



TOWN HALL | 3 EAST MAIN ROAD | PERU, MA 01235

SELECT BOARD MINUTES | 10/22/2018 at 6:00 P.M.
COMMUNITY CENTER

Present:

OFFICIAL

Ed Munch, Chairman/Historical Commission
Verne Leach, Selectman/ACO/Transfer Attendant
Caleb Mitchell, Town Administrator/Con Com
Justin Russell, Highway Superintendent
Caryn Wendling, Treasurer/Tax Collector
Margaret Chieffo, COA Director
Irene Morrison, Administrative Assistant

Residents:

Item 1: **Call to order:** 6:00 p.m.

Item 2: **Roll Call:** Chairman Munch present, Selectman Leach present, Selectman Cullett absent

Item 3: **State recording status:** Selectman Leach & Adm. Asst. Morrison recording

Item 4: **Review and Approve Meeting Minutes for 10/15/2018**

Mr. Munch motions to approve the October 15, 2018 BOS Meeting Minutes pending changes. Mr. Leach seconds. Mr. Cullett absent. Both Mr. Munch and Mr. Leach in agreement. **VOTE 2-0**

Item 5: **Report from Departments**

Council on Aging – Director, Margaret Chieffo reporting

COA Director Chieffo updated the BOS on things that have been going on since she took over as the COA Director. She said that the Farmer's Market coupons were distributed to local residents who met eligibility requirements. She thought the Meet & Greet at the Transfer Station went great. Upon delivering Farmer's Market coupons, she has been able to connect some people with local services such as Meals on Wheels, etc. She said there is an assumption from those she's met, that Meals on Wheels doesn't come up to Peru. However, she stated that they do come to Peru. Mr. Leach suggested she contact the Church or a Church Member, who has a very good list of people that baskets usually go out to during the Holidays. COA Director Chieffo said as she finds out about services and events through Berkshire Elder Services and Hilltown CDC, she puts those in the Live Wire, Facebook, and as many flyers that she can put out. She said that today, in talking with someone (Amy) from a local agency, she found out that services such as snow plowing could be available for the elderly. Also, there is a grant in which she could even get sand boxes for the elderly who may need them. Mr. Leach said that normally what happens, is the Highway Supt. puts a big pile of sand out at the Community Center parking area. Mr. Munch said if these people don't have transportation, and they're elderly, they're not going to be able to come over. Mr. Munch told her to keep the BOS posted on what she's thinking, and then the BOS would talk to the Highway Dept. Mr. Munch said that she could look into the snowplowing option, that if there were someone snowplowing, they could sand it too. Mr. Munch said, "up here, there could be an ice storm where you don't even want the elderly people to come out of their house. It would be better if that option wasn't even offered. If you saw someone that needed assistance, then

the town itself would look into what we can do legally to help these people. Also, the snowplowing option, if that was an option and they were doing snowplowing for these people that can't afford it, then they also would be doing sanding.

COA Director Chieffo said she's trying to give a free luncheon, maybe November 14. She would have Berkshire Elder Service and Hilltown Elderly Network (HEN) come, to give a talk about all the services that are available.

She also wants to plan a pot luck around February. Mr. Munch said one of the options in Hinsdale is that Ozzie's caters luncheons. As far as the Hinsdale/Peru collaboration, she's been going to their meetings, and we now have a Hinsdale/Peru luncheon. We would pay \$8.00 per person for the luncheon. She is offering for the Peru Residents, a \$5.00 fee. Hinsdale/Peru COA is having a Christmas Party Dec. 7. They have a big roast turkey dinner at the Fire House. They have carolers and singers, sing alongs, decorating, COA would serve the elders. She would like to be able to have our residents go for free or donation. Mr. Leach asked how much money she has in the COA account. She said \$238.00 from the town. Then there's an elderly outreach account through the town which has about \$500.00 in it. She is thinking about putting up a COA tree for the Festival of Lights in Hinsdale at the Town Hall.

Mr. Munch said for the phone option, we said as BOS we would sponsor Margaret for AARP so that she could get the phone service, which is only \$16.00 yearly. The phone is \$29.00. It is a flip phone. Then \$15.00 a month for 250 minutes. Mr. Munch said he would get the paperwork for AARP.

Highway – Supt. Justin Russell reporting

Hwy. Supt. Russell said the new truck is at Delurey's, and will be sent to Zwack's within the next few weeks to get built. He had talked to Finance Chairman, George Gruele a month or more ago, and told him that it would be ready by the end of November or December. He indicates that we're going to have to talk to Finance about payment for the remaining balance. He said "Free Cash" isn't anywhere near being ready, so it looks like we'll have to borrow. Mr. Munch said Treasurer/Tax Collector Wendling and he talked about a loan.

