

TOWN OF DANBURY - Board of Selectmen

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday , July 19, 2017 6:00 pm

Members Present: Lyn England, Chair
James Phelps
Jessica Hatch
Administrative Assistant Karen Padgett

Appointments Melissa Pierce, Comcast
Tricia Taylor, Tax Collector

Checks/Applications/Signatures

- **Payroll and Accounts Payable** were signed. Jim questioned a payment to the Merrimack County Advocacy Group. This appropriation was recommended by the Budget Committee, not by the Board of Selectmen. After discussion, since the organization was specifically listed in the budget, it was decided to pay it.
- June bank reconciliations were signed.
- **Minutes** for 7/5 were reviewed. Jim made the motion to approve the minutes as written, seconded by Jessica. Motion carried.
- **Building Permits**
 - 21-2017B Evangelista/Gustafson - Hemlock Lane 406-147** for a 12' X 12' shed. Jim made a motion to approve and sign the building permit, seconded by Lyn. Motion passed.
 - 22-2017B Deuink - 234 Eastern District Rd 410-090** Roof top solar array on the barn. Jim made a motion to approve and sign the building permit, seconded by Jessica. Motion passed.
 - 23-2017B Dauphinais - 26 Aspen Lane 406-095** for a 24' X 24' addition to the existing building. Jim made a motion to approve and sign the building permit, seconded by Lyn. Motion passed.

Bruce Armstrong presented a Fire Department purchase order for airpac servicing in the amount of \$2490. Lyn made a motion to approve the purchase order, seconded by Jim. Motion carried and the Chair signed the purchase order.

Highway Department

The work in the swamp area on Ragged Mt Rd is complete for now. The work went well. 4 culverts were installed at water level. The fabric was laid. It was graveled, rolled, graded, crushed gravel was added. The road was raised 16" - 18".

Old Business:

- The former owner of 412-019 has signed the payment agreement prepared by town attorney, Barton Mayer. In addition to the monthly payment, she agreed to pay the tax collector \$50 in a separate check for current taxes owed. The Selectmen signed the deed, also prepared by the town attorney, which will convey the property back to the former owner and be recorded at the Merrimack County Registry of Deeds, along with the payment agreement.
- Jessica spoke with the owner of 88 High Street. He granted permission for demolition contractors to go onto the property in order to quote the cost for the removal of debris. Karen will contact Hammond again to obtain a quote.
- The Board of Selectmen discussed the community forum regarding the Danbury Community Center. They would like to hold it some time in August. A copy of the lease agreement cannot be found showing exactly when the lease between the Town of Danbury and the Danbury Workshop expires. Karen will continue to look in the attic boxes for the signed lease agreement. A tentative date of August 30 was set for a public forum to discuss the needs of the community as a whole vis a vis the Community Center. Specific invitations to community leaders (Elementary school, TTCC, Police, Grange, churches, etc.) will need to be sent and an agenda needs to be developed. Do the townspeople want to continue to lease the building to the Danbury Workshop to use as a community center or would the interest of the town be better served using the building for another purpose? The forum will be discussed again at the next meeting.

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- The American Legion Hall on North Road is not being used by the American Legion. The local organization is inactive. Power is disconnected, no meetings are held and the proper state paper work has not been submitted in several years for the building/land to be exempt from taxation. According to Diane Frechette, of the NH Department of Revenue, if the building is no longer being used as an American Legion, the exemption from taxation can be removed.
Jim will speak with Mike Barnett to see if he has more information about the organization.

New Business

- NH SB 38 provides additional funds for municipal road work from the State of New Hampshire. This is unanticipated revenue and according to NH Municipal should be about 85% of our annual highway block grant. That amount is approximately \$114,750. This money must be used for new projects not already budgeted for. A public hearing needs to be held per RSA 31:95-b. The date of the public hearing was set for August 2 at 6pm. An ad will be placed in the Concord Monitor at least 7 days in advance. Jim asked if we should have the Road Agent begin ditching and installing culverts on Ragged Mt Rd from Davis Rd to New Canada in anticipation of receiving these funds. Lyn would like to have Alan come in to the next meeting and talk to the whole board about other potential projects for this new money. Jim feels that the paving price will be less because of the increase in area being paved.
- Franklin Savings Bank submitted a proposal for town operating funds to be deposited in their bank. There is the potential for the town to earn more interest on our money. They offer a "sweep" account that maintains a daily balance of \$100,000 in the operating account and the excess is put in a high interest earning account. They could also provide a scanner, for remote deposit of checks. The Selectmen are in favor of this, and would like to meet with the town treasurer to discuss this. Karen will ask Twila to attend the next meeting of the Board.
- Purchase order policy was discussed. The policy on record is from 2012, but Lyn and Jim feel that an amendment was made to that policy. Karen will continue to look for the updated policy.
- Jessica reported that Robin Overlock is obtaining and paying for a Boston Post cane from someone in southern NH. The cane is given to the oldest resident in town. There is supposed to be a plaque in the town hall showing who has had the cane in the past and who currently holds it. The board agreed that they could have a plaque made. Ms. Overlock also brought up the subject of the playground at Independence Park. She feels more equipment is needed and wondered about raising funds for new playground equipment. Jessica suggested she contact the Recreation Committee to discuss this. The board was in agreement that the town land across from the community center would be a great location for a playground. With a more central and visible location, it's possible that the playground equipment and the park area would not be vandalized like it is at Independence Park.
- Mike Sharp of Brian and Mike's Timber Harvesting sent an email indicating that they would like to gift some land along NH Route 104 to the Town of Danbury. Jim made a motion to accept the gift of land(410-058 and 410-072) from Brian and Mike's Timber Harvesting, seconded by Jessica. Motion carried.
- Jessica has received some complaints about Bohonon, Taylor, top of Waukeena, Dean Rd, Littlefield Rd, and the back end of North Rd. Jim will tell the road agent on Thursday about the complaints.
- Paul Tierney stopped in and asked that the road agent come look at the way the water and sand from the roadway are flowing onto his property at 35 Davis Road.

