

Selectmen's Meeting Minutes  
Monday, November 4, 2019

At the Selectmen's Meeting held on Monday, November 4, 2019 at 6:30 p.m. the following people were in attendance: Peter Corey, and Stanley Holz participated via conference call.

Peter Corey called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance. John Tholl will be late to the meeting tonight so we cannot take any votes until John Tholl arrives, but we can take all the information and hopefully John will be here around 7:00 p.m.

Brian Gosselin attended the meeting to discuss the Brown Street Furniture Building. He has had an existing business for 10 years in Littleton, and he has been talking with Reg Abbott and he is looking to move his business over here in Whitefield. He met with the Fire Chief last week and went over things. There are some outstanding back taxes on the property. He is looking to spend \$20,000 to \$30,000 to get in there. Peter Corey said if you purchase the property from Mr. Abbott, the back taxes have to be paid at the time of the closing. If you are looking for the Town to take it for back taxes and sell it, then it has to go out to bid. The Town can't take it and sell it specifically to an individual. We have to put it up to bid. Mr. Gosselin said he is looking at entering a lease agreement. Mr. Corey said it would actually be Mr. Abbott's responsibility to pay the back taxes. Mr. Gosselin said he is not sure he wants to spend \$20,000 to \$30,000 down there and have the carpet pulled out from under him. Mr. Abbott needs to work out an arrangement with the payment of back property taxes. Brian said he was leasing the entire property with the intent to buy it after three years. What arrangement would he make for the storage of vehicles? Brian said that he hasn't given that much thought yet. There are a lot of possibilities over there for storage. He is trying to cover the basics at the moment. Peter Corey told him that he would have to go before the planning board for a change of use for the property. Peter said he speaks for everyone and we would love to see that property return to viable use and the taxes paid up. Whatever arrangement he comes up with is with him and Mr. Abbott. Mr. Gosselin and Mr. Abbott should be coming before the planning board to get on an agenda for a change of use. He can certainly come before the Planning Board and see what he might need to consider to operate an auto body business. Peter said the process takes about two months for a planning board approval. It is good he came and asked questions. Brian said that he has already spent money at the property. He has ordered a door for the business. Brian said he can't drop it for two months and hope it picks back up. He can't be dormant for any length of time. He was hoping he would be ready to get in there by December 13<sup>th</sup>. He would love to have his business there, but two months is really holding him up. His next question is if he moves forward with what he is doing, is there a possibility it may not be approved? Peter said that is a possibility. Peter doesn't want to get into a long drawn out discussion about the planning board requirements. There are requirements that he will have to meet. Neighbors will have the opportunity to voice their concerns about the business. Peter said most items of concern can be mitigated. That gets talked about at a planning board meeting. We would love to see a viable business at that location. There are steps and processes that have to be gone through.

Bob Stiles attended the meeting to discuss what we decided to do about the Maple Street Extension water line replacement. Mr. Larson said we have to do a mapping of an existing system. There is nothing planned in the short term. Bob said that someone told him they would help take care of the thawing or let them run the water during the cold part of the winter. There was talk about a blow-off being put in. Mr. Larson said that is not going to happen now. Mr. Larson said the situation is on his to-do list, but not in 2019. The water ordinance does allow for an abatement of water in a situation like this. We take a cut-off date and then just bill on normal usage and anything in excess of that could be abated. Bob said that has been done in the past. Rob said he will work it out with Joyce to get a history of the usage. Mr. Hill said his pressure varies—sometimes it is good and some days it is not.

Bob said he put in an application to hook on to town water and sewer at Fred's Way at Map 101/Lot 017.1. His application was denied. Rob Larson said there are two issues: one is on the basis this a new building on an empty lot. In the planning board process it is treated as a new installation you cannot have a shared line and it has to be up to today's code, high density copper. You can no longer use PVC. Rob's request is to take the line up as a separate line and kick over using HDPE or copper and not try to tie off the Napa property. You can't have a shared line according to the new ordinance. Bob Stiles said the private line is big enough and it was the best piping when he put it in. Bob said it is all ledge up there and not feasible to replace it. Peter said just because some currently exist doesn't mean we want to continue letting this happen. Bob said it is all ledge in there and that is why there is no water line there. If there was a leak beyond that T then what happens? Bob said that the Napa will give Bob whatever he needs. The line is already there and he will use the HDPE, and he has got an easement from NAPA. Bob said if we make him do it then we want to make everyone do it. Peter said water lines run all over pieces of property throughout the town, and no one knows where their water lines are. Peter said that we need to see the Napa deed, and the maps, and get together when John is back. Rob said as part of the Conservation Plan, all private distribution lines need to be metered now. We have to put a meter in at the source and meter everyone off that line. We have miles of lines of private water line that we don't know where they go. Rob said we have to reduce the water loss for less than 15%. All the well sites are metered. 47% of the water we pumped never went through a meter so that is a problem. We need to put meters ahead of all these private distribution lines and figure out where the leaks are. We are also doing junction spots at the mains.

#### Budgets:

EDC: Scott Burns and Katie Marro said they will be requesting the same as this year, \$5,000.

Cemetery: Barbara Pinkham said they are requesting an increase of \$2,000 in their budget for 2020. They will be requesting \$32,000. Barbara said that they have \$25,000 in their general cemetery fund and she has highlighted in just a two year period the mowing contract in 2017 was 58% of their budget. Two years later it was 66% of their budget or 2/3 of their budget. We are getting by with the minimal mowing. She has asked for updated cost figures for an additional mowing. They are doing minimal mowing. The grass is not being mowed and some grass grow faster. They would like to add at least one additional mowing during the May-June period at both Pine and Park Street.

The cemetery trustees don't feel they should have to pay the water/sewer bills. She would like to see something done about that. Peter says it is just like paying you Eversource bills. They are utility costs. The water department is an enterprise fund. Barbara said that the water/sewer bills is a big item for

them now. We put off things that need to be repaired, i.e. fences, etc., and they face unexpected expenses like down trees and damaged roofing following storms.

Barbara wondered about contacting legal counsel with questions they may have, and Mr. Corey suggested reaching out to NHMA legal instead.

Stanley asked if the mowing contract put out to bid. Barbara said it is not bid out annually. We went out to bid two years ago and only got two bids. One of the bids received was more than our whole budget. The current mowing company does a very good job.

Scott Burns said the Planning Board was requesting the same amount in 2020, \$4,500. They are hoping to take in over \$6,000 in fees this year.

The Conservation Commission said they could not attend tonight, but will be requesting the same as this year's budget, \$2,500.

The meeting adjourned at 7:23 p.m.