



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

**SELECT BOARD MINUTES | January 13, 2020 6:00 P.M.**  
TOWN HALL MEETING ROOM

**Present:**

Verne Leach, Chairman  
Ed Munch, Selectman/Historical Commission  
Bruce Cullett, Selectman/Police Sergeant  
Caleb Mitchell, Town Administrator  
Justin Russell, Highway Superintendent  
Jim Kenney, Historical Commission  
Darryl Darby, Cemetery Sexton

**Residents:** Peter Yetman

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

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

Item 3: **State recording status:** Mr. Leach recording

Item 4: **Review and Approve Meeting Minutes for 1/6/2020**

Mr. Leach motions to approve the 1/6/2020 BOS Meeting Minutes. Mr. Munch seconds. All agree. **VOTE 3-0**

Item 5: **Report from Departments**

**Highway – Supt. Justin Russell reporting**

Supt. Russell said we got a little bit more Chapter 90 money in the amount of about \$14,000.00.

Supt. Russell reports that the 550 is going to Marcotte. They have a regular Truck Fleet Service garage there. He said it takes more time to get it there and take it back when they're ready to pick it up.

Supt. Russell is wondering going forth if we should think about applying for the Mass Works Grant for Rt. 143 to get it milled and save our Chapter 90 money toward East Windsor Rd. a little at a time. "Being a State numbered route, we might able to get that Grant a little easier." They're looking for us to improve housing and economic development on East Windsor Rd. He said Rt. 143 is quickly deteriorating. He said the patching they did this year before & after it was re-patched, there's holes opening up already. Mr. Cullett asked if Kathy Steven's is able to consult. Supt. Russell said she just got back from vacation. He thinks going into the Spring, she'll be doing more of that. Supt. Russell said they will be cleaning up the dirt roads this week.

### **Town Administrator – Caleb Mitchell reporting**

TA Mitchell gave the BOS a copy of the MTWP Grant Application that he submitted last week. In the Grant that he submitted, he said it's to make improvements on Curtin Rd. at the intersection to provide better access to Peru State Forest. He also said we're trying to promote sustainable forestry, protection of open space etc. The fact that we don't have the funds from our Chapter 90 funding to make those improvements on a discontinued road. Supt. Russell said the road isn't discontinued, but just closed for the winter. TA Mitchell said he talked to Tom Matuszko of BRPC, who said it appears they have enough funding for any of the member towns. (*See MTWP Grant Application*)

TA Mitchell said we received a letter from Mass Office of Disability regarding the ADA Grant. They regretfully informed us that we did not receive the funding. There will be more funding available later on this year in July they'll be putting out additional applications where we can apply again. (*See letter from Mass Office of Disability*)

TA Mitchell indicates he sent out the budget request to Department Heads for FY21. "We're trying to move along to give people some time to do their budgets. If they have any capital expenditures, or anything major they should put something down separately from the normal budget request."

TA Mitchell said he sent an e-mail out today for the Annual Town Report. It's that time of year where it's got to be done. He made sure he put down the dates of July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019 for the Annual Town Report to alleviate any confusion.

TA Mitchell said he received a resume' in his e-mail today from someone interested in the COA position. The person is a full-time worker at General Dynamics. TA Mitchell is concerned about the job description for the position. "If someone reads the job description, they may think it's more of a job than what it actually is. They could get the idea that it's considered to be a full-time position." TA Mitchell said he was thinking we should re-draft that job description and try to simplify it to reflect that it's a part-time position. He said he will contact her. (*See cover letter & resume for COA position*)

TA Mitchell gave the BOS a copy of material he received in an e-mail from BRPC regarding the Transportation Improvement Program. He said we've never applied for anything like this, and that he'd have to contact Tom Matuszko of BRPC. He indicates that there's a limited period of time to prepare this. Supt. Russell said, "What they're looking for is a project in which they are looking for the State to fund it, and the town would be responsible for 25% which covers engineering costs. It's about \$1M per mile for re-construction. Estimate about 1/4 of that for engineering. We've gone through this before with one of the engineers." He had the State come up, where they told us a couple years ago that Rt. 143 is not bad enough yet to be accepted in that program. (*See Transportation Improvement Program material*)

