

Select Board

Minutes

June 23, 2015

Leverett Town Hall, 7 pm

Present: Select Board Members: Julie S., Peter d., Tom H., Lisa and Margie, Ann Tweedy for the Montague Reporter

Spraying on the power lines by Eversource

Present for Eversource were Jeff Baril, arborist; and Tony Johnson; Vegetation Manager, Kathleen Casey; Conservation Commission Clerk, in addition about a dozen residents from town were present

Kurt Adams who brought the issue to the Select Board was first to speak. He talked about the dangers of herbicide application and requested that Eversource cut instead of spray the vegetation growing under the power lines. He also mentioned the vote taken by the town in the 1980's stating the same request.

Tony answered explaining the difficulties and costs of cutting including the fact that cutting promotes growth making the maintenance far more difficult. He also stated that Eversource sprays every 4 years with state approved chemicals (glyphosate) and certified/licensed application specialists on foot spraying individual plants. The spraying that is done is particular to certain problematic plants leaving desirable plants unharmed.

Others issues mentioned by those in attendance included the chemicals that are mixed with the glyphosate such as surfactants which are toxic and the possible harm to animals. The Town's Conservation Commission is notified as to any herbicide treatments planned in the upcoming year.

Kurt Adams asked if cutting is done in any other town and if they would use mechanical cutting. Tony replied that the Town of Ludlow, in the 1970's, requested cutting instead of spraying. A contract was drawn up stating that the Town would be responsible for the costs of cutting once the cost went beyond the cost of spraying. This arrangement lasted about 15-20 years before it became too expensive for them.

Chuck Dauchy asked Tony to inform the meeting of the options land owners have for agreements with Eversource to use the land under the power lines for agricultural purposes ("productive management") like growing Christmas trees, hay, food, etc. Tony stated that such agreements are possible.

In the end a mutual agreement was reached whereby Eversource will conduct a demonstration of spraying for anyone interested. They will provide a list of species being sprayed and a schedule of when spraying will occur (as best they can with the weather and scheduling of the contractors). Margie will be the point person and will send out a CTY with the demonstration date and dates of spraying as predicted by the contractors.

Transfer Station:

Ananda Larsen, Transfer Station Supervisor, and Jan Ameen, Director of FCSWMD, present.

Jan came in with a spreadsheet of all the containers owned by the Town, their condition, and the price to replace them. The containers owned by Town are in fairly good condition and should not need replacing in the next few years. She also made the Town aware that the FCSWMD rents certain containers for as little as \$360/yr. making that a very affordable option. It was noted that the replacement cost for containers on the Capital schedule is too high and should be adjusted. It is possible that they will be removed in the future if renting them seems to be a better option. Jan also reviewed a paper compactor cost savings scenario. She applied for a grant for one on behalf of the town. If it is received a further discussion and town meeting appropriation will be necessary.

Shutesbury Rd. accident:

Gary Billings, Police Chief, and George Lockwood and neighbor also present.

Another fatality on a motorcycle occurred on Shutesbury Rd. a couple of weeks ago. George requested new signage in that area alerting people coming down the hill of the sharp corner ahead. It was agreed that new chevron-style signs might help with safety. A stop ahead and stop sign at the bottom of the hill were also discussed.

Gary said he spoke to the reconstruction team who stated that the accident was not due to a road, or mechanical defect and was not the fault of the vehicle operator. The speed and inexperience of the motorcycle drivers was the cause.

Margie will talk to Will about the signs.

Business:

The minutes of June 6 were approved as written.

Richie Roberts came to talk to Margie about the deteriorating condition of the cemeteries in North Leverett. Margie informed him that the cemeteries are maintained by associations and that he should talk to Dave Glazier who is charge of the north cemeteries. The board is not inclined to take control of the cemeteries without a petition article from residents and a lot more information about their financial status. The board also decided that it is inappropriate that the town appropriate \$500 per year, per association for maintenance; a point also agreed upon by Town Counsel. It was decided in FY 17 to stop this practice.

Gas and diesel bids were received. **Motion: To award the diesel bid to Dead River and to authorize Will Stratford to choose who to award the gas bid to after some questions have been answered. Vote: 3-0 in favor.**

Two bids for landfill monitoring were received; from ECS and WJF Geo-consultants. No bid was awarded until further clarification.

Water sampling at the Nagy residence showed no contaminants. DEP suggested the town put a filter in but the board thought it prudent to wait.

After reviewing the appointment list the board voted to approve the slate of officials and to disband the Financial Advisory Committee and send them thank you notes.

Motion: To appoint Ezra Ward to the Fire Department pending a satisfactory physical and CORI at the rate of \$17/hour until FY 16. Vote: 3-0 in favor.

Motion: To approve Green Energy provided aggregation as long as it is not over .04 above the cost of regular energy as voted at the April Town Meeting. Vote: 3-0 in favor.

Julie reported that after the Personnel Board meeting that it was voted that the Select Board be in charge of the Public Records Policy. The board will review said policy.

The FRCOG Accounting contract was received. Some changes were made including the length of the contract from 1 to 3 years. The board will wait to sign the contract until Margie talks to someone at the FRCOG about negotiating the cost annually.

The mail was read.

Meeting adjourned at 9:45 pm

Minutes taken and recorded by Lisa Stratford