

Minutes of the Board of Selectmen Meeting

This meeting of the Board of Selectmen was called to order at 6:02PM on Tuesday, February 2, 2021 at the North Brookfield Police Department. Dale Kiley, Jason Petraitis, and John Tripp present.

Approval of Minutes: Mr. Petraitis moved, and Mr. Tripp seconded, a motion to approve the minutes from 12/1 executive session, 1/5, and 1/5 executive session. So voted.

Approval of Warrants: Mr. Petraitis moved, and Mr. Tripp seconded, a motion to approve the following warrants: General warrant # 1039 for \$778,807.95, Payroll warrant # 16 for \$337,856.55 and School warrant # 1038 for \$153,205.24. So voted.

Approval of CARES act funds: Mr. Petraitis moved, and Mr. Tripp seconded, a motion to approve the following CARES fund requests: School request speech therapy services for \$624.98, School request for heat and air conditioning repairs for \$1,640.05, Police request for COVID test for \$198.00, and BOS request for phone installation at the Highway department for \$375.00. So voted.

Old Business: Mr. Petraitis moved, and Mr. Tripp seconded, a motion to accept appraisal services from Daly Appraisal Services for the address at 63-65 Donovan Road. So voted.

New Business:

- a. Meet with Cemetery Commission and Jason Benoit regarding Maple St. Cemetery
Jason Petraitis spoke about two grant programs that would involve the Maple Street Cemetery: Complete Streets and the West Side Infrastructure Study (WSIS). He indicated the retaining wall is in very bad shape and is wondering if repairs can be included with either grant projects. The Cemetery Commission would also like to add gates, a flagpole and benches in the area. Kirk Burnham indicated that at one time there was an iron fence around the cemetery. Water erosion is causing the retaining wall (by Jim's Pizza) to fall apart and not a lot of attention has been paid in the past few decades.

Mr. Tripp asked what areas were included in the WSIS, Mr. Benoit said the areas surrounding Batchellor Dr and Maple St. He also said the money we get from the grant would dictate what we can do in that area, this study also encompasses Sewer and Water infrastructure. Sheila Orsi said the wall wouldn't fit into the Complete Streets project. Mr. Kiley asked Kirk if he had looked into grants, Kirk said no, Jason Benoit said it would be quite expensive to repair the wall. Mr. Tripp asked about old trees on the property, Mr. Petraitis said they've taken down a few here and there. Mr. Petraitis also stated the stairway needs repair. Mr. Kiley asked the Cemetery Commission to put together a list of projects and we can try to isolate each and work on it in steps, and asked them to give the list to Sheila Orsi just in case it can fit with Complete Streets. Mr. Petraitis said if we try to fix the sidewalk on Maple Street (part of Complete Streets) the retaining wall will come down. Sheila said there is a sidewalk analysis on the DDC website, and that would indicate where on the list Maple St falls.

- b. Jason Benoit: Projects for Spring 2020. Mr. Kiley asked Jason Benoit if he could give the board an idea of what's on the horizon for projects in Town. Jason said he's unclear, he's waiting on commitment letter from Chapter 90, which he should receive in May. He stated they typically

get around \$300,000.00. Mr. Kiley asked for a status update on the bridge on Mad Brook Road. Jason said the Governor signed, now we're waiting to get the money, about \$750,000.00 to repair. Mr. Kiley asked how long it will take once he gets the money, he said he can't answer that. Mr. Kiley asked if it had to go out to bid, yes it does. Mr. Tripp asked if Highway could repair it, Jason said there are environmental issues and it has to go through the correct process. Mr. Tripp asked if we went through that with Cider Mill Bridge and what is the status now. Jason said it has gone through the environmental process, we are now waiting on the bid process which has to start by June.

Mr. Kiley asked for Jason's priority list. Jason said with the Chapter 90 funds he's planning on spending \$200,000 on road repair and \$100,000 on leases. Town Farm Road needs to be modified and Brickyard and Bullard Roads are disasters, he would like to resurface and clean up that area.

