

MEETING MINUTES
Town of Heath
BOARD OF SELECTMEN – ALL BOARDS & COMMITTEES MEETING
Community Hall
November 14, 2017

Call to Order at 7:15 p.m. by Sheila Litchfield, Chair with Brian DeVriese, and Kara Leistyna, Town Coordinator present. See sign in sheet for other attendees.

All Boards/Committees Meeting: Sheila Litchfield welcomed attendees and explained the reason for the meeting. This is an opportunity for all committees/boards to share a summary of their good work on behalf of the Town and for others to hear a brief report of their current work. Each committee/board will have a 2-3 minute slot for status update. Robyn Provost-Carlson apologizes for her absence tonight.

Shared Services Update: Sheila provided an overview of the current meetings. A Select Board member from each town attends. For shared police, we are working with Charlemont to explore any kinds of ways to help support officers. Training requirements are time consuming and often officers are employed in several towns. For Fire Services, we are working with Rowe and Charlemont. No decisions have been made and remains at discussion level to see if sharing services is beneficial and potential challenges. Animal Control Officer is another role that we are exploring as a shared position. Melinda Herzig is filling in temporarily but we need a trained and qualified ACO on a permanent basis. FRCOG has been asked to assist in this effort. Sheila shared about the Efficiency and Regionalization grant that Heath is applying for to receive financial assistance to cover legal fees, etc. hoping it will help with the process and serve as a model for other towns.

Broadband: Sheila shared that Heath has received the promised funds from the State to cover the cost of design and engineering for broadband last mile project. Heath has signed on with Westfield, Gas & Electric. The design and engineering, covered by the State funds, will provide real numbers so that Heath will know the price tag for this project and whether or not the full build is affordable. If not, perhaps the State will assist. Legislators are currently seeking passage of a bill for further funding. Whip City Fiber (WG&E) will begin the mapping process soon so trucks will be seen around town. Completion of the project if lack of funding does not halt it, is projected to around 2019.

Open Meeting Law (OML): Brian DeVriese shared the newest changes to OML that apply to Heath: the Town may use its official website to satisfy the “all hours” posting requirement. However, Heath will maintain posting on Town Hall bulletin board as well since not every resident has access to internet. Also, the Town Clerk will provide any new appointee with copies of the OML, Attorney General’s regulations, and the Attorney General’s “Open Meeting Law Guide” and appointees shall submit a certification of receipt to the clerk within two weeks. Also, the clerk is required to provide new members with all OML determinations of violation issued to that public body within the previous five years. Also, approval of minutes must now occur within the next three meetings or 30 days, whichever is later. All OML information is on line located on the Division of Open Government’s (“Division”) website for further review. If a meeting needs to convene in Executive Session, Brian encourages groups to consult with the Select Board prior to ensure that all rules are followed.

Reports of Boards and Committees:
Agricultural Commission:

Board of Assessors: Heather Hathwell, Assessor, shared that the Re-mapping project funded through the \$55,000 IT Grant (Community Compact) is complete through its preliminary phase. Revaluation

completed in 2017 and will reoccur every five years. The Assessors have a small list of directives to complete and are ahead of schedule.

Board of Health / Town Nurse: Susan Gruen, Tucker Jenkins, and Armand Clavette, BOH members attended. Susan Gruen shared that the Board with the assistance of Glen Ayers, BOH agent, is working on dilapidated properties, has met with the Planning Board in an effort to work towards improved enforcement of rules. A formalized letter was sent to all property owners. Will continue to work towards devising clear protocol for enforcement. The BOH is looking for a new clerk currently.
Town Nurse: Claire Rabbitt shared that she has been working on revalidation with Medicare that provides reimbursement for flu vaccine. It has been a challenging process that happens every five years. A flu clinic was held and Claire has more doses available for those who need one.

Cemetery Commission: Claire Rabbitt, Cemetery Commissioner for North Cemetery, shared that some stones have been repaired recently in the South Cemetery through donations from family members of the deceased. More work may be done next year as well. Volunteers are always appreciated but Claire shared that for the most part, the cemeteries are in good shape.

Community Hall Committee: No one in attendance.

Conservation Commission: Brian DeVriese, Chair, reported that the commission meets on an as needed basis. Most frequent work consists of signing off on permits. Bill Lattrell serves as wetlands consultant and handles questions and site visits. The Crowningshield property in North Heath was purchased by the Franklin Land Trust and Trout Unlimited. This project involved clearing invasive species and habitat reconstruction in an effort to restore the flood plain damaged from Tropical Storm Irene. Proper functioning of the flood plain enables trout reproduction.

