



TOWN OF BLANDFORD
Board of Selectmen Minutes
February 6, 2017

1. OPEN SESSION - 7:00 pm
Present were Adam Dolby, Andy Montanaro, and William Levakis.
2. EXECUTIVE SESSION: Pursuant to G.L. c. 30A, sec. 21(a)(1) - To discuss the reputation, character, physical condition or mental health, rather than professional competence, of an individual, or to discuss the discipline or dismissal of, or complaints or charges brought against, a public officer, employee, staff member or individual. CANCELLED
3. EXAMINATION OF RECORDS OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS
 - a. Minutes of the January 30, 2017 meeting
MOTION: A. Montanaro made a motion to approve the minutes of the Board of Selectmen meeting from January 30, 2017
A. Dolby seconded the motion.
The motion was passed unanimously.
4. TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S UPDATE
 - a. Internet and Broadband update - Peter Langmore introduced WiredWest's Chair and Vice Chair, who provided an update of the status of internet and broadband in the hilltowns. Each town is now responsible for their own broadband build. Westfield Gas & Electric is available to do the design and engineering for the project. WiredWest reviewed their structure, plan and costs for building and connecting an internet service for the town. Budgets prepared with MBI are still valid. The next step would be to get the state to release the design and engineering money they are holding for the towns. Wired West requested that the Board sign town resolutions: one indicating the town's preference to build a municipally-owned broadband network supported, managed and operated by WiredWest; the other to confirm they are interested in working with Westfield Gas & Electric for design and engineering services and construction project management. Information presented by WiredWest is available on their website.
 - b. Staff Discipline Process – The staff disciplinary process has been designated to the Town Administrator. The Selectmen agreed that the town's process should be consistent with that outlined in the union contract. The disciplinary process procedure will be amended to reflect the suggestions.
 - c. Green Community Designation – Blandford has officially received its Green Community designation.
 - d. Union Contract – Ratified copies of the union contract were signed by the Selectmen. The contract is in effect until June 30, 2018. The Town Administrator will take over contract

- negotiations going forward with B. Levakis assisting. Copies of the contract and Memo of Agreement were handed to the Union steward after signing by the Selectmen.
- e. President's Day, February 20 – The Selectboard meeting scheduled for this Monday will be moved to Tuesday, February 21. All town offices that report to the Board of Selectmen will be closed in observance of the holiday.
 - f. Highway Update – A new person has been hired part time. Another part time hire may be made soon. Snow removal costs will be high this year due to the number of precipitation events. The Highway Superintendent, attended the MIIA conference last week and returned with information of benefit to the department's processes.
 - g. Accounting Consultant Invoice – The Selectmen reviewed the invoice submitted by the consultant and requested the charges for accounting services be invoiced separately from the charges from the forensic investigation services.

5. ACTION ITEMS

- a. Hilltown Ambulance Service Contract – tabled pending contract update
- b. Capital Expenditure FY17: fire hoses – The Fire Chief provided two bids for replacement fire hoses; one for \$9,426 and one for \$10,258. The fire hoses are comparable to each other; therefore, the lower bid will be accepted. A vote will be taken at a future Selectboard meeting for the use of funds.

6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS FROM PRIOR MEETINGS

- a. Hilltown Collaborative Update - Joshua A. Garcia, Pioneer Valley Planning Commission; Andy Myers and Darlene McVey, Hilltown Collaborative presented jointly in regards to the Community Compact Cabinet (CCC) initiative of exploring shared services and regional collaboration to enhance municipal service efficiency for local governments. Hilltown Collaborative will be applying for two grants: DOTA Grant to fund an IT Technical Support Specialist to initially perform a study of the six member town's computer needs (Montgomery, Chester, Blandford, Russell, Huntington, Middlefield); and an Efficiency and Regionalization Grant (E&R) for a shared Rural Economic Development Coordinator position through a regional partnership. This position would proactively address the challenges to growth that may exist within the Hilltown communities and will be instrumental with coordinating/implementing any of the identified priorities/strategies that may come out of the economic development plan. They are seeking a letter of support from each of the six municipalities supporting the grant submission.

Hilltown Collaborative next meeting will be held on March 2, 2017 at 6 p.m. at Stanton Hall in Huntington. They are looking for two members from the Town of Blandford to represent the town.

7. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Finance Team Progression – tabled
- b. Department Budgets – Budgets have been reviewed by the Selectmen and submitted to the Finance Committee. Ways to bring revenue into town were discussed, with potential from, the Fire and Police departments getting grants and receiving fees. USDA Rural Development was also noted as a potential option.
- c. Dog Licensing – Letters went out to 144 residents who did not license their dogs last year. Some may have moved out of town or no longer have the dog. There is a \$50 fine for each unlicensed dog.
- d. The town Caucus will be held on March 6.

8. PUBLIC FORUM

- a. A resident inquired about the contract with the post office for services in town. It was discussed that the contract automatically renews; any changes need to be negotiated with the Post Office. He also requested a drive-up mailbox for convenience and moving the dumpster out of sight. The resident also asked that the flag in front of town hall be illuminated. He had other concerns about the flags and its wear and tear. The town will look into sturdier flags in the future.

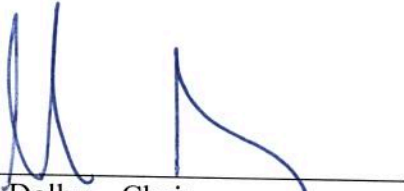
9. ADJOURN MEETING – 9:55 p.m.

MOTION: A. Dolby moved to adjourn the meeting.

A. Montanaro seconded the motion.

The motion was passed unanimously.

Submitted by: Sue Streeter, Selectmen Secretary



Adam Dolby – Chair



Andrew Montanaro - Clerk



William Levakis – Member