Jason wanted to discuss the trees on Water Department property that shade Route 67 after Oakham Road. It's always shady and the ice accumulates. He'd like to cut trees, in phases, to provide more light on the road. Mr. Tripp stated that whole property is a disaster, there's a lot of old growth and tons of trees have fallen, nearly missing abutting property. Mr. Kiley asked if Jason had a cutting plan in place, Jason stated it would be a selective cut, he doesn't want to clear cut the area. He has money in his tree account and thinks it would take a few days, at \$1,500.00 a day. He believes the Water Department would be interested in working together with this company to maintain a border around the reservoir. Jason said he doesn't want to upset abutters, Mr. Kiley said to have a public meeting with the abutters to explain the situation. Jason asked if it was ok to proceed with his plan, Mr. Kiley and Mr. Petraitis said yes.

- c. Sheila Orsi gave the BOS an update on the Complete Streets process. Their Facebook page and page on the Town's website have a lot of information, including their top priorities, number's 1,2,3&6. The DDC has been working with CMRPC and the Highway department, and it was decided that the Town needs to hire a consultant to help with getting the "master plan" for the DDC together. Sheila brought a letter from the BSC Group describing the tasks and fees associated with planning and engineering services. Task one being the initial planning process, and task two is phase one of the construction projects. Jason Benoit that it is standard procedure to hire a company like this when you have a big project with multiple aspects. Sheila said this company has worked with 4 or 5 other towns with their Complete Streets projects. Sheila spoke about some new initiatives that just came out. There are new "umbrella grants" that include about 10 programs. Essentially this will make the process of getting grants much easier. Mr. Kiley said the BOS would speak to Fin Comm about the cost of the BSC Group. Sheila spoke about 2 grants the Town was awarded: The Rapid Recovery Grant and Local Cultural Grant. The Rapid Recovery Grant is a technical grant, no funds allotted, but they help us with plans and assist us with funding resources. The Cultural Grant is for virtual programming for local artisans to teach and learn virtually. This grant was awarded to the Friends of the Town House and Marilyn Borst worked on getting it.
- d. Appoint Kathleen Crevier to the Town Beach Committee: Mr. Petraitis moved, and Mr. Tripp seconded, a motion to appoint Kathleen Crevier to the Town Beach Committee. So voted.

- e. Sign Audit Management Letter: Anne Janette gave a letter describing the services Scanlon and Associates will provide during our audit. Mr. Petraitis moved, and Mr. Tripp seconded, a motion to accept and sign the letter. So voted.
- f. Pioneer Valley Contract Amendment: Mr. Petraitis moved, and Mr. Tripp seconded, a motion to accept and sign the contract amendment with PVPC. So voted.
- g. Fire Report for November and December: Mr. Petraitis read the Fire Reports from Chief Joe Holway for November and December. Mr. Petraitis moved, and Mr. Tripp seconded, a motion to accept the reports. So voted.

Public Comment Period:

Brandon Avery said he's still waiting to hear what owner of the building that the Historical Museum is housed, is planning to do. He had a comment about Maple St. Cemetery; he came across information on past improvements to the cemetery and doesn't recall iron gates. He said the museum is about 40degrees right now, when it warms up he will do more research.

John Tripp commended the Highway Department on getting the roads cleaned up after the snow.

Announcements:

Mr. Kiley announced that there will be a public forum on the Open Space part of the Master Plan on February 4th on ZOOM. The link is posted on the Town's website.

Jason Benoit was asked about the bridge on Mad Brook. He said it could still take years, they have to wait for the money from the state, and get the OK from Conservation before they can get engineers involved to design.

There being no further business, at 6:59PM Mr. Petraitis moved, and Mr. Tripp seconded, a motion to adjourn. So voted.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ashley Barre