



TOWN OF BLANDFORD
Board of Selectmen Minutes
December 19, 2016

Attendance: Adam Dolby; Andy Montanaro; William Levakis

The Clerk called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

Department Reports – Finance (Treasurer, Accountant, Tax Collector)

- A 'soft closing' of the 2016 financial books for the town has been completed. The final closing will be at the discretion of the State after their review. The variances have been brought down to zero. The next step is to submit information to the State. The Schedule A is being prepared. The Finance departments will meet on Mondays throughout January to work on closing the books for July through December of FY17.

RECONCILING

The tax bills have been printed and will be mailed after Christmas. The tax bills must be mailed by December 31; payment is due by February 1. The first two tax bills are always estimated, with adjustments being made on the third and fourth bills. Tax bills may be paid online from a link on the Town of Blandford website. The tax collector's office is now utilizing UniBank's real time bill payment system, which allows for automatic calculating of interest when payments are made after the due date. This service will streamline not only the collection of property tax bills, but also personal property and excise taxes, beginning this quarter, and water, beginning next quarter.

Right of First Refusal: 41 Woronoco Road. This property is for sale and has received a bona fide offer. This is a Chapter 61 enrolled property, which remains in an undeveloped state and is managed under a forest management plan approved by the state. The town has a right of first refusal on purchase of the property should the landowner put the land up for sale while it is enrolled in the program. The town has opted not to purchase the property.

Old Business

- Hiring Policy – Several comments and suggestions have been received on the policy. The Selectmen agreed to table review of the policy until updates have been made.
- Gym Policy – Several comments and suggestions have been received on the policy. The Selectmen agreed to table review of the policy until updates can be made.
- Watson Park – A. Montanaro presented the specifications for replacement of the flower beds around and on each side of the gazebo. The proposed plantings are based on recommendations made by the master gardener who prepared the quote. The quote received was for approximately \$3,300, which includes an estimate for labor. The plants will be low maintenance but will require some care. The

town will need to find someone to fill that role. Labor will also be needed to prepare the beds for the new plantings.

- Re-vote Board Positions – A. Montanaro proposed taking over as Chair of the Board of Selectmen. B. Levakis pointed out that we are halfway through the year and will be voting in May. His recommendation was that we maintain the status quo until after elections. A. Montanaro will accept that.

MOTION:

To keep Adams Dolby as Chair of the Board of Selectmen, by B. Levakis

2nd: A. Dolby

Vote: All in favor

New Business

- Minutes -

MOTION:

To approve the minutes of the Board of Selectmen meeting on December 5, 2016

by A. Montanaro

2nd: A. Dolby

Vote: All in favor

- 2016 Hazard Mitigation Plan Adoption – FEMA has approved the town's Hazard Mitigation Plan, which allows us to replace like for like and make needed improvements in the event of a disaster.

MOTION:

To adopt the 2016 Hazard Mitigation Plan approved by FEMA, by A. Dolby

2nd: A. Montanaro

Vote: All in favor

- January 16, Martin Luther King Day – This is a federal holiday. The BOS will hold their meeting the following day on January 17, 2017.
- Dates for Warrant, Annual Town Meeting and Election – Reports are requested to be in the Town Clerk's office by March 15, 2017. Finance Committee recommendations, warrants and the final budget must be submitted to the Town Clerk by April 12.

March 6 Caucus

March 15 All departmental/commission/board reports due to town clerk to be included in annual town report

April 12 Completed budget and warrant, with recommendations by Selectmen and Finance Committee with approved review by Town submitted to Town Clerk, for inclusion in the annual town report.

April 24 Mini town meeting/information meeting for Selectmen and Finance Committee to go through warrant and budget for the ATM

May 1 Annual town meeting

May 13 Annual town election

A request was made to reverse the May 1 and May 13 dates, which is how it was done ten or fifteen years ago. The dates were changed to allow the person who drafted the budget to represent it at town meeting. This will require a by-law change and need to be voted at town meeting by town warrant.

- School Choice Week Proclamation – The town received a request from National school Choice Week to proclaim January 22-28, 2017 as School Choice Week. The matter will be deferred to the School Committee.
- Beech Hill Road – A resident called to report that the road had been heavily salted while the road was dry and that wells in the area were already contaminated. The concern was the large amount of salt used. B. Levakis noted that salt is put down prior to an ice event. The Highway Department has had recent new hire will be notified in order to provide proper training.
- Gym Kitchen – The kitchen in the gym has been outfitted with a new grill that fits over the burners and accessories. Due to the portable nature of these items, they will be kept in a locked area and taken out when needed.

Citizen's Forum

No discussion

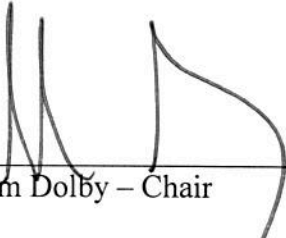
Meeting was adjourned at 8:17 p.m. to Executive Session with a Roll Call Vote

A. Dolby – Yes

A. Montanaro - Yes

B. Levakis – Yes

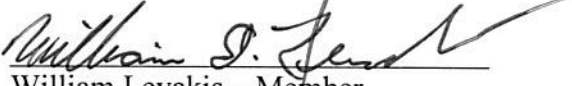
Submitted by: Sue Streeter, Selectmen Secretary



Adam Dolby – Chair



Andrew Montanaro - Clerk



William Levakis – Member