

SELECT BOARD MINUTES | March 2, 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
Irene Morrison, Administrative Assistant

Residents: Coralie Pelkey, Jesse Pelkey, Darryl Darby, Nannette Mone

Guest(s): David Rhinemiller, Lauren Garrity, BRPC

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 and Irene Morrison recording

Item 4: **Review and Approve Meeting Minutes for 2/24/20**

*Mr. Cullett motions to approve the 2/24/20 BOS Meeting Minutes pending changes. Mr. Leach seconds. All agree
VOTE 3-0

Item 5: **Report from Departments**

Highway – Justin Russell, Superintendent reporting

Supt. Russell reports that Asplundh Tree Service, will be in town possibly this week to start the line trimming that they do every 4 years. He doesn't know if they've contacted the Police Dept. yet. They're looking for places to park. Supt. Russell told them that right now the town yard behind the Highway Dept. is not available because they have not been plowing the back. Mr. Munch suggested they park in Camp Danbee's parking lot. Supt. Russell will check that out with Danbee.

Supt. Russell shared a document he found that was filed with the Bureau of Transportation on Dec. 8, 1997 regarding the private roads. The document indicates that there are 18 private roads spread out over a long distance between almost Washington, off some of the Hinsdale roads, all the way to Garnet & Ashmere Lakes. In the next few weeks, Supt. Russell will work on writing a policy to establish that the private roads have to meet certain specifications before they'll be plowed. He said it's not a lot of mileage, but it is spread out. Besides around Garnet Lake, if we have to end up doing those roads, there is a 2-ton bridge there that they can't go over. He wants to cover everything before we go to the ATM with an Article regarding the private roads. (*See private road document*)

Speaking to TA Mitchell, Mr. Leach said about a month ago he was asked by a resident of Minister's Rd. what it would take to turn a public road into a private road. TA Mitchell doesn't remember that but said he doesn't know how you would do that. Mr. Cullett & Mr. Munch said they don't think that's even possible. Supt. Russell said if we give away a road, then we're taking out of the formula for Chapter 90. TA Mitchell said you could close a road for maintenance, or completely eliminate a road. Mr. Leach will relay the information.

Supt. Russell presented the BOS with a quote for a ¾ ton Chevy Pick-up that goes for \$43,000.00 without a sander. He asked what was left in the Future Equipment Account. Mr. Cullett indicates that figure won't be known until the books are closed. Supt. Russell said the biggest difference is some of the prices for the plows. Marcotte Ford can outfit an 8 ft. plow for \$5,000.00, when everyone else is asking \$6,500.00 or above. He said Marcotte uses ACT Vehicle Equipment out of Westfield or Bart Truck Equipment out of West Springfield. Mr. Cullett requests that Supt. Russell get the mowing bids for the next Fiscal Year starting on July 1, 2020.

Town Administrator – Caleb Mitchell, TA reporting

TA Mitchell has received notification of the Green Community Designation Ceremony. It will be held here in Peru on April 16, 2020 in the Community Room. He hasn't received an exact time but indicates it would be in the afternoon. He said he will put it on the Peru Website.

TA Mitchell said there's been talk of re-establishing the rail line from Pittsfield to New York City. He said letters in support of the project are needed. The BOS agree to TA Mitchell sending a letter of support to the head of the Berkshire Select Board Association.

TA Mitchell has received a call from the contractor for the Solar Project on W. Main Rd. They want to schedule a pre-construction meeting before they start the Solar Project. Supt. Russell said he met with them last week and discussed the driveway to curb-cut and the culvert that needs to be put in. He said he thinks they're good to go to get their driveway permit in and to get the other entryway put in so that they can start working on it. Mr. Cullett said they're looking to meet with the Chairman of the Planning Board, Chairman of the Select Board, Electrical Inspector, and Chairman of the Conservation Commission. He said he doesn't see the need to have a lot of those individual's there. "As long as they're planning on moving forward, basically, the most important part is getting the driveway set with Supt. Russell, who has already started talks with them. Supt. Russell said the biggest thing he stressed to them is cleaning the road of debris from all the equipment and trucks going in and out of there. Mr. Leach told TA Mitchell to see if they could do the meeting at night. Mr. Munch said they have to have Police there, because that's a blind corner. Mr. Cullett said we need to at least get some signs up.

