

Selectmen Present: Jacob Smith, William Bembury

Absent: Scott Bastarache

Also Present: Bryan Smith, Philip Wonkka, Deb Smith, Candy Gore, Kim Lyman, Janice Vega-Liros, Sarah Vega-Liros, Thelma Downs, Linda Downs-Bembury, Philip Kidder, Ricky Jillson, Michael Gordon, Marcia Bernard, Vivian Vuerich, Armando Vuerich, Thomas Duffy, Erik Eichorn, Carole Lyman, Connie Hall, Dave Hall, Rebecca Hubbard, June Graves, Clemma Savage, Michele Turner, Diane Bledsoe, Rae Kowacki, Michael Hubbard, Megan Edson, Edwin Costello, Glenn McCrory, Jacquelyn Boyden, Jeffrey Rollins, Alison Rollins, Brittney Richotte, Katrina Richotte

Press: Christine Miranda, Athol Daily News; Mike Jackson, Montague Reporter

At 6:35 PM **Chairman Smith** called the meeting to order.

Review of Meeting Minutes from July 26, 2017

The Board reviewed meeting minutes from Wednesday, July 26, 2017. **Selectman Bembury** made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from July 26, 2017 as written. **Chairman Smith** seconded. The Board made the following amendments:

- Page 1 to change the wording "...follow the receding protocol..." to now read "...follow the receiving protocol..."
- Page 1 to change the wording "...conditions and additional..." to now read "...conditions and add additional..."
- Page 3 to change the wording "...would be interested in extending..." to now read "...would be willing to extend..."
- Page 4 to change the wording "...they mainly listed to..." to now read "...they mainly listened to..."
- Page 4 to change the wording "...legal counsel approval." To now read "...legal counsel review."

Selectman Bembury made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from July 26, 2017 as amended. **Chairman Smith** seconded. Unanimously approved.

American Flags on Utility Poles- Erving Center & Farley

Chairman Smith informed those in attendance that the Town had been contacted by NationalGrid and informed of a policy related to the mounting of flags on utility poles. **Chairman Smith** explained that Verizon requires an application to be completed one (1) time, while NationalGrid requires an annual approval process and the Town to issue a \$2 Million certificate of insurance. **Chairman Smith** explained that both the Town's insurance provider and legal counsel has advised against issuing this certificate of insurance in this amount as it exceeds the \$100,000 limit of liability established by MGL Chapter 258. **Chairman Smith** explained that the Town's options are to take the flags down or to extend the insurance certificate. He expressed his concerns about extending the insurance certificate. Jacquelyn Boyden asked if the Town had contacted state representatives to ask for support on this matter. Carole Lyman asked if the Town can affix the flags to the ground on poles. **Chairman Smith** explained that the Town would likely need to work with Mass DOT if flag poles were installed in the Route 2 layout. Deb Smith asked for contact information for NationalGrid and Representatives. **Chairman Smith** agreed and urged residents to contact representatives and NationalGrid to discuss their concerns. **Chairman Smith** agreed to have the information posted on social media. **Selectman Bembury** also suggested outreach.

Church Street/ Erving Center Safety Concerns

Chairman Smith opened the discussion regarding concerns with traffic and safety in Erving Center with a summary of the situation. **Chairman Smith** reviewed the southbound traffic count on North Street, at 44 North Street between July 17, 2017 and July 30, 2017. In that time frame there were a total of 11,173 vehicles, with an average week day count of 1,363 and an average weekend count of 1,961.

