

Minutes of the Board of Selectmen Meeting

This meeting of the Board of Selectmen was called to order on Tuesday, April 18, 2023 at the Town Offices. Jason Petraitis and Brooke Canada present.

Fire Chief Joe Holway was present to discuss the ambulance contract, he said they need to add \$20,000 to the contract, the amount hasn't increased in 14 years. EMS doesn't make money. Joe said the money could either come from the budget or Holden Funds. Mr. Petraitis said Holden Funds could dry up and it would be best to find it in the budget, but he's not sure they can find the full \$20,000.00. Patrick Kiritsy said when Holden Hospital closed the area towns received funds as part of operating cost. Joe said they purchase stuff for the PD such as pads for the d-fib machine. Joe said EMS/Ambulance gets audited, he wants to make sure the contract is appropriate and feels having the \$20,000.00 in the contract would be more solid. Pat asked if the Board had any questions for them. Mr. Petraitis said no, they're doing a good job. Pat said they are training for Firefighters to become EMT's. Joe said they ran a class. Pat said they had a 100% passing rate which is the first time in state history. Joe said they'll be hosting that class annually or biannually.

Proposed Town Bylaw: Bill King said they are trying to get a Gravel/Sand pit permitting process into the General Bylaws, it is part of zoning but want it part of the general so that current pits won't be grandfathered in. This would give the BOS and Planning Board a little control over the pits. Mr. Petraitis said we'll see what Town Counsel has to say.

PVPV Town/Owner Agreement-Mrs. Canada moved, and Mr. Petraitis seconded, a motion to sign the Town/Owner Agreement Housing Rehab for 37 Mt Guyot St in North Brookfield, and 19 Pine Lane in Brookfield. So voted.

CMPRC Contract Amendment-Mrs. Canada moved, and Mr. Petraitis seconded, a motion to sign the CMPRC Contract Amendments 1 and 2. So voted.

Haley Ward-Mrs. Canada moved, and Mr. Petraitis seconded, a motion to keep Haley Ward (formerly Lenard Engineering) as the engineer for the West Side Infrastructure project. So voted.

Board of Health Revolve-Mrs. Canada moved, and Mr. Petraitis seconded, a motion to authorize the creation of a Board of Health Revolve account for the purchase of trash bags with a limit of \$35,000.00 beginning July 1, 2023, Fiscal Year 24. So voted.

Interview Process-Mr. Petraitis said he may not be able to attend the interviews for Assistant Collector, and Mrs. Canada said she may be a few minutes late.

Storage Units-Mrs. Canada said she was approached by the North Brookfield Theater Guild stating they have two units and the roof is leaking. They couldn't access the unit because of snow, and there is grass growing outside the unit. She did a walkthrough with Mr. Tripp and they thought the Guild could be moved to a different unit until maintenance can be done. She asked who manages the upkeep and if it would make sense to hire someone, or ask the Highway Department to handle it, which would add more hours. She also wondered how to manage the abandoned property; she suggested Jamie Gilman could help as he knows someone that does this as a living.

Brandon Avery had suggestions for rules on Open Space that's not in active use, specific properties could be modified within the guidelines. Focusing on Donovan Road right now because someone is using the

town owned land for private use, they are clearing trees, stacking the wood, and parking their truck on that property, which is under control of the Conservation Commission. Brandon would like the policy reviewed and posted soon as we have an issue with people encroaching on Town property.

Reserve Fund-Mrs. Canada moved, and Mr. Petraitis seconded, a motion to approve a Reserve Fund request for \$2,500.00 for an insurance deductible due to payroll fraud. So voted.

Reissue payroll-Mrs. Canada moved, and Mr. Petraitis seconded, a motion to approve reissuing a payroll check in the amount of \$6,989.63. So voted.

Special Town Meeting Warrant-Mrs. Canada moved, and Mr. Petraitis seconded, a motion to approve the Special Town Meeting warrant, pending removal of the General Bylaw article. So voted.

Mrs. Canada wanted to know what was going on with the Arnold Property. Ashley explained what Town Counsel advised. Mr. Petraitis said the pipe that runs through Stoddard Ct and Gilbert St is one of the main drains and is town-owned. The town doesn't own the Arnold's drain, that main drain runs under the street. When the system was built homeowners were able to stub in to the drain. We tried to pay for the repair but we aren't allowed to use tax payer money for private property issues.

Mrs. Canada sent an email about issues she had with the April 11 BoS meeting. She was frustrated with the statement Mr. Petraitis wrote about the drag event, and that a vote was planned with no knowledge or addition to the agenda, she's concerned about legalities. Mr. Petraitis said he wrote the statement the night before the meeting. Mrs. Canada said there was still time to inform her, Mr. Petraitis said that would be a violation of open meeting law, Mrs. Canada said he could have asked Ashley to inform her. Mr. Petraitis said that as far as the crown that was present, he didn't inform anyone of his intentions, they were there to protest the show. Mrs. Canada said she'd have to take his word for it.

Mr. Petraitis brought up a letter from the ACLU, Mrs. Canada said we have until next week to decide how to respond, Mr. Petraitis said we'll send the letter to Town Counsel and they'll let us know how to proceed. Mr. Petraitis said the show is adult cabaret, he didn't say they couldn't have the show by special permit, just that they couldn't have it on the common. Mrs. Canada said that the board conveyed it was because it was adult entertainment, but she disagrees as there's no nudity, no sexual acts, so it is not adult entertainment as defined by the state. Mr. Petraitis said he thinks its vulgar and rude, Mrs. Canada asked in what way, he said he doesn't think kids need to see it. Mrs. Canada said we can't make decision based on opinion, only based on law. Mr. Petraitis said the law is vague and we will consult Town Counsel. Mrs. Canada stated she is not in favor of the decision to cancel the drag show and feel's we're digging ourselves a hole. Mr. Petraitis says he respects that. Mrs. Canada said this is an issue of law, this is discrimination, and we'll be in a lawsuit.

At 6:53PM, there being no further business, Mrs. Canada moved, and Mr. Petraitis seconded, a motion to adjourn. So voted.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ashley Barre