

TOWN HALL 3 EAST MAIN ROAD PERU, MA 01235

SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES: August 22, 2022: 6:00 P.M.

Peru Community Center

Verne Leach, Chair Selectman/ACO
Bruce Cullett, Selectman/Police Chief
Doug Haskins, Selectman/Finance Committee
James Welch, Town Administrator
Terry Walker, Administrative Assistant
Jesse Pelkey, Fire Chief
Justin Russell, Highway Superintendent
Jim Kenney, Historical
Bonnie DiTomasso, School Committee

Public Attendees: N/A

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

Item 2: Roll Call: Chairman Leach present, Selectman Haskins present, Selectman Cullett present

Item 3: State Recording status: Selectman Leach for personal use

Item 4: Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag: Led by Selectman Leach

Item 5: Review and Approve BOS Meeting Minutes for 08/08/2022:

Selectman Leach motion to approve 08/08/2022 minutes pending changes, Selectman Cullett second, 3-0

Item 6: Update of Departments: Highway Superintendent Russell mentioned that the MassWorks project on East Windsor Road is scheduled to begin next Tuesday, August 30th. Highway Superintendent Russell also mentioned that MassDot had contacted him after a site visit on Route 143 and the road work should be completed this fall. Transfer Station Attendant Leach asked Superintendent Russell about bottles and cans, and it was noted that the bottles and cans should have been swapped today. Also, Transfer Station Attendant Leach mentioned that the gate is difficult to open and it needs to be fixed.

Fire Chief Pelkey had questions regarding two invoices that were pulled and put on hold last week. Selectman Cullett mentioned that the board had pulled two invoices and TA Welch returned the invoices to the Town Accountant. Chief Pelkey explained the importance of a new nozzle. Also, Chief Pelkey explained the importance of the ESO program costing \$5,000. Selectman Cullett explained an item such as this should go on the wish list for Free Cash at Annual Town Meeting. Chief Pelkey thought it was a good idea to take out of his budget since he was awarded in excess of \$15,000 in grant funding last year. Chief Pelkey feels this program will help his fire department and he assured everyone he will not go over his budget. Chief Pelkey purchased this program because it is beneficial in reporting to the state and federal government. There are 400 programs available for training, and officers can do training at home. Selectman Leach instructed Chief Pelkey to bring large purchases to the Board of Selectmen before purchasing. Selectman Cullett explained that the Selectboard knew nothing about this program, and they do have questions that need to be addressed. Chief Pelkey explained that recurring cost for the ESO program is \$3,000 per year. Selectman Leach needs more detail explaining what this program is all about, Selectman Haskins is concerned that Chief Pelkey has spent most of his budget and the fiscal year has just started. Chief Pelkey reiterated that he plans to write grants and he assured everyone he will not go over his budget. Selectman Cullett is concerned Chief Pelkey's building maintenance account has less than \$300.00 remaining in the account. Chief Pelkey said he was told by the board to spend out of his budget for

the notice of non-compliance he wrote regarding the fire house violations. Selectman Cullett explained to Chief Pelkey that he brought the urgency on himself with the notice of violation regarding fire house issues. Selectman Cullett feels that a \$5,000 program is excessive, and the Selectmen do not have information on it, the expense needs to be evaluated and more information is needed.

Selectman Leach questioned Chief Pelkey as to why tax dollars are being spent on power washing someone's fence. Chief Pelkey explained that he tries to help towns people and he was helping the Berkshire Sheriffs Association for the day. Chief Pelkey was still in service for calls. Since Chief Pelkey only has \$300.00 left in building maintenance account, Selectman Leach asked Chief Pelkey if he had half of the estimate for capping the well. Fire Chief did not have an answer.

TA Welch shared an invoice from Atlas for fireworks at Camp Danbee totaling \$2,500 -Peru's portion of the shared fireworks. Also, TA Welch has not received any feedback from architects or engineers for the Town Hall Feasibility Study.

Item 7: Discussion, Review and possible vote on Inspection Fees for Various Town Departments: HOLD

Item 8: Discussion and possible vote on process and criteria for additions to Veteran's Honor Roll: Jim Kenney requested the minutes reflect Dick Burk completed the majority of the research. Mr. Kenney mentioned that he is attempting to complete the list of veterans through tombstones at the cemetery, but many tombstones do not have information on veterans serving in the military. Mr. Kenney brought recommendations and criteria for inclusion on the Veterans Honor Roll.

Recommendation: Board of Selectmen appoint a 3-person Honor Roll Committee to review and approve applications.

