

TOWN HALL 3 EAST MAIN ROAD PERU, MA 01235

SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES: February 5, 2024, 6:00 P.M.

Town Hall Meeting Room

Verne Leach, Chair Selectman/ACO
Ed Munch, Selectman
Terry Walker, Town Administrator
Justin Russell, Highway Superintendent
Valerie Bird, Board of Health Agent
Nanette Mone, Board of Health

Public Attendees: Dan Perreault

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

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

Item 3: State Recording status: N/A

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

Item 5: Review and Approve BOS Meeting Minutes for 1/22/2024

Selectman Leach motion approve 1/22/2024 minutes as written, Selectman Munch second 2-0

Item 6: Update of Departments:

EMD-Bruce Cullett informed the BOS that the 2023 EMPG grant included the purchase of a suitcase style 2200-watt portable Honda generator that will be housed and maintained at the Highway Department but will be available for public safety and emergency purposes. The 2023 Grant was also utilized to purchase the Fire Department five "red zone" hoods to be worn under their turnout gear, several portable radio batteries, and a variety of equipment batteries.

Highway Superintendent Russell mentioned that he has contacted Gene Darby regarding the beaver issue which is causing flooding in the vicinity of 27-31 North Road.

Superintendent Russell mentioned that he is replacing the bushings and pins in the excavator boom and should be completed next week. Also, the invoices from Pete's Tire and Cintas have not been paid that were on the Special Town Meeting Warrant. Highway Superintendent Russell contacted the Accountant and they were not aware that a Special Town Meeting to pay these invoices had occurred. Selectman Leach asked TA Walker to follow up with the payment of these invoices.

TA Walker mentioned that the MassWorks grant application will open on May 6, 2023, and must be submitted by June 5, 2023. This grant is a million dollar grant for road reconstruction. The One Stop Webinar was today from 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m. and was very informative. One item they stressed is if the town writes a grant for two roads the roads would be competing with each other. Although, the town can submit as many Expression of Interest (EOI) for projects as needed. In the past, the town could only submit 5 EOI's. The Board of Selectmen will get feedback from Highway Superintendent Russell on what roads should be considered for the \$1,000,000 MassWorks Grant.

TA Walker mentioned that Patrick Mahoney from Guardian Energy and his engineers will be completing an audit on town buildings on Monday, February 5, 2024, at 11:00 a.m. TA Walker notified all departments of the date and time. Also, TA Walker reported that Town Clerk Leach is too busy with elections, and she cannot assist with the Annual Report.

The Annual Town Report will be printed by Courier Printing. TA Walker will be emailing all departments requesting their reports for FY 23. (July 1, 2022, to June 30, 2023.)

Item 7: Discussion of Oil Spill at Town Garage: Highway Superintendent Russell reported that a dump truck from MB Hauling was delivering sand to the Highway Garage when a hose broke on the dump truck spilling oil at the highway garage. Miller Petroleum handled the cleanup and Lockwood Remediation Technologies was called in to test the soil. The release from Lockwood Remediation, Neil Schofield, states the spill was contained and clean up has been completed.

Item 8: Discussion and possible vote on Appointing Dan Hassett as House Inspector through Berkshire Health Alliance for the Board of Health: Nanette Mone asked who contacted the BOS to put this item on the agenda. Selectman Leach stated the Chairman of the Board of Health, asked the BOS to place this item on the agenda. BOH agent Valerie Bird mentioned that if Dan Hassett is appointed, his responsibilities will be to follow through with getting property in compliance and if the owner does not comply, he will go to court for the town. Selectman Leach motion to appoint Dan Hassett as Housing Specialist Inspector until June 30, 2024, Selectman Munch second, 2-0

Item 9: Review and Approve Accounts Payable, Treasury Warrant, Payroll Warrant: V16-2024, 16-2024

Item 10: Public Input: Bruce Cullett requested that the Board of Selectmen appoint a committee of five to oversee the Assessment and Study of the Town Hall/Community Center and spearhead the effort to document the existing conditions of the building. Mr. Cullett referenced the Request for Proposals that was sent out by the Town to Architectural/Engineering Firms approximately 18 months ago with no responsive bidders. He stated that a great deal of legwork is required to get a professional firm onboard to complete this study so that a report of findings can be utilized to make good decisions on the future building needs and the needs of Town Departments. Mr. Cullett referenced the discussions the BOS has had previously with the Library Trustees about the potential for bringing the Library into a Town owned building and opening the door for Library specific grants. Bruce Cullett volunteered to be a committee member. This committee would all work together to understand the needs of the town and conduct formal meetings to move towards a goal. An Engineering firm will be needed for a feasibility study on whether the existing building could be renovated and brought up to code or will a new building be needed. The BOS were in favor of forming this Committee and asked Bruce Cullett to provide a public posting for the Committee. Selectman Munch suggested that the Librarian should have input and Bruce Cullett agreed mentioning that he recommends members of the Committee have commercial building construction and facilities management experience. Selectman Leach mentioned that the heating system is very inefficient. Highway Superintendent Russell mentioned that there are cracks in the foundation and the town hall does not meet current codes. Mr. Cullett stated that during any renovation project or if the building was to be replaced that temporary office trailers could be utilized for town business and could potentially be placed behind the Fire Station so that they could easily be connected to power, water, and septic. Selectman Munch felt comfortable with getting started with the assessment of the building to allow for grants for the new town hall since TA Walker has been awarded millions of dollars in grants. Bruce Cullett felt that if replacement of the structure is more cost effective than renovation that it would utilize roughly the same footprint.

Selectman Leach motion to recess from 6:45 p.m-7:00 p.m., Selectman Munch second, 2-0

Selectman Leach motion to resume meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Roll call Selectman Leach present, Selectman Munch present. BOS resumed review and approval of Accounts Payable, Treasury, and Payroll warrant.

Item 11: Adjourn: Selectman Leach made motion to adjourn the 2/5/2024 BOS Meeting, Selectman Munch second, Vote 2-0. The 2/5/2024 BOS Meeting adjourned at 7:31 P.M.

Articles used:

Warrant: V16-2024, 16-2024
Appointment letter

Terry Walker
Town Administrator

Verne Leach, Chairman



Doug Haskins, Selectman



Ed Munch, Selectman



Date Approved: 2-12-24

Received 2/12/2024 Kim Leach, Town Clerk