



TOWN OF BLANDFORD
Board of Selectmen, Minutes
December 15, 2014

Attendance: Andy Montanaro, William Levakis, (Adam Dolby via Facetime) and Cara Letendre – Secretary

Open Meeting:

7:06 p.m. Mr. Levakis formally called meeting to order, provided notice that meeting may be recorded.

Posted Agenda Items:

1. Tax Rate Classification Hearing: Assessor and Board discussed single vs split tax rate pros and cons. Mr. Montanaro motion to set tax rate based on classifications outlined in tax classification rate document on page four, being the same in all classes, Mr. Levakis second, unanimous vote.
2. Mr. Larry Gresty: introduces himself to the Board. Discussed his experience as electrical inspector in Westfield Ma. Mr. Montanaro motion to appoint Mr. Larry Gresty to the position of Electrical Inspector to complete the remainder of the term, Mr. Levakis second, unanimous vote.
3. Finance Committee Regarding Municipal Accounting Firm Cohn Reznick: submitted proposal for Board's review.
 - a. Finance Committee approached Mr. Ron Knossek, CPA at Cohn Reznick asking him to develop and understanding of our current process and prepare a process for a monthly cash and non-cash reconciliation.
 - b. All three Financial Officers agree with the need and encouraged the engagement.
 - c. Mr. Montanaro: Financial Officers are then committed to following the newly developed process.
 - d. SoftRight Integration: Mr. Van werkHooven is setting up with SoftRight Rep. Mr. Knossek is will participate.
 - e. Mr. Knossek will present a series of recommendations as well as design a system of internal controls detailed to include the individual tasks necessary to perform in order to deliver monthly reports and maintain a quality system of internal reporting.
 - f. Funding to come from Reserve Account
 - g. Mr. Montanaro: requested that the Finance Committee set time lines for when the Board can expect to receive monthly reports.
 - h. Mr. Montanaro motion to have Ron Knossek of Cohn Reznick engage to provide support to our Financial Officers in a manner consistent with his submission at a price not to exceed \$7,000.00 contingent upon a contract reviewed and approved by Town Council, Mr. Levakis second, unanimous vote.

Old Business

1. Fire Ladder Truck: Chief Harvey would like to see it go out to bid. Board agreed
2. Event License: next week
3. Highway Outline: Read and Reviewed.
 - a. Russell Stage Road: complaints regarding potholes
 - b. Mr. Levakis: stated that Highway Department employees will no longer be working for the Water Department on Highway time. Push for potholes to be filled ASAP, top priority.
 - c. Mr. Dolby: concerned about pre-treating roads for storms. Also discussed need to handle drainage more efficiently.
 - d. Mr. Montanaro: Agrees with pothole and drainage as top priorities. Highway Superintendent is now posting daily assignments of each employee at the garage. Concerned that cold-patching potholes would be a waste of time. Mr. Levakis will follow-up with a consultant.
 - e. Mr. Levakis motion that Highway Superintendent not go to anymore meeting without prior approval of the Selectboard, Mr. Montanaro second, unanimous vote.
 - f. Treasurer: still waiting on Chapter 90 money. Mr. Levakis will follow-up.
 - g. Mr. Levakis asked Mr. Montanaro as Highway Liaison to follow-up with Highway Superintendent regarding no longer taking the vehicle home daily. He also asked that any parts needed be shipped rather than picked up by Highway Dept. employees.
4. Highway Sick and Vacation Accrual Time: Mr. Montanaro submitted a review of the time cards vs. the attendance records. Multiple occasions Town paid vacation or sick time, and it was not recorded on the attendance sheet. Conclusion: lack of accuracy with the accrual periods. Question how to handle accruals? Mr. Levakis discussed getting a time clock for the Highway Department, will follow-up with Finance regarding funding.
5. Wired West Letter: signed
6. Tax Collector Salary: next week.
7. Police: next week
8. Fire Department Invoice: next week
9. Transfer Station Employee Rate of Pay: Mr. Montanaro- put on hold while work on classification and compensation package for all Town employees. Have to set a pay rate.

New Business

1. Incident at Knittel's Conservation Area: Mr. Chips Norcross, Mr. Charles Benson & Mr. Bryan Young (Conservation Chair).
 - a. This past Saturday Mr. Norcross and Mr. Benson were cross country skiing on the Knittle Conservation Trails off of Herrick Road. When they returned to their car a state trooper greeted them and told them they had been trespassing. He stated that he had called for back-up and if the skiers had continued along the trails when they were told to call back, they could have been shot at. He threatened to arrest them. Mr. Norcross and Mr. Benson explained that the trails were property of the Town.
 - b. Upon hearing about the altercation, Mr. Young went to the Barracks with a letter from Springfield Water and Sewer Commission stating that the Town of Blandford had the rights to the property. Mr. Young said that the trooper did not accept the letter and wanted to speak with Springfield and Water Sewer Commission directly.

- c. Mr. Levakis: Spoke with Springfield Water and Sewer awhile back about removing gates. They promised instead to send us a set of keys and to let the State Police know that Blandford residents are able to hike on the land. However, we did not ever receive the keys.
 - d. Mr. Dolby: asked that we schedule someone from Springfield Water and Sewer Commission to attend a Selectboard meeting as well as a representative from the State Police.
 - e. Mr. Young has contacted Bryan LaCourt from Springfield Water to make him aware of the situation. He asked him to send a letter to the State Police barracks in Russell for them to keep on file stating that Blandford residents are able to walk/hike on the property.
 - f. Discussion regarding taking the gates and/or signs down. Board decided to wait for further information.
2. Berkshire Trail Riders Grant: Mr. Dave Desinudis from Berkshire Trail Riders presented Chief Harvey with \$1,000.00 grant money towards a rope rescue program.

9:20 p.m. Mr. Levakis motion to adjourn, Mr. Montanaro second, unanimous vote.

Submitted by: Cara Letendre

William Levakis

Andy Montanaro

Adam Dolby