TA Mitchell said he has received a letter of interest for the Council on Aging (COA) Director position. He left her a message asking to get back to him to arrange an interview. (*See letter of interest for COA*)

TA Mitchell said he has been working on getting the invitation out for bids for the Vocational Transportation. He has run into a glitch with the Combuys web site. He was planning on opening the bids on March 23. Mr. Cullett suggested sending them to the bidders that bid the last few years. He said March 23rd is the due date for the sign as well. He asked the BOS how they want to deal with the bid of the Fire Truck. If we use a bid-site there's a 9% buyers fee. You would be limited to just that site. You can't take bids in a sealed envelope and open them at the same time because the person handing in the bid wouldn't have the 9% buyers fee. We either do it on that site or do it as we've done it in the past. Mr. Leach & Mr. Munch would like to do it like they've done in the past. Supt. Russell said Auctions International is the company that would have had the pick-up that he currently has listed. He was allowed to view it before the auction came up for that. Mr. Cullett said to run it like we used to and see what we get for numbers. We can reject any and all bids and do it a different way. Supt. Russell said he has a contact if the BOS wants to go to that site.

TA Mitchell called the Administrative Office of CBRSD. Evidently the discussion of the Preliminary Budget was not approved. They will have a final vote on it March 12th. They did give him the Preliminary numbers of \$894,42.00 which they stressed that it can't go up when they go to the March 12 meeting. It can only go down. He said that's up \$39,000.00 from last year. The Capital Budget for the new school is \$128,328.00 which won't change at all.

Item 6: Interview with David Rhinemiller for the Town of Peru Wiring Inspector

Mr. Rhinemiller said he has been an Electrician for 40 years, Electrical Inspector for 25 years in Adams, Plainfield, and Savoy. He has numerous licenses and all required certifications. Mr. Cullett asked if Adams was almost full-time.

Mr. Rhinemiller said almost full-time with about 20 inspections per week. He said he doesn't know the fee-schedule here. Mr. Cullett said it's around \$45.00 - \$50.00 per inspection. The Inspector gets 90% of that and the Town gets 10%. Not knowing what the Peru Charter is, Mr. Rhinemiller asked how the Inspectors are governed. Mr. Cullett informed Mr. Rhinemiller that it's governed by the BOS, but that he would work in conjunction with the Building Inspector.

