

SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES: March 6, 2023 @ 6:00 P.M.

Peru Town Hall Meeting Room

Vern Leach, Chairman BOS/ACO
Bruce Cullett, Selectman/Police Chief
Terry Walker, Administrative Assistant
Justin Russell, Highway Superintendent
Jesse Pelkey, Fire Chief

Public Attendees:
Bonny DiTomasso-School Committee
Dale Weeks
Heather Brooks

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

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

Item 3: State Recording status: Selectman Leach and Selectman Cullett for personal reasons under Exemption E

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

Item 5: Review and Approve BOS Meeting Minutes for 2/27/2023:

Selectman Leach motion to approve 02/27/2023 minutes pending changes, Selectman Cullett second, 2-0,

Item 6: Updates of Departments:

Highway Superintendent Russell mentioned that the clothing container has not been removed from the transfer station. Superintendent Russell also mentioned that he had spoken to the state regarding Route 143 and discussed omitting rumble strips. There is a possibility the federal guidelines may require rumble strips. After milling is completed on 143, they may add millings to intersections. If there is any money remaining from this state funded project, it will hopefully be used for guardrails. Superintendent Russell mentioned he is in the process of submitting paperwork for Chapter 90 crack sealing on several roads.

Bonny DiTomasso-School Committee member distributed the school budget and list of vocational students. She mentioned that 2 students are graduating and there aren't any applications for Freshman students for next school year. Plus, Bonny mentioned that the minutes from a previous Board of Selectmen's meeting stated Annual Town Meeting twice and Annual Town Election was omitted.

Fire Chief Pelkey mentioned that a Darley invoice was not paid in November. Chief Pelkey contacted our Town Accountant, and she said it was before her time and she had been locked out. Chief Pelkey asked the Selectboard to do some research and find out why the invoice wasn't paid. The invoice is for \$118.00 for shipping, and it had not been paid. Selectman Leach will research and find out why this wasn't paid. Fire Chief Pelkey mentioned he attended a class in Worcester for Fire Service Grants. One grant is for \$10,500 which is very competitive and not a matching grant. Chief Pelkey mentioned that the class on Energy storage batteries was very informative.

Police Chief Cullett: Nothing at this time.

Item 7: Discussion about snow plowing complaint by Michael Dewkett: Selectman Leach stated that it is hard to address this complaint without the complainant present. This will be tabled until Mr. Dewkett is present. Selectman Leach stated that Mr. Dewkett had been notified that he was on the agenda.

Item 8: Discussion and possible vote on estimates on Peru Fire House Furnace: Fire Chief Pelkey updated the Selectboard with quotes for a new furnace for the Fire House.

- George Propane \$8,435
- Laureyn's United \$10,950
- Pittsfield Pipers \$7,150

Since Pittsfield Pipers submitted the lowest bid, Selectman Leach made a motion to offer the bid to Pittsfield Pipers, Selectman Cullett second, 2-0. Chief Pelkey mentioned that he will contact Pittsfield Pipers in the morning.

Item 9: Discussion and possible vote on repair quotes for the Peru Fire Engine: Fire Chief Pelkey mentioned that Freightliner in Westfield, MA is waiting on the brake parts for the fire engine which were ordered from Merider. At this time, Chief Pelkey does not have a shipping date for the parts. Selectman Cullett asked when the last preventative maintenance was done on the fire engine. Fire Chief Pelkey stated that the last preventative maintenance on the fire truck was done by Shakerly the end of August 2021 and it will be two years the summer 2023. The cost for Shakerly is \$1,300 for servicing. The servicing includes tire pressure, coolant levels and oil change. Freightliner inspected the fire engine and notified Fire Chief Pelkey that there were several issues:

- Rear Mud Flaps
- Oil Leak
- Power Steering Leak
- Coolant Leak
- Wiper Blades
- License Plate not attached properly
- Tires
- Strobe light

Selectman Cullett asked Fire Chief Pelkey if any issues that freightliner found matched up with Chief Pelkey's inspections of the fire engine. Fire Chief Pelkey did not see the power steering leak until it was at freightliner. Selectman Cullett mentioned that Chief Pelkey is a trained diesel mechanic and asked Chief Pelkey if these issues were major and do we need a garage to do the work. Chief Pelkey stated that he is no longer a certified diesel mechanic. Chief Pelkey mentioned that he could have a mechanic come to the Fire Department Garage and fix some of the issues with the fire engine. Chief Pelkey mentioned that he could fix some of the issues in house such as: strobe light, mud flaps and attach the license plate properly. Chief Pelkey stated that he cannot change the tires. Chief Pelkey also reiterated that there isn't a shipping date for the brakes nor a tracking number.

Selectman Cullett asked Chief Pelkey if he could possibly go get the fire engine and fix the issues that can be done in house. Fire Chief Pelkey was under the assumption the fire truck was apart and believes the tires may be off the truck. Selectman Leach asked Fire Chief Pelkey if he has a monthly check list for the fire engine. Fire Chief Pelkey mentioned that he would look over his books and get back to the Board of Selectmen. Highway Superintendent mentioned that the issues may be minor and offered the Fire Chief use of his power washer to check for leaks. Highway Superintendent Russell asked Fire Chief Pelkey how many firefighters have a CDL and what training is provided to the firefighters. Fire Chief Pelkey stated that none of the firefighters have a CDL, the training provided is downloading a book and taking the firefighters out every Tuesday.