### **Cemetery Sexton – Darryl Darby reporting**

Darryl said he was under the impression that a discussion regarding the Cemetery Commission would be on the Agenda tonight. He didn't know if it could be posted somewhere to see if other people are interested in joining the Commission. TA Mitchell said we have 2 letters of interest. Jim Kenney said it is on the website with only 4 words "Cemetery Commission 5 Members." He was hoping there would be a link. TA Mitchell said we need to put something with more of a description that we're looking for volunteers. Mr. Leach reiterated from last week's meeting that we can't appoint just 2 members. There has to be at least 3. Jim Kenney asked if Darryl could be a member. Mr. Leach doesn't know.

TA Mitchell said he doesn't see it as much of a conflict. Mr. Leach said the Commission sets the policies etc. Jim Kenney said the Cemetery Sexton would report to the Commission. He asked if the BOS would be willing to have the Cemetery Sexton be a member of the Commission. Mr. Leach said, "We'd have to find out if we can. We'd have to look at the job

duties of each to make sure they don't intertwine." TA Mitchell will find out from the Hinsdale Cemetery Commission if they allow the Cemetery Sexton to be on the Commission. Mr. Leach asked Darryl if he would be interested on being on the Commission if we find out he can be on it. Darryl indicates he would be.

#### **Historical Commission – Jim Kenney reporting**

Jim said the Historical Commission had a meeting a couple weeks ago, where they discussed what the ornament for the 250<sup>th</sup> is going to look like. He said they seem to be gravitating toward it including a Colonial Minuteman and the Radio Tower, to show 2 extremes in time as well as the word(s) "Partridgefield & Peru." He said they haven't figured out yet how it's going to come together. He sketched some things on Power Point and he's looking for comments back. Mr. Munch speaking as a Historical Commission Member said, "The importance of this is more than we discussed because this could become the new Town Seal. The Police Dept. is considering re-doing their patch. If this is something really special such as the cannon down in Hinsdale, it could be more than just for the 250<sup>th</sup>." Mr. Leach said his only question is if the tower is privately owned, are we allowed to use it for the Seal? Mr. Munch said it's a landmark. Mr. Cullett said it's not copy righted. Jim said in answer to Mr. Leach's question about the cost of the ornaments, the original e-mail from a couple years ago had a minimum of a 100-piece order to start with at \$4.95 a piece, plus a \$150.00 set-up. He has spoken with the Accountant, who has located the line entry, but will check with Sharon Gruele to make sure that the money is in the right place. He is hoping within the next couple days, he'll find out. Mr. Cullett said if we can utilize that sign as the logo for the 250<sup>th</sup>, going forward we could use it for other things.

#### **BOS – Mr. Leach reporting**

Mr. Leach said he has received a letter from Mass Community Development Block Grant FY2020 Community Development Fund. They are looking to get a signature from the BOS Chairman. Mr. Munch said they have increased the amount in their guidelines. He said for a single person, qualifications are up to \$49,000.00. Mr. Leach would like to have the Board of Health (BOH) informed that they will cover damaged septic or having a septic replaced. They also cover wells.

Mr. Cullett spoke about the signs on the Restrooms. He said we have an issue with the septic tank. They don't know what's going on yet. He said there's a sinkhole in the parking lot in the area of the septic tank. The soil above it must have gone into the tank. It has either made its way through a collapse in the tank or there's a hole making its way in. He said Supt. Russell is going to dig it up to see. He ordered a portable toilet from White Wolf. He turned the water pump off and put the signs on all of the bathrooms.

#### **Item 6: Discussion and vote to appoint Kathy Borden to represent Peru on the Hinsdale/Peru Cultural Council**

Mr. Leach said Hinsdale Cultural Council sent the BOS a letter asking us to appoint Kathy Borden as Peru Representative to Cultural Council.