Criteria:

1. Veterans or surviving family must make an application.
2. To qualify a veteran must have been a life-long resident of the Town of Peru or have been a resident of the town upon entry to the military during a period of conflict, or a resident directly after discharge. (Verification of residency will be confirmed to the satisfaction of the Honor Roll Committee).
3. Must have received an honorable discharge at time of separation and provide a copy of DD Form 214. WD AGO Form or applicable Honorable Discharge Form.
4. Must have served at least one day on Active Duty during the periods of conflict listed below.
 - a. Revolutionary War
 - b. War of 1812
 - c. Patriot War
 - d. Mexican American War
 - e. Civil War
 - f. Spanish American War
 - g. World War I
 - h. World War II
 - i. Korean War
 - j. Vietnam War
 - k. Afghanistan War
 - l. Operation Desert Shield/Storm/Iraqi Freedom/Enduring Freedom
 - m. Iraq War
5. Veterans who served in other wars/conflicts can be considered for recognition by the Honor Roll Committee and submission of a nomination form is encouraged.
6. Medals, honors, with supporting documents and photos are required.
7. The completed form should be returned to the Town of Peru Town Clerk.

Selectman Leach addition: on Page 2 # 4 to add have served your country. Highway Superintendent Russell questioned if there is available funding to build a veterans Memorial at the town green in Peru. Selectman Cullett addition: to add with approval of paperwork equal to the DD form 214. Mr. Kenney will add two additions and will

look into grant funding with the veteran's agent in Pittsfield. Selectman Cullett motion to approve once changes have been finalized, Selectman Leach Second, 3-0.

Item 9: Discussion and possible vote on Wahconah HS building project addition: Bonnie Ditomasso, presented the Selectman with a report from the school committee. The Original project cost of the project at Wahconah High School was \$72,000,000 and \$2,000,000 was not used. The excess funds can be used to repair the Wahconah track project if the Selectmen from the 7 towns vote to use the excess funding for the school track. The track was built in 1980 and resurfaced in 1991. The track has grass growing in the cracks, the surface is hazardous and is a liability. By adding the \$2,000,000 to the loan with an interest rate of 4.5% it would increase the Peru residents' portion by \$3,955.00 per year for the life of the loan. One option is to go to each town for a silent affirmative vote, a Special Town Meeting could be held and ask the voters, or the Board of Selectmen could vote yes or no. Bonnie Ditomasso will attend the Thursday School Committee Meeting and the vote will be 60 days from Thursday. TA Welch suggested that the Board of Selectman vote and give Bonnie Ditaomasso direction, Selectman Cullett motion to vote town by town, and motion to use the \$2,000,000 to complete the track project at Wahconah High School, Selectman Haskins second, 3-0 and Bonnie Ditomasso was instructed to vote yes on 16D.

Highway Superintendent Russell mentioned that Bonnie DiTomasso should ask if vehicles could be restricted from the track and limit to emergency vehicles to prolong the life of the track. Superintendent Russell also wants the condition of bleachers discussed and they are not ADA certified. Bonnie DiTomasso will bring this before the school committee.

Item 10: Discussion and possible vote on Fire Inspections for Town Hall and Highway Garage: Selectman Leach questioned Fire Chief Pelkey on how the Highway Department can be written up with a Hot Work violation when no one is using the welder. Fire Chief Pelkey said it is a violation because there are torches in the building and Superintendent Russell is not certified. Selectman Cullett asked Chief Pelkey why was the agreement that the Fire Chief and Board of Selectman violated and why Fire Chief Pelkey didn't do a walk through before violations were issued. Selectman Haskins and Highway Superintendent Russell offered to walk through the highway garage with Chief Pelkey and Selectman Cullett offered to walk through the town hall with Chief Pelkey before any violations were issued. The board felt that Chief Pelkey could have helped with issues and the board wanted to work with Chief Pelkey to get the buildings ready before violations were issued. Selectman Cullett said he begged Chief Pelkey to work with the Selectboard, Chief Pelkey completely ignored the agreement, violated the agreement and rushed to get violation notices written. Selectman Cullett mentioned that they had asked for dates and times that the Fire Chief was doing the walk through so the issues could be taken care of before a violation was written. Selectman Cullett told Chief Pelkey he showed disrespect and was very unprofessional. The Selectboard had asked Chief Pelkey several times to use discretion and work with the Board of Selectmen.

