

Selectboard Minutes
September 22, 2021

Meeting opened at 6:30pm

Present: Ann Marie Visconti, Chair; Tonya Santaniello; Curt Robie
Duane Pease, Town Administrator (TA)

Curt requested a moment of silence for Pat Paschal, a longtime resident who recently passed away.

Warrants reviewed and signed; Payroll; \$15,125.73; Expenses: \$38,522.32

Minutes of 8/18/21 approved on motion by Ann Marie; Tonya 2nd; vote 3-0

Minutes of 8/25/21 approved on motion by Ann Marie; Curt 2nd; vote 3-0

Mail: DEP inspection of Transfer Station received; all is good.

Tax Collector, Mary Ann Pease, addressed the Board regarding delinquent tax payers. She said she will be posting these on the Town website, it is only a few owners that are in arrears and will only post those that owe over \$1,000. She explained rather than put these in Tax Title which is expensive, posting the names on the web site has been very successful in the other town she works in. She will notify the taxpayers prior to posting the names to give them a chance to make payments or arrangements to make a payment.

She also said that David Irwin of Adelson Accounting did an audit in Chester and they were very satisfied and she will send his contact information to the Town. We will also check with Tom Scanlon again to see if his firm is interested in the audit.

Former employee, Bob Miller, met with the Board regarding an error in the amount of money that was deducted from his pay while he worked for the town. He went to Hampshire Retirement and was told the town only withheld 5% and failed to increase it to 7%, therefore he will have to pay in excess of \$4,000 to obtain his retirement benefits. Town accountant, Bev Cooper, was at the meeting and she is familiar with the retirement system and said the error was with the Retirement Board and he should not be penalized for their mistake. She will do more research on this. TA said he

will check with Town's insurance carrier to see if there may be coverage for this.

Selectboard will schedule meeting with Finance Committee at next meeting, 10/6/21 at 7pm.

Curt asked Bev what the balance of the Stabilization Fund was, \$330,000 and the Sarah Dickson donation, \$29,000. Free Cash is not available as of now. Bev said the Schedule A is due to the state by October 15th. Curt was also concerned with some budgets being overspent and not being immediately addressed, perhaps reducing the next years budget would keep this from happening as a form of penalty.

Curt also said the Senior Center is facing many issues as he has viewed the crawl space and there is hanging, wet insulation, many old desks, rocks, etc. in the space. John Savery is putting together an estimate to replace the wiring.

There will be a meeting of all departments, committees, commissions, etc. on October 16th from 8:30am to noon.

Carol Waag asked the board to make alternate appointments to the Conservation Commission as some members have health issues and can't always attend the meetings and therefore a quorum is not available. She recommended Barry Bernard and Chris Bresnahan as alternates. Ann Marie motioned to appoint, Tonya 2nd; vote 3-0.

Council on Aging requested Charlene Gero and Pat Jones be appointed, Ann Marie motioned to appoint, Curt 2nd; vote 3-0.

Eleanor Doyle requested she and Andrea Tosi be reappointed to the Cultural Council. Ann Marie motioned to appoint, Tonya 2nd; vote 3-0.

Curt advised he had completed the grant application for the Root Road culvert replacement engineering. Carol Waag agreed to oversee, there will be a public hearing once the engineering is completed.

Curt is still pursuing members to join the Open Space Committee and has met with the Planning Board and Conservation Commission in an attempt to gain members. He has also submitted a \$14,000 grant requesting

equipment and software for the Police Dept. He was able to submit the grant under the Best Practices Grant program.

Tomorrow he is having a Zoom meeting with Molly Jackson-Watts to discuss the possibility of obtaining a grant for the erection of a cell tower on town property as this would aid residents in communications as service is very spotty in town. It could also be used by Berkshire Control to improve emergency contacts with police and fire Departments.

Curt will also be attending a rural regional school meeting, there will be representatives of the area regional schools and state officials at this meeting to discuss the issues facing the schools.

Crystal Kruzyna discussed the CPR and First Responder classes with the board. She said Hinsdale Ambulance charges less for these classes than others in the area and will be scheduling them, the courses were not offer last year due to the COVID pandemic. Ann Marie said she realizes Crystal is not representing the Fire Dept. but she is concerned that many times a large number of volunteer firemen show up a medical call and are just standing around. This may make it uncomfortable for the resident that needs immediate care.

There was also a question about building being done on Town Hill Road and if Building Permits had been taken out. TA will follow with Building Commissioner.

Curt motioned to adjourn, Tonya 2nd; vote 3-0 and meeting adjourned at 8:45pm

Minutes respectively submitted by:

Duane Pease
Town Administrator

Minutes accepted with/without changes by:

Ann Marie Visconti, Chair Tonya Santaniello Curt Robie