At 7:40 Jim made a motion to go into non public session per RSA 91-A:3, II (c) *Matters which, if discussed in public, would likely affect adversely the reputation of any person, other than a member of the public body itself, unless such person requests an open meeting. This exemption shall extend to any application for assistance or tax abatement or waiver of a fee, fine, or other levy, if based on inability to pay or poverty of the applicant.* Motion was seconded by Jessica. Lyn - yes, Jim - yes, Jessica - yes. Motion carried.

At 7:50 Lyn made a motion to come out of non public session, seconded by Jim. Motion passed. A vote was taken to seal the minutes of non public session. Motion passed unanimously.

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AA

- Karen presented data from the PA 28 property inventory form from 2017. There was a 68% return rate of the form and of those returned only 4% had changes to the property. Very little information was obtained from the forms to justify the time and expense of distributing, recording and filing the forms. Also, with the cyclical property revaluation in progress, many properties will be looked at every year by the assessors. Lyn made a motion to discontinue using the PA 28 property inventory form, seconded by Jim. Motion carried.

FYI

- letter sent to Paul Brown
- DRA USPAP report for 2016 statistical update
- NH DES notification - well release for Dauphinais 406-093 Aspen Lane
- Quarterly 941 tax form
- Thank you note was received from South Danbury Church for - Linda Wilson
- Foreclosure notice

Visitors

Melissa Pierce - Comcast

The town's franchise contract with Comcast is up for renewal in November 2017. It is a 10 year contract. She has met in most recently with the Broadband Committee. She stated that currently Comcast has 18 miles of coaxial plant in the town and 165 video customers. To build out the rest of the town would add an additional 40 miles. There are currently no plans for Comcast to expand in town. There is potential for public/private partnerships.

Jim asked how the town could get broadband to more people.

MS. Pierce stated that the unserved areas are extremely low density which equals a high cost for each home passed. Per the current contract, 20 homes are needed per mile for Comcast to be willing to expand to an area. This is actually lower than the national average. The per mile construction cost is approximately \$32,000 per mile.

Jim asked what would happen if the Town and Comcast did not come to an agreement on the contract renewal. Ms. Pierce stated that Comcast would continue to offer the existing service. The franchise contract is for television cable only. Broadband and phone are also delivered thru the same lines.

If the Town took the initiative to raise some funds, Comcast would typically contribute \$1400 for each home passed. At that point, Ms. Pierce showed the Selectboard the Comcast construction map. The estimated cost for building out an additional 16 miles of cable is \$512,000. By calculating the number of houses passed, Comcast would contribute \$280,000 of the total. Danbury would have to fund \$232,000.

In order to present something to the voters proposing a a bond for broadband, the board asked Ms. Pierce to come up with exact construction costs for the 4 areas of interest and a confirmation of the amount Comcast would contribute for houses passed.

The franchise in a non-exclusive franchise, meaning that if another provider were willing, the town could allow them to expand into Danbury.

Different aspects of the renewal contract were discussed, including the franchise fee. Currently the Town of Danbury gets a 2% franchise fee. This fee applies to the video service and is added to a customer's bill.

Lyn brought up additional aspects of the contract for discussion, per the recommendation of the town attorney, Barton Mayer. Ms. Pierce will convey the items discussed to her team and get back to the Selectboard.

Tricia Taylor

The tax collector provided a list of properties that are eligible for tax deeding this year and when asked, stated that the deeding process can begin 2 years and a day from the date of the oldest lien. Property owners who still owe 2014 taxes are on the deeding list. She will start the process on July 20.

At 8:55 Jim made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Jessica. Motion carried and meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted Karen Padgett, Administrative Assistant