Hwy. Supt. Russell said, "at the Annual Town Meeting, the Town voted to fund \$125,000. They didn't vote to fund the other \$97,000.00. We have the money in the future equipment, and Finance Chairman Gruele thought at one time of using part of that fund, and taking out a loan for the remainder. Mr. Leach said that even if the money comes out of future equipment, it has to be voted on. TA Mitchell said we definitely have to have a "Special Town Meeting", and he's not so sure if we want to take a loan to pay for it. He said he's not sure that he would recommend that, because we haven't completed the Tax Recap, set the Tax Rate, or sent the tax bills out. Therefore, without revenue he doesn't think it's a good idea to be taking another loan out, when we already have a loan for Chapter 90 Program. We still haven't been reimbursed that money. He thinks we have the money either in the stabilization fund or the future equipment. He said we may want to have the Finance Committee convene a meeting with the BOS to discuss what the best options are. Hwy. Supt. Russell said he would receive an invoice after he picks the truck up that will have to be paid within a month, which will bring us into January.

Hwy. Supt. Russell said as far as line painting, they're going to get 143, South Rd., North Rd., Raymond Dr. and E. Windsor done. Mr. Leach said there's quite a drop going onto Middlefield Rd. and onto South Rd. where the blacktop starts, then the chip seal. Hwy. Supt. said it was before it got chip sealed. It's blended in now, which is the best it's going to get. Mr. Munch wanted to know if the pot hole on E. Windsor Rd. near the sharp corner near the shooting box has been fixed. Hwy. Supt. Russell said he knows there's a lot of pot holes out there, but until the weather warms up for a day or more, they can't go get blacktop. He has to finish some stuff on the bottom of Hickenbotham Rd.

Hwy. Supt. Russell said it's been over 2 weeks that we sent out a letter to the resident on Marlow Dr. about removing the rocks on the edge of the road. He indicated that the rocks are still there. He said they're on town property, and are a public safety issue. Mr. Leach said another letter should be sent to him as a follow up, saying they have to be moved by a certain date. Mr. Munch added, "or the Town will refer the Highway Dept. to remove them." Hwy. Supt. Russell said he would just go and move them. Mr. Munch told him that if he goes there to move the stones, to bring a Police Officer with him. He also said to put in the letter that he has 1 week to move them. "We have to get them out of there before we have a snowstorm."

Hwy. Supt. Russell indicated that he started to pump out the oil tank, but it's so deep in the ground for the pump being used, that he had to borrow a pump from someone, and will pump the tank out tomorrow. He said he has to get a permit from the Fire Chief Dewkett so that he can move the tank.

Hwy. Supt. Russell brought some sand samples to show the BOS. One sample was the sand that is currently used, which is washed sand from Donovan's. The other sample is from John S. Lane in West Stockbridge who has come up with a by-product from their dense grade materials to make road sand like the bivi chips that have been used in the past. Hwy. Supt. Russell said he's going to start using that. Currently, we pay about \$14.00 a ton for sand, plus \$4.50 a ton to haul it. The by-product from dense grade materials is about \$8.60 a ton, plus about \$6.50 a ton from Westfield. He would use just enough salt to keep the pile from freezing. He said he's been working on getting a contract for salt sent to him. He said that currently, prices are coming in at \$50.00-\$54.00 a ton, compared to \$74.00 a ton last year. Mr. Leach said he'd like to see them stockpile some salt, because every year it gets harder at the end of the year. Hwy. Supt. Russell said that in the past, there were shortages of salt, but the Federal Government has stepped in, so there shouldn't be a shortage of salt. He said there are stockpiles everywhere.

The result from the DEP walk around is that they want the Highway Dept. to have a meeting with Conservation. There are a couple things around the Highway yard that need to be corrected. The inspection from the Dept. of Labor was due to when Travis got hurt. They took pictures, and want some corrective action. Hwy. Supt. Russell filled out the corrective action form, and sent pictures of what he did for the corrective action. Other corrective action is regarding templates, which he has, but needs to put on our letterhead with our words. There is an eye-wash station at the Highway Dept., but he said it's not required because we don't have bulk chemical storage. Mr. Leach said he wants to have Hwy. Supt. Russell show him how the gas works. Hwy Supt. said the meter's not working right, but the pump's working.

Town Administrator – TA Caleb Mitchell reporting

TA Mitchell said he contacted the Representative from Charter, requesting a copy of the design plan for the town. He has yet to hear anything back. He also contacted Peter Larkin to request his advocacy for the town.

TA Mitchell said due to illness, Crocker had to cancel their scheduled meeting with the Town. He said it may not be necessary for them to come. There's a phone in the Highway Dept. and Fire Dept. that seem to be working, and in which outgoing calls can be made. He had to fill out a form authorizing them to switch the phones from Verizon to Crocker. Both the Highway Dept. and Fire Dept. have phones in which outgoing calls can be made. Once the phones are switched over, if you call the main Town Hall number, you will be given the appropriate extension number that you would then dial to reach that Dept. or to leave a message.

Regarding the Solar Array By-Law, TA Mitchell contacted Sam Haupt, Chairman of the Planning Board, requesting that the Planning Board begin meeting on developing the Solar Array By-Law. Chairman Haupt told TA Mitchell that it would require 20+ more hours of technical assistance from Berkshire Regional Planning before we could even get started. TA Mitchell sent copies of his e-mail correspondence with Chairman Haupt to Lauren Garrity of BRPC. He is waiting to hear back from her. Chairman Haupt also requested that we put him on the Agenda so that this can be discussed at a BOS Meeting. TA Mitchell responded to him letting him know that Lauren Garrity will be invited to the meeting. Once she responds to TA Mitchell, and he confirms her being able to attend the BOS Meeting, he will then put it on the Agenda.

