



TOWN OF BLANDFORD
Board of Selectmen Minutes
March 13, 2017

1. OPEN SESSION - 7:09 pm
Present were Andy Montanaro and William Levakis.
 2. EXAMINATION OF RECORDS OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS
 - a. Corrected Minutes of February 17, 2017 meeting
 3. TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S UPDATE
 - a. PVPC MPO Western Tier Vacancy – B. Levakis agreed to be the representative Selectmen from Blandford. The Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is a regional body made up of nine voting members that meet five to ten times annually. The MPO region includes the forty-three cities and towns in and around the lower Connecticut River Valley in western Massachusetts. The MPO and their staff work to establish priorities for the funding of transportation studies, projects and programs related to the region's bridge and roadway network, public transit, rail, bicycle and pedestrian needs, and aviation related projects and programs.
 - b. Hilltown Collaborative – tabled
 - c. Bond funds – A claim of \$265,000 is being submitted to the bonding company by the Town Auditor for reimbursement associated with the lawsuit against the former tax collector. The bond will cover a maximum of \$100,000 per year. The total claim amount by year is currently not available. The Town Auditor requests approval to hire Chris Mikesh to assist with the submittal.

MOTION: To approve the Town Auditor's request to employ Chris Mikesh to assist with bond submittal preparation at a rate of \$25.00 per hour, by A. Montanaro.
Discussion: An hourly rate of \$20 was discussed, but the higher amount was settled on based on the many volunteer hours C. Mikesh has given to the town in this matter.
B. Levakis seconded the motion.
The motion was passed unanimously.
- The discussion turned to the possibility of filing a civil lawsuit for non-performance of duties to recoup some of the salary paid. Legal counsel will be consulted as to the pros and cons of filing a civil suit.
- d. Payroll updates – tabled
4. ACTION ITEMS
 - a. Kinsley Generator Quote – B. Levakis was provided the quote to review. It will be discussed at a future meeting.

- b. Resignation of Plumbing and Gas Inspector –
MOTION: To accept the resignation of the Plumbing and Gas Inspector, Peter Anderson, by A. Montanaro.
B. Levakis seconded the motion.
The motion was passed unanimously

- c. Appointment of Plumbing and Gas Inspector – Aaron Poteat expressed his interest in the Plumbing and Gas Inspector position.

MOTION: To appoint Aaron Poteat as the Plumbing and Gas Inspector for the Town of Blandford, by A. Montanaro.

Discussion: A. Poteat had received approval from the Building Inspector regarding his qualifications. Licensing will be completed after his appointment. In the meantime, a licensed plumber will be appointed as Assistant and will review the work. The Plumbing and Gas Inspector is paid per inspection.

B. Levakis seconded the motion.

The motion was passed unanimously

- d. Assessor's Clerk Position Appointment – This position must be appointed by the Board of Assessors.
- e. Assessors appointments – Legal counsel indicated that the BOS has authority to appoint Assessors for the full term. No special election is needed. The BOS is looking for two people to appoint.
- f. Watson Park, Phase II – A. Montanaro requested approval to contact the tree service for a quote for the next phase of tree work. Approval was given to request a quote and list of work.

5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS FROM PRIOR MEETINGS

- a. Post Office Lease – This item will be placed on the Executive Session agenda for next week.
- b. Fire Station Location – A. Montanaro visited the Blandford fairgrounds to determine possible locations for a fire station. He would like to continue the discussion next week. B. Levakis envisions the Fire Department and Highway occupying a new building that could be built near the salt shed. With modest renovations, the current Highway building could become a substation for the Fire Department, saving money by negating the need to purchase land. The fairgrounds are owned by the Agricultural Society. A matching grant may be able to be obtained from the Department of Agriculture in Hadley for land purchase.
- c. Specs on Bridge Repair – Brian Young met with Mark Stinson of the MADEP to view the bridge to be repaired on North Blandford Road. The DEP thought the bridge could be re-capped if the abutments are solid, which would save money. The savings could subsequently be used to repair the bridge on Gore Road, which may be more costly. The work for both bridges needs to go out to bid. A. Montanaro submitted a list of questions he would like answers to. B. Levakis will follow up on the answers.
- d. Hiring Policy – tabled

6. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Blandford Ski Area – Dale Miller represented the ski club. After three years bad years, the club is in financial difficulty and needs to earn money to stay in business. The Knox Trail Riders event would have brought in \$10,000. They are begging the Selectmen to let the event go forward so they can get money to stay open. They are offering early bird specials for skiers to purchase ski passes for next year. The ski area brings in about \$20,000 in taxes per year. They are also the oldest continuously running ski area in the country. They are

asking for approval for the September motocross event. The Selectmen will check with the Zoning Board to see what issue they had.

- b. Watson Park Water Bill – The Water Department has agreed to adjust the back charges for Watson Park. The bill will be for only this year's charges.
- c. Union Negotiations – The Union has asked to open third year negotiations. B. Levakis will obtain the necessary information.
- d. Identification Cards – Some town employees are encountering resistance when they need to go onto a resident's property. The town is looking into identifying vehicles with the town seal, buying t-shirts and hats for town employees and providing identification cards. An announcement of the town identification cards will be made and a sample will be on view in the town hall lobby and the website.

7. PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENTS

- a. Town Hall and the Transfer Station will be closed tomorrow due to the pending snowstorm. The Transfer Station will be open on Wednesday instead.

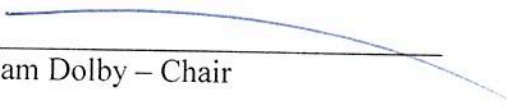
8. ADJOURN MEETING – 8:38 p.m.


MOTION: A. Montanaro moved to adjourn the meeting.

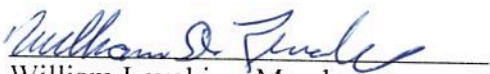
B. Levakis seconded the motion.

The motion was passed unanimously.

Submitted by: Sue Streeter, Selectmen Secretary


Adam Dolby – Chair


Andrew Montanaro - Clerk


William Levakis – Member