Selectman Bembury discussed the southbound truck traffic and noted that these vehicles cannot safely turn on to Church Street. Carole Lyman advocated to reduce truck traffic on Church and North streets. Carole raised the concern about the lack of attention displayed by motorists, noting that pedestrians have been nearly hit. Katrina Richotte raised concern about the lack of visibility along Keyup Brook where North and Church streets meet, and asked to have brush removed and for snow and ice to be removed from the area in the winter as it creates snowbanks for children to climb over on their way to the bus stop. Alison Rollins asked about installing flashing lights for pedestrians to use when crossing. Sarah Vega-Liros asked about installing an island structure at the intersection of Church and North streets. **Chairman Smith** stated that the Town could investigate that option. Megan Edson raised the concern about speeding on North Street up to the North Street crossing and asked if the Town would consider installing alert strips in the Flag Hill Road area. Brittney Richotte asked about continuing the double yellow line on North Street so that vehicular traffic understands that North Street is the through traffic and Church Street requires a turn. Glenn McCrory, Highway Foreman, explained that the double yellow line was made non-continuous a few years ago to clarify that it was an option to turn onto Church Street. **Chairman Smith** stated that the Town will research whether a dashed yellow line is an option to provide guidance for southbound traffic to know that they do not have the right of way. Linda Downs-Bembury explained that Mass DOT began discussing the bridge replacement approximately 15 years ago and stated her concern that Mass DOT will not move quickly. Rebecca Hubbard discussed her experience walking Church and North streets over this past weekend. Rebecca observed cars turning from Route 2 onto Church Street and reaching speeds over 30MPH quickly. Marcia Bernard asked if the Town could move the speed monitoring sign further down Church Street to notify cars earlier of their speed. Marcia also asked if the flashing lights could be changed and if the Town could stencil "Yield Ahead" in the travel lane. Marcia also gave her support for considering alert strips. Deb Smith asked if the Town could increase visibility of crosswalks by adding color or a thatch pattern. Katrina asked the Board to discuss the timeline to research these options and to begin making improvements. **Chairman Smith** explained that additional signage and painting could be completed within months and some long term approaches such as ordinances, bridge repairs, and speed humps will take further research and coordination with other agencies. Linda stated her support for the "Yield Ahead" stenciling and seconded Marcia's suggestions. **Selectman Bembury** asked if the Board wanted to establish a committee to work on these issues. **Chairman Smith** explained that he would like to see what Town resources can accomplish first and noted that it may be necessary for a dedicated committee to work on specific issues like working with Mass DOT. Michele Turner asked if the Town could consider installing sidewalks along North Street, north of the intersection. Carole discussed a walking area that had been created on North Street several years ago that was abandoned after a repaving project. Deb asked that the Board consider impacts on High Street as improvements are made on Church and North streets.

Chairman Smith stated that the topic will remain on the agenda.

Building & Ground Maintenance Positions Finalists

Glenn McCrory, Highway Foreman, joined the Board and reviewed the process that the Screening Committee followed for the Building & Ground Maintenance position. The Town received 14 applications. The Screening Committee reviewed all materials in comparison to the minimum and preferred qualifications in the position description and advertisement. The Committee identified five (5) applicants to interview. All interviewees were asked the same questions. After the interviews, the Committee has recommended two (2) finalists: James Whiteman and Thomas Duffy.

Glenn provided an overview of both candidates, noting that the position description includes preferred qualifications for landscaping and horticulture experience because of the focus on the park maintenance. James Whiteman's materials described extensive building maintenance, but lacked ground maintenance experience. Glenn noted that he had some concerns with answers given during the interview process. Thomas Duffy's application materials detailed both ground and building

maintenance experience, and included several references attesting to his work ability. Glenn stated that he believed Thomas Duffy would be an asset to the Town and recommends hiring, stating that he meets and exceeds the minimum qualifications. **Chairman Smith** stated that he served on the Screening Committee and that he agreed with Glenn's assessment. **Chairman Smith** explained that grounds maintenance needs to be a priority for the position, more so than in the past to meet the needs of the Recreation Commission. **Chairman Smith** also spoke to the need for the person in this position to work independently and be self-motivated which he believed Thomas demonstrated by operating his own landscaping business. **Chairman Smith** asked if the Board should conduct final interviews or accept the Supervisor's recommendation. **Selectman Bembury** asked for clarification about the Screening Committee's recommendation. Glenn explained that the Committee named two (2) finalists, but that as the Supervisor for the position he was recommending that the Board hire Thomas Duffy.

Chairman Smith made a motion to offer the Ground & Building Maintenance position to Thomas Duffy, at a rate of \$18.24 per hour with a 90 day probationary period, not affecting benefits, and a start date to be determined with at-will employment. **Selectman Bembury** seconded. Unanimously approved.