Chief Pelkey mentioned that anyone could have contacted him about the inspections, and he didn't do anything wrong. Chief Pelkey stated that Highway Superintendent Russell showed disrespect towards the Fire Chief and told him to get off the property. Selectman Cullett asked Fire Chief Pelkey once more to cooperate and work with everyone. Selectman Leach asked Fire Chief Pelkey how a violation can be written if it is not happening. Fire Chief Pelkey said if something is on the premises without a certification a violation can be written. The resolution -Highway Superintendent Russell will take the class for the certification. Selectman Cullett again reiterated that Fire Chief Pelkey is working against the Board of Selectmen and in the public sector when an agreement is violated there is cause for termination. Fire Chief Pelkey stated that the Town Hall violations are curtains in the basement and upstairs curtains are not fireproof. Also, Building Inspector paperwork is too close to the panel. Fire Chief Pelkey said he was doing due diligence on all inspections. TA Welch asked Fire Chief Pelkey if special accommodations should be made for Chief Pelkey at town hall because of his spinal cord injury. Fire Chief Pelkey assured TA Welch he did not need special accommodations for his spinal cord injury.

Item 11: Discussion and possible vote on the UPCODE program: Selectman Leach motion to approve UPCODE_Program for \$396.00, Selectman Cullett second, 3-0.

Selectman Leach reconsidered and rescinded his motion, Selectman Cullett second, 3-0 to rescind.

Selectman Leach motion to revisit next week, Selectman Cullett second, 3-0

Item 12: Discussion of applicants for the Town Accountant position: Applicant for Town Accountant wants her interview to be kept confidential. Selectman Leach is in favor of keeping the applicant confidential, and the possibility of executive session for the interview. Also, the Town Accountant must be present.

Item 13: Discussion and possible vote on Woodland Trails Partnership Job Description: TA Welch criteria for position were as follows: attend meetings, knowledge of land conservation, keep Board of Selectmen informed, grant process ie: assist the town to optimize grant funding for forestry, and this will be a volunteer position. Selectman Leach motion to accept pending changes, Selectman Cullett second, 3-0.

Item 14: Public Input: N/A

Item 15: Review and Approve Accounts Payable, Treasury Warrant, Payroll Warrant: Town Treasurer presented the Board of Selectman with the results of a State House Anticipation Note for \$1,244,706 for the MassWorks Grant project on East Windsor Road. The funds will be in bank by August 30th and the SAAN is a 7 month note. Bids were received on August 10th and the bids were as follows:

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|--------|---------|
| • Easthampton Savings Bank | 3.50% | |
| • Adams Community Bank | 3.75% | |
| • Greenfield Co-operative Bank | 3.40% | AWARDED |
| • Berkshire Bank | no bid | |
| • UniBank | no bid | |

Selectman Leach motion to approve loan #346 and award the bid to Greenfield Co-operative Bank, Selectman Cullett second, 3-0

Item 16: Adjourn: Selectman Leach made motion to adjourn the 08/22/2022 BOS Meeting, Selectman Cullett second, Vote 3-0. The 08/22/2022 BOS Meeting adjourned at 8:27 P.M.

Articles used:

Minutes 08/08/2022

Payroll 23-4P

Vendor VO 5-2023

Town Accountant candidate

Notice of Violation Peru Town Hall issued by Fire Chief Pelkey

Notice of Violation Peru Highway Department issued by Fire Chief Pelkey

Town of Peru Veterans Honor Roll Nomination Form

Town of Peru Veterans Honor Roll Recommendations and criteria for inclusion

Mohawk Trails Woodland Partnership Peru Representative

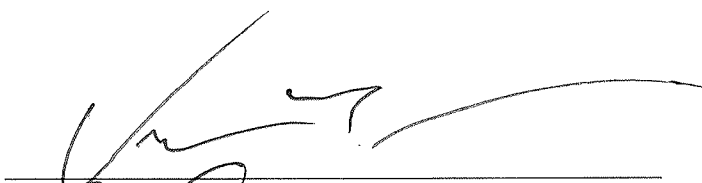
Bids for \$1,244,706 SANN for the MassWorks Grant project

Respectfully Submitted,

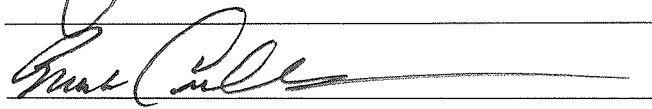
Terry Walker

Administrative Assistant

Verne Leach, Chairman

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Verne Leach', written over a horizontal line.

Bruce Cullett, Selectman

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bruce Cullett', written over a horizontal line.

Doug Haskins, Selectman

A horizontal line for a signature, currently blank.

Date Approved: _____