Mr. Leach motions to appoint Kathy Borden to represent Peru on the Hinsdale/Peru Cultural Council. Mr. Munch seconds. All agree. **VOTE 3-0** *(See letter of interest from Cultural Council and appointment papers for Kathy Borden to represent Peru on the Hinsdale/Peru Cultural Council)*

#### **Item 7: Discussion of MA Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs Grant offering for MTWP Members**

This item was discussed by TA Mitchell in his Department Report

Item 8: **Discussion of 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration**

Mr. Cullett gave the BOS copies of the proposal he received from Callahan Sign. He said there are a couple options. There is an option for a Full Color LED Sign and an option for the Monochrome red display sign. Mr. Leach commented that he likes the Monochrome. Mr. Cullett said, "Monochrome is less money, but if we could maybe shave some costs on other things and maybe go with that, it's something we're going to have to really consider."

Mr. Cullett read the reply he wrote to Mass Office of Travel & Tourism. He didn't have an electronic copy of the paperwork that Mr. Leach gave him last week, so he e-mailed Town Clerk Leach with the wording to put on the electronic forms to send. The reply explained what the \$25,000.00 will be utilized for in preparation of the Peru 250<sup>th</sup> Celebration in July of 2021. The funds will be utilized mainly for infrastructure improvements at Peru Town Hall and the Town Park that are necessary for the planning of the festivities to take place. This includes signage, lighting, electrical infrastructure improvements etc. (*See reply to Mass Office of Travel & Tourism*)

Supt. Russell suggested cleaning up the Town Green by getting rid of the dead apple trees and scrubby bushes. He said we could plant something different there. Mr. Munch indicates he is going to look into doing something with the Honor Roll. Mr. Cullett suggested doing some landscaping prior to the 250<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Cullett said we have the same contractor for mowing for the first 6 months of next year. He said last season, he wasn't thrilled with what they did and how infrequently they came. He also indicated that many calls were made to the contractor to mow for Memorial Day. Mr. Leach said he's not happy with their punctuality and not doing it when they should be. Mr. Cullett said we need to put it out to bid again this spring when next years budget discussions come up.

**Items not on the Agenda, but brought up for discussion to the extent permitted by law**

Peter Yetman said he has 5 or 6 kids ages 8 -10 who are involved in basketball who are struggling with some basketball. He wants to run basic drills with them. He said Peru has basketball hoops that don't get used. He asked if 1 night a week, the gym would be available for some of these kids. Mr. Leach asked him if it would be a problem for them to move the tables & chairs and put them back when they're done. Mr. Yetman said he had no problem with that, but one concern he has is that the window without a grill on it, if one could be put on. He said Wednesday nights would be the best night. Mr. Cullett said we would need to protect the thermostat, router and the door that has no grill in the window to protect it. Mr. Leach said his only reserve is moving the file cabinets because they are full of planning, zoning documents etc. He also asked the other Board Members if Mr. Yetman would be designated as responsible and get a key to the Community Center to come up here, or would he be doing it while somebody is here. Mr. Cullett said it would be easier to give him a key.

Mr. Leach motions to make Coach Yetman have availability to the gym and use it as a basketball court. Mr. Cullett seconds. All agree. **VOTE 3-0**

Item 9: **Review and Approve accounts payable, treasury warrants, payroll warrant**

Item 10: **Adjourn**

Mr. Leach motions to adjourn the 1/13/20 BOS Meeting. Mr. Munch seconds. All agree. **VOTE 3-0**

**BOS Meeting adjourned at 7:38 P.M.**

**Articles used:**

1/13/20 BOS Agenda

1/6/20 BOS Meeting Minutes

MTWP Grant Application

Letter from Mass Office of Disability

Cover letter and resume for COA position

Transportation Improvement Program material

Letter of interest from Hinsdale/Peru Cultural Council

Appointment papers for Kathy Borden to represent Peru on the Hinsdale/Peru Cultural Council

Proposal from Callahan Sign

Reply to Mass Office of Travel & Tourism

Letter from Hilltown CDC

Vendor Warrants

Respectfully submitted

*Irene J. Morrison*

Administrative Assistant

Verne Leach, Chairman \_\_\_\_\_

Ed Munch, Selectman \_\_\_\_\_

Bruce Cullett, Selectman \_\_\_\_\_

**Approved:** 2/3/20\_\_\_\_\_