Item 7: **Discussion of Green Community Grant Application with Lauren Garrity**

Lauren Garrity of Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC) said now that we've received the Green Community Grant, we have to figure out how to spend the money. She said that Mark Grabinski, Dept. of Energy Resources will be the main contact. She presented the BOS with the Energy Reduction Plan that BRPC submitted to the Dept. of Energy Resources in 2019. It has the Guardian Audit that was done in 2017-2018. She said when we decide what we want to do for energy projects, we have to put together a proposal and submit it to the State. Once approved, then we can go ahead to have the contractor come in and do it. Mr. Munch asked if we would have to pay first, then get reimbursed. "If we do, then we'd have to raise and appropriate." Lauren said she thinks we do. "Once the work is done, the State comes back and looks at the job, making sure it was done to spec, then they'll cut the check. They want you to spend some money upfront as soon as possible." Mr. Munch said he'd like to see some of the small simple things like lighting addressed. Lauren went through the Audit done by Guardian and did a spread sheet looking through our projects and started by pulling out things in yellow that we might want to highlight as our first jobs. Guardian didn't like it. Some of the lighting has a return on investment over 40 years, and some lighting has a return on investment for 5 years. The new Town Garage would be a 5-year investment. Lauren said Town Hall is a 15-year return on investment, and questions if we really want to do that yet because we don't know what we're doing yet. She said, "You might want to start with the Salt Shed. Weatherization would make sense, because no matter what you do, if you have a leaky building, your heat is going out the window. The anti-idling technology that we looked at, would pay for itself within a year. Start spending on these smaller projects but save the big chunk for a big project. The other thing is, the Town Garage. When you had the Audit in 2018, that was before you got your new boiler in the new Town Garage. So, we have to have Guardian come back and re-audit the building now that we have the new furnace. You ask them what else can we do in the Town Garage? You had talked about infra-red to compliment the radiant heat." Supt. Russell said he really likes the radiant heat in the floor. Lauren said she has already spoken to Guardian, and they're going to come back, to re-evaluate the new heating system in the garage and to look at this building to see if there are upgrades we could do now that would still be just as valid if we reconfigured the gym into offices. They will be back, they said around mid-March. They should be contacting TA Mitchell to set up a meeting, and to arrange for someone to be here so that they can walk through all the buildings again. Lauren said that since the Audit in 2017-2018, the State is pushing these new air source heat pump systems. Lauren said she spoke with Dalton about that and they said they have experience with them. She doesn't know if we have an office to do mini splits in some small discreet place that might work for us, in which case they would pay for that. "That would be a less expensive heating source. You could use the air force heat pump to augment it, and it also provides air conditioning in the summer. That would get rid of window air-conditioners." Guardian will also look at our lighting. These are what she's thinking that could be our first steps. Mr. Munch said, "On the list it says swap the use of the F550 for the F250. That would be an incredible savings. We're trying to get Fleet in the picture & save money." She said they asked about that and they said no. She said to wait for Guardian to see what they say. "They know exactly how to get the incentives through Eversource. When they come back and look at lighting again, you would be able to work directly with them, and wouldn't have to go out to bid. State procurement laws for energy efficient products are easier." Mr. Cullett asked if we would have to go through Chapter 30B Procurement. She said no. Mr. Cullett said he assumes we're required to pay prevailing wages. She said, "Yes." Mr. Munch asked what the repeat time period to this Grant if we spend it. Lauren indicates that as soon as you spend it, you can apply for the next funding round. It comes by once a year. It's competitive. TA Mitchell said Charlie Levesque from Modern Wood Heat is willing to come here to give us a presentation. It's something that we have to schedule. He just did Hawley's Town Hall. Mr. Cullett asked if the Grant would cover just the cost of the new heating system boiler. What about the distribution system within the building? Lauren said that would be part of the project. There are other municipalities who have already been through this, and you should go visit them. Mr. Leach said his only reservation is the maintenance. It's got to be cleaned periodically. Mr. Munch said it's not like that. Lauren said the State is encouraging you first to button up your buildings and reduce your fossil fuel use. She said they're not going to give us windows unless they're leaking like a sieve. They will have you seal around the windows. Mr. Cullett asked if we have a project in here that's turning this into office space, and part of the scope of work is to replace the 30 year old windows, and to meet the stretch code, they need to be a certain type of window, the money wouldn't cover that? Lauren said maybe not. Mr. Munch said in order to insulate a building like this, you have to stud the walls up and insulate whatever the

stretch code is. Lauren said she thinks we would have to have an architect. When Guardian comes in, ask “If we want to make this building energy efficient by putting in insulation, how would that happen? Do you do it, or would we have to get a sub-contractor from you, how would that happen?” Mr. Munch said, “Part of this is going to have to be covered by the town. There’s going to be something that we’re going to have to pay. I’m trying to find out what the dividing line is between where the town leaves off, and where Green Community comes in.” Lauren said that the Architect will come in and want to know how many hours this room is used, and how much energy you’re going to save? They need to quantify. Weatherize all the windows, put in insulation in this room because it’s going to be used more. She said DOER is going to want to see us spending money within the next few months, putting in an application to draw down your grant. “Once Guardian comes out here, think lighting, and weatherization. She said to think about anti-idling. She said she would go with weatherization in the new Town Garage. TA Mitchell said we are looking at lighting, weatherization, and anti-idling as an initial grant application. She said she would go with weatherization in the new Town Garage. Especially if you want a new heating system, DOER is going to want to see you’re keeping the heat in the building that they are paying for. (*See Energy Reduction Plan*)

Item 8: **Discussion and possible Vote to appoint Town of Peru Wiring Inspector**

Item 8 is tabled to the next BOS Meeting of 3/9/20

Item 9: **Discussion and possible Vote to approve Agreement with BRPC on behalf of Berkshire Health Alliance for Public Health Nursing Services for Fiscal Year 2021**

Mr. Cullett said it’s the same as last year. TA Mitchell said the Chairman of the Select Board would sign the Agreement. *Mr. Cullett motions to sign the Agreement. Mr. Leach seconds. All agree **VOTE 3-0** (*See Agreement with BRPC for Public Health Nursing Services*)

Item 10: **Discussion and possible Vote to approve Agreement with Berkshire County Sheriff’s Office (BCSO) for Emergency Communication Services for Fiscal Year 2021**

***RULE OF NECESSITY** – Mr. Cullett invokes the Rule of Necessity for the reason that he is Police Sergeant of the Peru Police Dept. and Mr. Leach and Mr. Munch are on the Fire Dept.