Air Conditioning Installation Request for Fire Station #2

Philip Wonkka, Fire Chief, and Glenn McCrory, Highway Foreman, joined the Board to discuss a request to install a mini-split heating and cooling system into Fire Station #2. The mini-split air system would be installed to regulate the temperature of the radio room, office, and meeting room. Chief Wonkka explained that the building isn't as well insulated as Fire Station #1 and is too hot for the radio equipment and staff in the summer and too cold in the winter. The proposed system would help to regulate the temperature in these spaces.

Chairman Smith explained that as a call force member of the Fire Department he is concerned about the appearance of a conflict of interest in the decision making process. **Selectmen Bembury** stated that he did not perceive a conflict and was okay with **Chairman Smith's** continued participation. Jacquie Boyden suggested that **Chairman Smith** file an appearance of conflict with interest with the Town Clerk. **Chairman Smith** stated he would do so.

Glenn reviewed an estimate with the Board for the installation of a mini-split air system with installation by an electrician for not more than \$7,128. **Chairman Smith** made a motion to install a mini-split HVAC system at Fire Station #2 for the radio, office, and meeting rooms and to pay for it out of the Town Buildings account (01-192-200-57800) in the amount of \$7,128. **Selectman Bembury** seconded. Unanimously Approved.

FY2018 Water Commitment #2

The Board reviewed charges for final charges at 8 Park Street in the amount of \$46.14. **Chairman Smith** made a motion to approve the second water commitment for FY2018 in the amount of \$46.14. **Selectman Bembury** seconded. Unanimously approved.

LED Retrofit Design Agreement with Tanko Lighting

Bryan Smith, Administrative Coordinator, discussed the scope of the LED retrofit Street Light project. The State grant through the Metropolitan Area Planning Commission will partially reimburse the Town for the design, inventory, and retrofit of approximately 163 cobra head lights. Bryan explained that Glenn McCrory and David Brule participated in a meeting with Jason Tanko to discuss the project and concerns about light pollution. During that meeting, Jason Tanko asked if the Town would want the approximately 50 post style fixtures on Route 2 and on Lillian's Way inventoried and designed for a retrofit. The additional work could be added to the agreement with Tanko but would not be reimbursable by the State grant. The proposed agreement with Tanko Streetlighting Inc. for the initial scope and the additional fixtures will not exceed \$4,707. This amount is below the amount that was budgeted. **Chairman Smith** made a motion to authorize Bryan Smith to sign the Contract for

Professional Services by and Between the Town of Erving and Tanko Streetlighting, Inc. for all Town of Erving street lights in the amount of \$4,707. **Selectman Bembury** seconded. Unanimously approved.

FY2018 Small Commercial Business Exemption

Jacquie Boyden, Assistant Assessor, joined the Board to discuss whether or not the Board would like to accept the Small Business Exemption for FY2018. She explained that this is an annual decision before the tax rate can be set. This option would automatically impact approximately five (5) tax payers and would shift approximately \$4,500 in value to the other commercial properties. Jacquelyn explained that the small commercial exemption is available for sole proprietors or partnerships with less than ten (10) employees and less than \$1 Million in valuation. The Assessor's office is provided with a confidential list from DUA. Jacquelyn explained that other businesses can apply for the exemption but the application is an intrusive process. The confidential list members would be processed automatically. Small businesses not on the list would have to apply and be processed by April 1st and the exemption would be processed out of the overlay account. These businesses should appear on the list in future years. The exemption is for \$100,000 of value on the business. **Chairman Smith** made a motion to adopt the Small Commercial exemption for FY2018. **Selectman Bembury** seconded. Unanimously approved.

