered.

Mr. Jones noted no second to the Motion.

Mr. Jones moved that the Selectboard supports purchase of a piece of road equipment. Second by Mr. Mello.

There was discussion: that the next step would be to develop specifications for the equipment needed.

The Motion Passed unanimously.

Mr. Jones raised the question of calling a Special Town Meeting. Mr. Mello suggested that the best course would be to develop consensus with residents and hold a vote at the next regular Town Meeting; that the vote might then be clear decision.

Mr. Dutton moved that the Town will not buy a piece of road equipment without holding a vote at Town Meeting.

There was discussion; that the town has the right and duty to purchase equipment up to \$250,000.00 and that therefore this Motion could be against statute.

Mr. Mello moved that the Selectboard agree that equipment purchase information be taken to the Town Meeting as an Article.

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It was noted that the Selectboard's legal right and duty to make such a purchase would not be affected; that it would be a non-binding vote.

There was discussion of representative vs direct democracy; Mr. Dutton suggested that it would be inappropriate for the elected body to give a direct legislative power to the citizens.

It was suggested that the town be asked in March for a decision on equipment purchase; that this would be the earliest opportunity for a vote; and that there would be time for the Committee to return a recommendation for a specific item of equipment.

There was consensus that equipment is needed, and the Committee will continue research. And that the Town should be consulted at Town Meeting despite the Selectboard's right and duty to exercise its discretion.

New Business

Meetinghouse Municipal Planning Grant Application (cancelled)

Appoint Dot Maggio to Meetinghouse Committee

Mr. Mello nominated Ms. Maggio to the Meetinghouse Committee.

Mr Jones noted that Ms. Maggio would be the seventh member of the Meetinghouse Committee.

All in Favor.

Town Treasurer

Mr. Jones explained that Ms. Nystrom had met with Ms. Wiswall and Mr. Jones to inform them that she had not realized the level of expertise with accounting and computers that the position required, and had recommended that Ms. Wiswall assume the position, and appoint her as Assistant Treasurer; and that, at Mr. Tanza's suggestion, the Selectboard accept the resignation, and post notice of the open position, and proceed with the hiring process; that the work will continue; and that all parties are satisfied with that arrangement.

Mr. Tanza suggested that Ms. Wiswall could be appointed Acting Treasurer, and would then have the power to appoint Ms. Nystrom as her assistant for the interim.

Mr. Jones moved to accept the resignation of Dani Nystrom as Town Treasurer. Second by Mr. Dutton. **All in Favor.**

Mr. Jones moved to appoint Sara Wiswall as Acting Treasurer, pending further interest when the position is posted. Second by Mr. Mello. **All in Favor.**

The position will be posted by September 30th, 2019.

It was noted that Ms. Wiswall will begin the process of compiling the data for building the budget.

Old Business

Traffic Safety Discussion

Mr. Jones explained that there had been interest expressed by a resident in monitoring license plates for the State Police. There was discussion: that the small cemetery behind Cynthia and Johnny's shop entrance had been considered, and other locations; that there are speeding problems and other traffic safety hazards; that solar radar speed signs have been installed in other towns; there had been little enthusiasm, considering costs and lack of portability; that there had

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been contracts with the State Police for an hour a week of patrol presence; that although there is no longer a contract, it may be possible to have an officer on location from time to time.

There was discussion; of state studies, and anecdotal evidence that the signs make a difference; that the Sheriff's office may have more officers available; and that there might be a police trailer that can collect data as well as display the driver's actual speed; that there is probably a fee, and that this could provide for an educated choice; that there is traffic monitoring available that the Town had used previously.

Mr. Jones will consult with Chris Campani and WRC about speed tracking equipment and data collection; and invited further comment.

Mr. Dutton suggested farm equipment warning signs; Mr. Bills noted a "Caution" sign and a "Tractor" sign. The river side was suggested as a location; the posts are already installed; Ms. Brimmer observed that road painting has also been used to draw attention to the road near a hazardous location.

Mr. Dutton will inquire with the Sheriff's department and the State Police as to availability and costs.

Town Building Updates

Mr. Mello discussed the BMH; that the back yard had been dug up, to check the septic system; changes made; he noted that any change to that building or facilities needs approval of the Selectboard. It was suggested to ask what work is being done.

Mr. Jones will consult Mr. Bourne, noting that it may be part of Planning Grant research.

Mr. Mello inquired as to communication from the state about the water system; Mr. Jones noted that he had called and emailed without response.

Mr. Mello noted that 30 years ago last week, students had moved into the school building; he discussed repairs to doors and trim; that by Fall should be ready for painting; he had called Jeffers about servicing the boiler. He discussed a \$22,000.00 quote for painting the building, except for the windows, from Momaney, and noted that he had consulted with others; one vendor will come next week to inspect the site; Mr. Mello will bring bids to the next meeting; and noted that there is about \$6,400.00 on hand, anticipating \$9,000.00 by November 1st.

Summary / Update / Reports

Guy Tanza – Town Clerk Report

Mr. Tanza reported a school vote by Australian Ballot, Tuesday; he urged everyone to vote and noted that the Warning and sample ballot are posted online; Town business is going well, in compliance with new legislation; 23 books have been scanned, 12,000 pages; dog registrations are nearly complete, one remaining unlicensed; delinquent taxes down to about \$2,200.00; the Town will not have to borrow.

Highways & Roads

Guy Tanza – Road Commissioner Report

Mr. Tanza reported that the Town Yard has been cleaned up, 350 yards of fill, and asphalt "crumbles" removed; weed-whacked; preparing for the new shed construction before the frost; the Town may rent a payload; he had communicated with Cargill Salt, raised the bid to 160T.,

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noting that the Town is not locked into Cargill, but salt is set aside for the Town; he has inspected the roads, and asked that some material be applied at the dumpsters for Winter.

Mark Bills – Road Supervisor

Mr. Bills reported general maintenance, scraping and fresh gravel; received signs and posts which he has installed, ready to bolt the signs up; there is no plan before Winter to work on the Salt Shed; there was discussion. Mr. Bills has packed dirt around the shed; he observed that there might have been some use for materials at the Town Yard that were removed. Mr. Clark asked if there would be a sand RFP; the plowing had been bid, but the sand needs to be put out to bid.

Communications

Email

- Communication with Ms. Maggio regarding the health complaint; there has been further communication; she has mailed a letter to the property owner reminding that the Town health order is still in effect; it seems likely that the land owner has been arrested for a parole violation.

Regular Mail

- VLCT newsletter

Pay Orders

Accounts Payable

There was a note about the School District Tax payments; that the state has not yet provided the amount due; the same payment as was remitted last year will be applied this year.

Mr. Jones moved to approve Payroll Warrant #2020-10 dated August 30th, 2109, in the amount of: \$1,233.80. Second by Mr. Mello. All in Favor.

Payroll

Mr. Jones moved to approve Accounts Payable Warrant #2020-09 dated September 4, 2019, in the amount of: \$256,663.82. Second by Ms. Brimmer. All in Favor.

Set agenda for the next meeting – Wednesday September 18, 2019

Mr. Jones will not be present (vacation).

The Road Commissioner and Foreman will meet on the 11th

- Road Equipment Purchase Committee update

Adjournment

Mr. Mello moved to Adjourn. Second by Mr. Dutton. All in Favor.

The meeting was Adjourned at 8:27 PM.

Respectfully submitted, Peter Barus, Recording Clerk, September 7th, 2019