Speaking as Sergeant, Mr. Cullett said they would definitely have to have a repeater up here on the Tower. Supt. Russell asked if it’s possible to access Windsor’s repeater. He can hear them clearly all over town. They use Dalton Dispatch. Sergeant Cullett said they could probably work something like that out. Mr. Leach asked Sergeant Cullett if he would like to look into Dalton. Sergeant Cullett said it’s too late and we should sign off this year.

*Mr. Cullett motions to sign the Agreement for Emergency Communication Services. Mr. Munch seconds. All agree **VOTE 3-0** (*See Agreement for Emergency Communication*)

Item 11: **Discussion of 250th Anniversary Celebration**

Mr. Cullett mentioned under Item 5 that there are RFQ’s out to 3 different sign companies for a new sign with the due date of March 23rd. He confirmed that everyone has received the RFQ. He said we need to put together an RFQ for electrical service upgrades that we’re looking for behind the Fire Station and the Park. He said they have to decide how much lighting they’re looking for whether it’s going to be putting 2-3 poles back there. He thinks 2 would be sufficient to light both sides of the field and the back side of the highway garage. He said, “We’re going to have to determine how much we can spend for the remainder of the grant. We need find out exactly what the sign bids come in at. Then we’ll know what’s left in the grant.” Mr. Munch asked if we need more, we’re not under the gun to get it done by the time we have to use this grant by. If we have money in the fund, we can use that money for outlets or additional lighting or anything we need electrical. Mr. Cullett said the big thing we were looking to do with the money in the Grant is to get an outdoor panel back there so we can control circuits for vendors and control the lighting.

Coralie Pelkey discussed if we wanted to do the Boston Post Cane to award to the eldest in town as part of the 250th Festivities. She thought Peru used to have a Boston Post Cane. The BOS thought that was a good idea.

Item 12: **Discussion of Fiscal Year 2021 Budget**

Mr. Cullett said at the Finance/Select Board Meeting we ran through the budget requests that we have received so far. TA Mitchell said no other budget requests have been received. The one thing they were missing from their discussion last week was the quote that came in for IMC. Mr. Munch said that at the Finance Meeting, he brought it up that this will become mandatory. Speaking as Police Sergeant, Mr. Cullett said Chief Henault was told that eventually this will become mandatory. It hasn't as of yet. He said the Vendor included training for 4 individuals. He said there are already 3 that have been trained in IMC from working in other towns. The quote total is \$9,660.00 which includes the first year of maintenance. Mr. Munch asked if there was a Grant that could help with this. Mr. Cullett said he would continue to look into the Executive Office of Public Safety. Supt. Russell said at the end of the bills for January, we were still 15,000.00 under on the snow roads. Our biggest expense this month has been sand. There's probably \$5,000.00-\$6,000.00 between trucking & material for sand coming in.

Item 13: **Review and approve Accounts Payable, treasury warrants**

Item 14: **Adjourn**

*Mr. Leach motions to adjourn the 3/2/20 BOS Meeting. Mr. Munch seconds. All agree. **VOTE 3-0**

BOS Meeting adjourned at 8:10 P.M.

Articles used:

3/2/20 BOS Meeting Agenda
2/24/20 BOS Meeting Minutes
Sign in sheet
Quotes for Chevy Pick-up
IMC Quote
Private Road document
Letter of interest for COA
Energy Reduction Plan 2019
Agreement for Emergency Communication Services
Agreement with BRPC for Public Health Nursing Services

Respectfully submitted

Irene J. Morrison

Administrative Assistant

Verne Leach, Chairman _____

Ed Munch, Selectman _____

Bruce Cullett, Selectman _____

Approved: 3/9/2020