1 Day Special License- Recreation Commission

The Board reviewed a request by the Recreation Commission which is proposing to add new attractions to the Fall Festival to include Lefty's Brewing Company. **Selectman Bembury** asked how the Recreation Commission arrived at this decision. Alison Rollins, Recreation Assistant, explained that Fall Festival used to extend into the evening with a bonfire and that interest had been expressed in restarting that tradition. Alison explained that the Commission has been planning to include a band, the beer tent, and a bonfire with the Firefighter's Association. **Selectman Bembury** asked if public safety had been consulted. Erik Eichorn stated that Lefty's requires a police presence. The Commission stated that Fall Festival is scheduled for September 30, 2017, with a rain date of October 1, 2017 and that beer tent would be available in the 5PM to 9PM timeframe. Jacquelyn Boyden discussed her experience with similar events in Turners Falls as being positive. Jacquelyn asked how the Recreation Commission would establish a separated area for the beer tent. Erik explained that Lefty's Brewing Company will provide TIPPS certified servers, will conduct ID checks, will establish a separated area for service, and will provide the Town with a \$1 to \$2 Million insurance rider. The Board agreed that they are not concerned with the proposal as long as Police Chief Blair is consulted and that the necessary staffing is available. Deb Smith asked if the Firefighter's Association is planning to do food, would participants be allowed to consume food in the tent. Erik stated that he believed that would be allowed and would follow up with Lefty's. Jacquelyn asked if the Town was making a fee from Lefty's. Erik explained that no fee would be paid to Town and there will not be a sharing of revenue.

The Recreation Commission will follow up with Police Chief Blair and will forward correspondence to the Board. The Board agreed to make a decision about granting a 1 Day Special License on August 28, 2017.

Green Communities Grant

Bryan Smith, Administrative Coordinator, asked to have this topic tabled until August 28, 2017. The Board agreed.

Eversource Transmission ROW Reliability Program

Bryan Smith, Administrative Coordinator, informed the Board and those in attendance that representatives from Eversource had met with Town department heads to discuss their continued maintenance work in Erving along the transmission lines. The current program will remove brush and trees from the right-of-ways. Eversource representative have been going door-to-door to meet with affected residents and to answer questions. Arborists are meeting with residents to discuss what trees will be impacted. Residents will have the option to keep the wood or to have it removed. Eversource

expects this work to continue through December 2017. The Town has already posted the contact information for this program on the Town's social media account.

Vet Ruck New England 2017

Chairman Smith informed those in attendance that a veteran's organization would be rucking through Erving as part of an awareness campaign. The event runs from August 17th through August 21st. The Town will post the event flier on the Town's social media. Public Safety departments are aware and will participate if available. Rebecca Hubbard suggested setting up an area to greet veterans with water and food. Bryan Smith, Administrative Coordinator, will coordinate with Rebecca.

Riverfront Park/ UMRC Construction Plaque

Bryan Smith, Administrative Coordinator, presented the Board with a request for a construction plaque to memorialize the establishment of the Erving Riverfront Park and to celebrate the efforts of the Usher Mill Reuse Committee members (UMRC). The Board reviewed draft text for the bronze plaque that would be installed in a rock in the park. The current estimate for the project is between \$1,100 and \$1,200. The Board agreed to move forward with the plaque and asked Bryan to work with the former UMRC members and the Recreation Commission. **Selectman Bembury** asked if the Town could schedule a celebratory event for the installation of the plaque. Bryan will work with all parties.

Little Free Library

Rebecca Hubbard, Friends of the Library President, informed the Board that the Little Free Library had been installed approximately a week ago and that it was actively being used. Rebecca thanked the Board for accepting the gift of the Little Library and the Highway Department for installing it. She discussed working with the Recreation Commission to schedule a celebratory event in the future for the "official unveiling" of the Little Library. **Chairman Smith** thanked Rebecca for the donation of the Little Library. Bryan Smith, Administrative Coordinator, offered that it may be possible to time the event to celebrate the Little Library with the installation of the construction plaque for the Park and UMRC. Bryan will work with all parties to coordinate.

Cemetery Sexton Appointment

Chairman Smith made a motion to appoint Glenn McCrory as the Cemetery Sexton effective July 1, 2017 at-will. **Selectman Bembury** seconded. Unanimously approved.

Adjournment

At 9:05 PM **Chairman Smith** made a motion to adjourn. **Selectman Bembury** seconded. Unanimously approved.

Respectfully Submitted,



Bryan Smith
Administrative Coordinator