

SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES: April 20, 2021: 6:00 P.M.

Town Hall Meeting Center

Ed Munch, BOS Chairman/Historical Commission
Bruce Cullett, Selectman/Chief of Police
Verne Leach, Selectman/ACO
Caleb Mitchell, Town Administrator
Nanette Mone, Board of Health Chair
Charles Levesque, President of Innovative Natural Solutions
Sam Haupt, Finance Committee
Karen Tonelli, Town Assessor
Brian Dewkett, Fire Chief
Tonya Santaniello, Administrative Assistant

Item 1: **Call to order:** 6:00 P.M.

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

Item 3: **State Recording status:** Tonya Santaniello recording; Live stream on Zoom Meeting.

Item 4: **Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag:** Lead by Selectman Munch

Item 5: **Review and Approve Meeting Minutes for 4/5/2021:** Munch made motion to approve minutes for 4/5/2021 pending changes, Leach seconds. All agree. **Vote 3-0.**

Item 6: **Update to Departments:**

Fire Dept.: Fire Chief Dewkett said he was working on generator pricing. Discussed contacting Mark Levernoch Plumbing & Heating and Pioneer Plumbing & Heating for gas who have not come out to look at the job, stated they were too busy. Dewkett stated that St. Pierre Heating & Cooling did come out to look at the job, but he has not had a chance to review their estimate yet. Dewkett said he contacted Jessie Dewkett, Scott Webster, Crosier, and Andrus regarding electrical work on the Fire Dept. generator. Chief Dewkett stated he only received an estimate from Jessie Dewkett. Discussed that the skid unit on the Chevy Brush Truck has been repaired and he ordered an electric start pump for the Deuce and a Half. Discussed the need for a signature on the AFG Safety Grant, BOS Chairman will need to sign the grant. Dewkett said it is a reimbursement grant in the amount of \$8498.00.

Board of Health: Nanette discussed that Katie from the Mobile Unit is gathering names for the upcoming COVID vaccinations. Residents should call 413-655-2020 or 413-655-0053 and leave a message for more information.

Transfer Station: Leach as Transfer Attendant stated there was nothing new to report.

Police Dept.: Chief Cullett said the Grant Application through the Executive Office of Public Safety for safety equipment will be submitted Friday and was signed prior to the meeting by Chairman Munch.

Town Administrator: TA Mitchell discussed call from Crocker regarding the port request they received, and they wanted to know if the Town was cancelling service. Discussed that Valley Communications wanted to know what time they can come out Friday. Mitchell will be at the office to meet them. Cullett will contact Valley and tell them no later than 10:00 AM. Mitchell discussed submittal of notarized letter for the Dunn number, he is waiting for a response from the Government. Discussed the Green Community Contract has been sent to the State and he is waiting for them to return it. Discussed the Credit Invoice received from MIIA removing the old Fire Truck and the addition of the new Fire Truck. The total for FY22 is \$39,672.00 which is due 8/1/2021. Discussed tuition for Smith Vocational, \$18,400 per student yearly and as of today there are 8 students. The Town always adds one extra, so the total is \$165,600. Discussed KP Legal Fees increased by \$10.00 per Hour.

BOS: Cullett stated Citizens Security was at there yesterday from about 11am to 4:30pm, the transformer and the battery backup was bad on the new doorbell and the actual new doorbell is bad, so they were not able to fix it

completely. This should be a warranty issue. Cullett said there should not be any more calls for a low battery on the 2 security systems, the batteries were changed out in the panels. The fire panel was in trouble mode meaning the alarm was deactivated at some point, Citizens tried to trace the problem, but they have not been able to completely fix it and will come back for that.

Item 7: Presentation by Charles Levesque, President of Innovative Natural Solutions, LLC on Modern Wood Heating

6:30PM: Mr. Levesque stated even though he is President of Innovative Natural Solutions, he is doing the presentation as staff to the MA Statewide Wood Energy Team which has been involved in promoting modern wood heat which has nothing to do with the Springfield Biomass Power Plant. The MA Statewide wood energy team is a program of the MA Forest Alliance. Discussed that the purpose of this program is to encourage the Institutional and Public side to possibly use modern wood heat. Mr. Levesque presented a Power Point Presentation discussing different types of modern appliances used today for modern wood heating. Discussed Incentives on the State and Federal level that can help pay for modern wood heat due to the cost of the appliances being more expensive. Munch asked what the percentage difference is between the cost of the propane or oil appliances and the modern wood heating appliances. Mr. Levesque stated they would easily be 2 or 3 times the cost which is why there are so many incentives and that the cost savings over time would easily pay it back. Discussed which building the board was looking at as a possible location. Cullett discussed it would be the Town Hall and that the Town is about to undergo an assessment for the entire structure which will include structural, electrical, plumbing, mechanical and heating systems. Discussed the current forced hot air heating system which is extremely inefficient. Discussed looking at the entire project together including the possibility of going with to a pellet boiler. Leach asked how much maintenance the system would need. Mr. Levesque stated for the pellet boiler it would require the wood ash in a storage bin to be removed 3 or 4 times per heating season. Munch stated the board will need to look into this and put it into the equation when they do the building assessment.