Highway Superintendent Russell mentioned that the firefighters need real life experience and if the truck is not driven properly, it will ruin the brakes. Fire Chief Pelkey mentioned that the Tanker has nothing wrong with the brakes. Selectman Leach said it was very concerning that the first time the Selectboard found out about these issues mid-February and Chief Pelkey knew about the fire engine issues in November. Chief Pelkey mentioned that Shakerly didn't mention the wipers needed replacing when they replaced the windshield in December. Selectman Cullett said all small towns strive to follow NFPA guidelines, but it is not mandatory. Chief Pelkey mentioned that tires must be DOT compliant, and the fire engine tires are missing tread on the tires. Highway Superintendent Russell mentioned that the fire engine tires do not have dry rot just normal wear and tear. Selectman Leach asked Fire Chief Pelkey how many calls since November. Chief Pelkey said he believed he had two calls. Chief Pelkey suggested having a line item at Annual Town Meeting for new tires.

Chief Pelkey agreed to power wash the fire engine at the Highway Garage. Chief Pelkey will bring the fire engine back to the Fire House if Freightliner doesn't have the fire engine apart. Selectman Cullett mentioned that it is a top priority to keep the equipment maintained and serviced. Selectman Cullett also instructed Chief Pelkey to delegate firefighters to check trucks monthly. Chief Pelkey is waiting on an estimate for parts. As of today, no shipping conformation on the parts. Selectman Leach asked Chief Pelkey to email Selectboard with updates. Chief Pelkey will call Freightliner in a day or two and if the fire engine is together, he will pick it up. Selectboard put on hold.

Item 10: Discussion of FY24 Budget: The Selectboard did not have any new departmental budgets since last week. Highway Superintendent Russell received a verbal quote for salt shed doors-\$4,200.

Highway Superintendent Russell is working on quotes for plows, and he is also working on his FY24 budget.

Superintendent Russell mentioned that last week he had stocked up on salt and sand. Superintendent Russell also mentioned that the snow budget will be overbudget. Superintendent Russell mentioned that the Mack truck is 25 years old, the Selectboard should consider replacing it and using the Mack as a backup truck.

The Finance Committee will meet Wednesday, March 15th.

Fire Chief Pelkey asked if DOT physicals could be paid out of his budget. Selectman Cullett mentioned that OSHA requirement standard since 2018 requires the Fire Fighters have medical clearance to wear a respirator. Prior to 2018, the firefighters are grandfathered.

Item 11: Public Input: Dale Weeks asked Fire Chief Pelkey what is being replaced on the fire engine. Fire Chief Pelkey stated that he was having rotors, calipers, wheel seals and brake pads replaced.

Dale Weeks asked the Board of Selectmen if writing grants was in Chief Pelkey's job description. The Selectboard said grant writing was in the Fire Chief's job description. Fire Chief Pelkey mentioned that everything has been clarified since the Finance Committee meeting.

Item 12: Review and Approve Accounts Payable, Treasury Warrants and Payroll Warrant: V19-2023, 23 18P

Selectman Leach motion to recess at 7:06 p.m. Selectman Cullett second, 2-0, Selectman Leach called meeting to order at 7:20 p.m. Selectman Cullett present, Selectman Leach present.

Selectman Leach received an Open Meeting Law Complaint, today at 3:28 p.m. from Kimberly Wetherell and this will be on the agenda for next week.

Fire Chief Pelkey returned to the meeting and asked if he could use Terry Walker to write a FEMA Grant. Selectman Leach felt that Fire Chief Pelkey took several classes in grant writing he was capable of writing the grant. Fire Chief Pelkey mentioned that the classes were for State Grants not Federal Grants. Selectman Leach mentioned that Terry is working in other departments and there is so much money allocated. Fire Chief Pelkey asked why Terry could not assist in all departments.

Item 13: Adjourn: Selectman Leach motion to adjourn the 03/06/2023 BOS Meeting, Selectman Cullett second, Vote 2-0. The 03/06/2023 BOS Meeting adjourned at 7:50 P.M.

Articles used:

Minutes- 02/27/2023

Warrants – V19-2023, 23 18P

Central Berkshire Regional School Budget

Fire Department Furnace Quotes

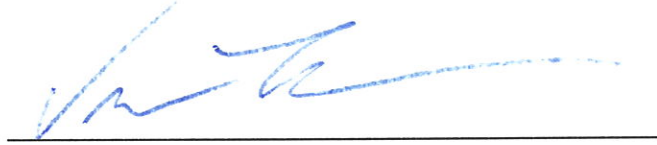
Sign in sheet

Respectfully Submitted,

Terry Walker

Administrative Assistant

Verne Leach, Chairman



Doug Haskins, Selectman



Bruce Cullett, Selectman



Date Approved: 3-13-23

