

SELECT BOARD MINUTES – October 6, 2010

Present: Dave DeHerdt, Doug Field, Norm Russell

Minutes: A motion was made, seconded, and voted to accept open meeting minutes of September, ~~15~~, 22, and 29 as written

Appointments:

Pole Hearing: Present: Al Bissett representing Verizon and WMECO

The purpose of this hearing was to request approval for the installation of a second pole on Bullitt Road near the pole approved at the August 11th Board meeting. Bissett said this pole should have been included in the earlier request. After a brief discussion, for which no abutters were present, a motion was made, seconded, and voted to approve request # 9ADLEY-2 for siting a new pole on Bullitt Road. (Pole T.13 ¼ E 18 N)

Belding Memorial Park: Present: Park Commissioners - Nina Coler, Pat Thayer

The Park Commission has reviewed the changes to the agreement proposed by the Select Board at its September 15th meeting.

The Commission would add one item # 1.8 to specify that \$3,000 of any remaining funds, once the project is completed, remain with the Commission as funding for the first year of the maintenance fund. Coler said this would show the AG that the Town intended to continue to maintain the park. The Board thought this should be an item which would the Town should have a say in. DeHerdt said he thought it would be approved.

She also mentioned that a few things, such as picnic tables had been left off the list and some funds would be used for their purchase.

The final draft will be submitted to Town Counsel for review before a final plan is prepared for signing.

Police Department: Present: Chief Cotton, Diane Wilder

Chief Cotton introduced Wilder, recommending her for appointment to the SB. Wilder has been a dispatcher at Shelburne Control for 16 years; she was sponsored by Ashfield to go to the Police Academy and has been working part-time in Charlemont for three years. She recently began working one shift a week in Whately. She would like to do some day-time work. She recently has become involved with the high-risk domestic task force.

When asked how she feels about police work, she said an officer can't be "big and tough" And that it's important to know people. When asked why she would want to work in Ashfield, she replied that she knows the history of the department. Not a lot of officers survive Ashfield. However, Chief Cotton has put down some good basics and she sees the department as becoming a better place to work. Regarding ethics, Wilder said people

look up to police officers. As a police officer she has to hold herself to high standards. She says police have to stay out of town politics.

A motion was made, seconded, and voted to appoint Diane Wilder to the Ashfield Police Department as a police officer, subject to a six month probationary period.

Police Search Committee: Present: Beverly LaBelle, Suzanne Corbett

The committee has been reviewing applications and is now ready to send packets requesting additional information to applicants. They are concerned about funding to do thorough background checks on a limited number of applicants; they weren't sure whether the number would be 10 or fewer. Chief Cotton could do some background checking. But the committee felt an evaluation by an impartial person (from outside the area) should to be done. Would the Board be satisfied with a reference check by phone or prefer an in-person check by paying an actual visit to the town where the candidate (s) resides? They were clear that the final candidate should have a complete check including: medical, psychological, and vision evaluation.

The Board responded that the members were in the dark, as to what the committee was actually asking. Before they could make any decisions additional information, such as the cost to do the various background evaluations suggested and how many persons would be subject to this process, would need to be known.

Corbett had a concern about an article that appeared in the *Ashfield News* about a member of the committee who felt some other members had a conflict of interest because they knew some of the applicants. She wanted to know who had written to the Board and what steps the Board had taken. The Board's response that it would expect that whoever had a conflict would recuse him/herself.

Special Town Meeting: The Accountant has been consulted about a possible need to address any financial issues at a STM. She reports there is no need to do that until January. At this point the free cash amount has not been certified. The article requested by Wired West could wait until January. The Board is looking at the \$40,000 which the Town pays the FRCOG for services, wondering if some of these services could be done less expensively by the Town.

Cola increase for retired employees; Information has been received from the Franklin County Retirement Board about a change in the base amount used to calculate cost of living increases. Field will attend a meeting on October 14th to learn more about this.

Access to town hall for posting meetings: To aid in compliance with the new Open Meeting Law, there is a need for committees and boards to have access to the building to get the key to unlock the message board. Someone suggested that if keys to the message board were available, persons would not need to get into Town Hall. This will be considered.

Wind Siting Advisory Board: Two persons have expressed an interest in being on this committee. Duncan Colter (an engineer and on BOH) and Jack Adams

NEW BUSINESS

Fall Festival: Gray's Sugarhouse has requested access to the back furnace room via town offices to keep the raise the dough for its popular fried dough. Gray's has been doing this for many years without a problem. This year the fry-a-lator will have to be located outside, due to changes in regulations.

Community Development Strategy: A motion was made, seconded, and voted to accept the revised Community Development Plan prepared at a public hearing held earlier in the evening. (October 6, 2010 @ 6:45 PM)

Liaison Reports:

Fire Department – The trucks passed inspection.

Police Department – Some new lights were installed in the police station. There are still some computer issues. Need to get a proposal for upgrading. Also need to consider separate back-up system for police department.

Highway Department - Pichette will be out for a few days due to colon surgery.
The department is working in the park.

Emergency Management – Three fire extinguishers in Town Hall have to be replaced.
The cost will be \$250.00. Temporary ones are in use until the new ones arrive.

Town Office - The candidate for Assistant Administrator withdrew. The issue is in respect to the amount of time and money for the responsibilities assumed.
It may be necessary to reorganize the current staff meet the need.

Town Hall – Wayne Gardner reported that the rail for the ramp on the north side of the building has been fixed.

Mail:

Halloween – A letter has been received from Rona Leventhal, a story teller, with a proposal to provide some Halloween storytelling in lieu of the usual costume judging and haunted house that is usually part of Halloween festivities.

Town Hall alarm – A note from the Police chief advises that the alarm has been reset.

Vocational Students – Information has been received from Judy Willis at the superintendent's office regarding students attending vocational schools. The Board would like a further breakdown to show transportation costs.

Consent/release form for firefighters – A new consent/release form will now be used for firefighters who have not reached the age of majority.

Motion to adjourn the open meeting and enter into executive session to discuss negotiation with non-union personnel and on-going litigation, was seconded and so voted in a roll call vote. The time was 9:00 pm. DeHerdt announced the Board would not reconvene in open session.

Respectfully submitted,

Priscilla Phelps