Relating to Article 27 at the ATM where it was voted to transfer \$125,000.00 of free cash for payment of the new truck, TA Mitchell said we only transferred that amount in free cash for the truck. There were no other funds approved for the purchase of the truck. Mr. Leach said he would have to get in touch with Finance Chair Gruele to discuss. TA Mitchell said he has to contact him, sit down and talk about this, and probably schedule a Finance Meeting where it will have to be decided how we want to proceed. He said when we did the Article, we thought based on what was said to us that we would get the "Free Cash" certified earlier than usual. At the time, that's what we thought. That's why we wrote the article this way. We probably already planned to have a Special Town Meeting to appropriate the remainder of the funds necessary for the purchase of the truck. We thought we'd have Free Cash and be able to take it out of that. He doesn't think that will be an option. The only option available to us at this point, is to have a "Special Town Meeting" where we either take money out of stabilization or future equipment. He doesn't think it's a good idea to take a loan. Mr. Leach said

if there's anything else that should go on that Special Town Meeting because it cost about \$2500.00 to have a Special Town Meeting.

Treasurer/Tax Collector – Caryn Wendling reporting

Mr. Munch asked if Treasurer/Tax Collector Wendling had any idea as to when the tax bills are going to go out. She said that the re-cap hasn't been submitted to the State yet. Until that happens, we're at the mercy of the State, because all the quarterly towns are setting their tax rates now.

Treasurer/Tax Collector Wendling said she came in last Thursday, and her air conditioner had been taken out. She wanted to know who had taken that out. Mr. Leach indicated that Bruce Cullett did. She said she would like to know who's in her office. It is a locked office.

TA Mitchell didn't know if the Pierce Property had been foreclosed. Treasurer/Tax Collector Wendling said we foreclosed the property, and the rights to the property were turned over to us. When the State did their Title Search, they came up with some problem that when Barrison & Bloom foreclosed on it, somebody else should have been notified. They had to re-do that paperwork. That's where it's still standing.

Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership Program – Ed Munch, Representative reporting

MTWP Representative, Ed Munch said the MTWP bill has passed. The Governor wants one legal amendment to it, specifying meetings are held in compliance with the Open Meeting Laws. Tom Matuszko, MTWP Project Manager will be coming to all the town's to do a presentation to get the town's to opt in to the agreement. Now that it's a law, they want to get the town's to join. The next thing after that will be setting up an account and start the funding process. First thing, is that the town has to opt in. There are 21 town's that have to join it. Mr. Leach said it is to bring business to the town, which is forestry based, which in turn would bring revenue to the town.

Item 6: Discussion and possible vote to approve purchase of a cell phone for the Council on Aging Director

Already discussed in COA Report. (see "Report from Dept. in Item 5)

Item 7: Discussion and possible vote to approve purchase of new computer for Highway Superintendent

Mr. Leach said he has a suggestion on that after talking with TA Mitchell. He does have an issue with his laptop. "It's not that old of a laptop. Maybe we could convert that down to the Highway and buy him a desktop, which is cheaper, but they're more powerful. Currently, when he goes to use the keyboard, it's picking up his hand, moving the sensor all over." TA Mitchell said he's not really sure how he feels about that, because he doesn't want to be in a position of having down time while waiting. Mr. Munch told TA Mitchell to run it by Howard at Bug Busters to see what he thinks. TA Mitchell said we may want to wait for Selectman Cullett and Hwy. Supt. Russell to come back, then talk about it. Mr. Leach said for him to get a price on a desktop to give us something to work with. Mr. Munch suggests tabling this item for further discussion to the next BOS Meeting.

Item 8: Update/Discussion Charter/Spectrum

Already discussed in TA Report. (see "Report from Dept. in Item 5)

Item 9: Update/Discussion and Review of Town Audit

TA Mitchell said he is still waiting for Joel Bard from KP Law to get back to him. He will try contacting him again tomorrow. Discussion will be carried to the next BOS Meeting.

Item 10: Discussion, Review, and possible vote to award Bid Contracts for Projects for Town Hall

TA Mitchell said Selectman Cullett, who is absent tonight, asked for this item be continued.

Item 11: Review and approve accounts payable, treasury warrants, payroll warrant

Item 12: Adjourn

Mr. Munch motions to adjourn the 10/22/2018 BOS Meeting. Mr. Leach seconds. Both Mr. Munch and Mr. Leach in agreement. Mr. Cullett absent **VOTE 2-0**
The BOS Meeting adjourned at 7:39 P.M.

Articles used:


10/22/18 Agenda
10/15/18 Meeting Minutes
TA Report
Vendor Warrants
Payroll Warrants

Respectfully submitted,

Irene J. Morrison

Administrative Assistant

Ed Munch, Chairman



Verne Leach, Selectman



Bruce Cullett, Selectman

Approved: 11/5/18