

Select Board

Minutes

February 24, 2015

Leverett Town Hall, 7 pm

Present: Rich, Julie, Peter, Margie and Lisa

Finance Com: Tom P, Ann, Greg, Steve, Tom H.

School Com: Margot, Bob, Jen, Kip, Alan

David Detmold, Montague Reporter

School Budget Hearing

Kip asked for a couple minutes prior to the start of the hearing to thank Rich Brazeau, Bob Mahler, Margot Lacey, John Kuczek, Randall Roberts (and his crew) and Wayne, Chris, and Joe (janitorial staff at the school) for their response to the sprinkler system malfunction and flood at the school last week. Additionally Kip was interested in seeing an infrastructure capital plan/committee implemented by the Select Board to avoid unforeseen large expenditures. Margie stated that she and John K. have been working on a spreadsheet. Once it is done it will be circulated to other departments so they can add things. Kip also wanted to acknowledge that the town will be losing a couple of employees in the next couple years who collectively hold a huge amount of institutional knowledge (buildings and roads).

Bob presented the school budget with a 3.5% reduction. He reduced a full-time position to a .4 position and reduced a custodial position from 8 to 6 hours per day. Additional cuts were made across the board, all programs were reduced in some way. The final school budget was \$1,600,786. Questions were asked by the Select Board and Finance Committees. School choice was discussed again—Kip brought attention to the fact that school choice money is now being used to fund the budget whereas once it was seen as “extra.”

Other business:

Gary Billings came in to ask if the Select Board would hire Tim Batchelder as a part-time police officer.

Motion: To appoint Tim Batchelder as a part-time police officer pending a satisfactory physical at the rate of \$17.00/hour. Vote: 3-0 in favor.

The minutes and executive session minutes of Feb. 10 were approved as written.

The board agreed to forward the petition of Robert Sieruta concerning a zoning change for ATM on to the Planning Board for further action.

Rich updated the board on the sprinkler system malfunction that occurred last week. Last Wednesday (during school vacation) the fire alarm went off signaling the Fire Dept. to respond to the school. The sprinkler system had gone off perhaps due to the subzero weather. Upon responding 8,000 gallons of water had leaked into 4 classrooms causing major damage to insulation, plumbing, rugs, sheetrock, etc. Randall Roberts was able to come immediately with a crew and school was able to resume as scheduled on Monday. Contractors are still working including a specialty company with moisture meters and huge dryers.

Tuesday morning the system went off again causing damage to two more classrooms. The reason for the second episode is unknown. The system had been put under pressure, tested and drained after the first break. The insurance company may conduct an investigation.

Due to the size of the project Randy will have to get bonded. Margie will call him and have him call his insurance company. Margie is working with the insurance company on the details and finances and expects the bill will be paid directly by them. If the insurance company can't provide reimbursement to the contractor quickly enough Margie spoke with the Town Acct. who said the Select Board could vote an emergency expenditure.

Motion: To set up an emergency spending account (according to MGL Ch. 44, Sec. 31) insurance fund.

Vote: 3-0 in favor.

The board discussed asking the following people to be on the hiring committee for a new Transfer Station Coordinator: Gordon Fretwell, Christine Nelson, Judy Weinthal, and Margie. Rich volunteered to be on it if necessary.

The Council on Aging was asked if they were interested in having a person from the new Veteran's Services come to Leverett during a Senior Lunch to do an hour-long presentation on their services. Terry, for the COA, thought that this may not be the right audience. The board suggested that Margie call back and ask if they should consider grouping towns to get more interest and a bigger audience.

The board signed the final completion documents for Siemens after receiving a letter from TJ Conway stating that they had been paid in full and after Margie met with a Siemens representative to discuss the damper. Margie was impressed with the thoroughness of the meeting/inspection. She will send a thank you note.

Motion: To sign final completion of the Siemens' project. Vote: 3-0 in favor.

A grant agreement for SCBA's was signed.

Motion: To appoint Ben Miller to the Fire Dept. pending a satisfactory physical and CORI at the rate of \$17.00/ hour. Vote: 3-0 in favor.

The board agreed to use the FRCOG Accounting program again next year.

The meeting scheduled for March 10 needs to be moved to March 9. Lisa will email affected people.

Julie reported that 10 people came to the Affordable Housing meeting. A second informational meeting will be held on March 23.

The mail was read. Thank you's were signed.

Meeting adjourned: 9:00 pm.

Minutes taken by Lisa Stratford.