Item 8: Discussion and Possible Vote to decide how to proceed with property located at 40 East Main Road: Karen Tonelli, Town Assessor, discussed the property located at 40 E. Main Road regarding the history and the emails to and from KP Law regarding the Title of the Property. Karen asked what the BOS if they want to move forward with what they do for any other acquired property and have an auction. Munch stated the land is useless because the Town has been told by the State, the Town cannot break ground on the property due to the possibility of toxic waste buried there. Cullett discussed the property continues to be an eye sore and if there is any land in town that they could sell to the State this would be that land as it is surrounded by State property. Karen stated that KP Law is asking if the Town wants them to move forward and file the petition in Land Court or do nothing. Munch asked what Karen recommends. Karen recommended not to proceed with Land Court and paying more legal fees to acquire a non-valuable parcel. Munch made a motion to no further action this year on the property located at 40 E. Main Road because the Town is losing money. Cullett seconds. All agree. **Vote 3-0.** Property is listed as Map 24, Lot 37. Munch discussed not that there was a motion they may go through the Board of Health regarding the property and the building that is falling which is considered a danger.

Item 9: Discussion of Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership Grant: TA Mitchell has nothing to report on the Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership Grant. Mitchell said he was able to contact Chris Hagar at DCR regarding signs on the previous grant. Chris assured Mitchell that they would now put up the signs as soon as possible. They will be putting up 4 signs, 2 Peru State Forest signs on Curtin Road, 1 at the parking area that goes up to Garnet Hill, and 1 for Garnet Hill monument.

Item 10: Discussion and Possible vote on Bulk Waste Fees: Discussed charts that Anna sent regarding fees. Cullett went over fees charged at the Lenox Transfer Station from their Pricing Sheet. Cullett adjusted the Town of Peru's fees which will be updated and posted. Cullett made motion to increase the Bulk Waste Fees as stated on pricing sheet. Munch seconds. Leach recused. All agree. **Vote 2-0.**

Item 11: Discussion of Fiscal Year 2022 Budget: Munch asked about Free Cash. Mitchell stated that the Accountant and Treasurer should have an update on Free Cash numbers in approximately 2 weeks once they close the books. Cullett asked when Mitchell was told this information. Mitchell said a few days ago in an email. Leach asked how many weeks

before the Annual Town meeting. Mitchell stated June 5th is the meeting. Cullett discussed conversation in December that the numbers would be available 3-4 weeks from December. Mitchell said this is right. Munch stated they need these numbers because they need to print the warrant and Cullett said they need to figure out free cash to finalize the Budget. Mitchell stated until the books are closed, he cannot get a number. Munch said the Accountant and Treasurer need to get moving because we are out of time. Mitchell said he sent them an email expressing that. Munch said not only does the Town Report need to be printed but the Warrant for the Annual Town Meeting needs to be printed and posted a week prior to the meeting. Mitchell will keep following up.

Item 12: **COVID-19 Updates:** Munch discussed the email from Peggy White regarding reopening Town Hall. TA Mitchell said he has been working on the reopening for Town Hall and he is almost done. Mitchell discussed that Hinsdale provided materials for people to read which was the training. Munch discussed providing materials and having employees sign a form saying they acknowledge receipt. Mitchell said he has an email from the Town Administrator in Hinsdale with information that he can just forward to everyone so they can sign the paperwork. Cullett said to have one sheet of paper with a spot at the bottom that says I acknowledge receipt of this. Discussed reminding people it is by appointment only and record in a log anyone coming in from the public. Discussed if employees would need to sign in the logbook any time they come into the building. Munch discussed having the information ready by May 3rd. Nanette discussed contact tracing and a person would need to be exposed for more than 15 minutes to someone that is positive.

Item 13: **Public Input:** No public logged in to Zoom meeting. No public input.

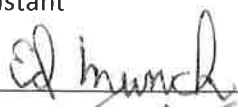

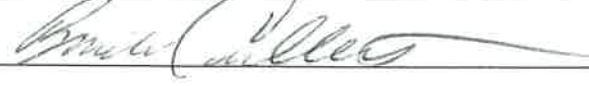
Item 14: **Review and Approve Accounts payable, Treasury Warrants, Payroll Warrants:** Accounts payable, Treasury Warrants and Payroll Warrants reviewed and approved.

Item 15: **Adjourn:** Munch made motion to adjourn the 4/5/2021 BOS Meeting. Leach seconds. All agree **Vote 3-0. The 4/5/2021 BOS Meeting adjourned at 7:46 P.M.**

Articles used:

- 4/20/2021 BOS Meeting Agenda
- 4/5/2021 BOS Meeting Minutes
- MIIA Property & Casualty Endorsement Invoice and Contract Changes
- Presentation from Innovative Natural Solutions
- Town of Peru Bulk Dumpster Pricing Updates
- Lenox Valley WTF, LLC Waste/Recycling Transfer Facility Fees
- Commonwealth of MA Trial Court Civil Action paperwork
- 8/10/2018 Email from KP Law regarding 40 E. Main Rd
- 9/24/2018 Email from Assessors to KP Law regarding 40 E. Main Rd.
- 10/2/2018 Email response from KP Law to Assessors regarding 40 E. Main Rd.

Respectfully Submitted
Tonya Santaniello, Administrative Assistant

Ed Munch, Chairman 
Verne Leach, Selectman 
Bruce Cullett, Selectman 

Date Approved: 4/26/2021

RECEIVED
MAY 04 2021
Kim Leach
TOWN CLERK
TOWN OF PERU