Council of Aging: No one in attendance.

Cultural Council: Bob Gruen, newly deemed Chair, reported that the Town has received \$4,400 allocation this year for grants. All applications were due Oct. 15. The Council will meet in December to review applications and award grants. Bob shared that it always amazes him to see the array of projects submitted. Generally, it's a mix of familiar entities and new applicants. Heath is also due to collect input from the community. Bob encourages people to think about next year!

Energy Advisory Committee: Heather Row, Chair, shared that the Committee has been working on tasks associated with the Green Communities Act. Energy Conservation, Inc. was hired by National Grid to gather data on energy use for town buildings that will eventually be put into report format.

In addition, UMass Clean Energy Extension through UMass has completed a preliminary building heating analysis with recommendations. This draft report is available to review at the Town Hall. Heath, through FRCOG, has received a META grant that will pay for a contractor to conduct an ASHRAE Level II audit for town buildings in Heath. Once the signed contract is received, the project will proceed. Heather shared that ASHRAE Level II audit (a more detailed analysis) will assist when seeking grants through Green Communities. Heath has benefitted from a grant through FRCOG to assist with writing the energy reduction plan for the Town of Heath.

The Energy Advisory Committee has met with the Planning Board and will arrange for a public hearing on the Stretch Code – a necessary criterion for Green Communities consideration.

Heather shared about a program through Community Action that provides home energy assistance for residents in paying for heating fuel and heating system repairs and weatherization. Community Action will accept up to 200% Federal Poverty Level for income eligibility. Info. will be available at Town Hall or call Franklin County Community Action.

Last, the committee is also working on a solarize program that may offer 10-15% energy savings. 1,000 households are needed so several towns need to participate. The committee will present the program to the Board of Selectmen.

Finance Committee: Ned Wolf, Chair, acknowledged other current members: Jan Carr, Gloria Fisher, Kathy Inman, and Jeff Simmons. The Committee will keep an eye on our levy ceiling (*the full and fair cash value limit of all taxable real and personal property*). The levy can only increase by a certain amount from year to year – the limit is the maximum amount that the Town can levy in a given year. The levy limit may not exceed the levy ceiling. The committee will also keep an eye on the Broadband project. The Town will proceed but remain aware of the complexity which includes the financing portion. Stipends will continue to be reviewed and researched. The Committee will attempt to create a formula to improve how stipends are calculated for each applicable position.

Heath Telecom: Art Schwenger reported that Al Canali, former manager, recently moved to Florida. Art has been active with WiredWest, serving as a representative for Heath. Art is also a participant in conversations with Westfield, Gas & Electric. To sum it up Art declared, “We’re on it!”

Heath Veterans Memorial Committee: Bob Bourke, Co-Chair, announced that the formal dedication of the new Heath Veterans Memorial occurred on November 4, 2017. Members have received a lot of positive feedback on the project. They are winding down now as a committee and will disband after two remaining goals are satisfied: benches placed within the memorial area and a means to illuminate the flag at night. They are researching how to run a wire from the existing pole. Bob reported that further tasks will most likely fold into those of the Parks & Recreation Committee. There are enough funds remaining to complete these tasks. Please look for article in the Shelburne Independent. The Select Board thanked the Committee members for a job well done which was met with applause. STOP

Historical Commission: Heather Hathwell, member, reported that the National Register has accepted the application to increase the boundaries of the Historic District in Heath including down South Road to Hannay/Palmer and Dyer residences and to the Fairgrounds down to Simpson property.

Library Trustees: Deb Porter, Trustee shared that the library won a blue ribbon at the Heath Fair for best organizational exhibit! The books at the Heath School library now belong to the Town and the trustees are in the process of devising a plan on best use. Current library space is restricted and they are also working on ways to reconfigure use of space. There is a need for handicapped accessible furniture. The current large reading and display table is not ADA compliant so they may use the table at the Heath School. The plan is also to remove the large circulation desk and replace with a smaller desk that they will also get from the school. The re-use of the school is still unknown but the trustees will keep apprised.

Parks & Recreation Commission: Bob Bourke commended the current group including Mary Holan, Lyra Johnson-Fuller, Shahid Jalil. The group also appreciates the assistance of Lorena Loubsky. Bob reported that the committee installed new child swings and sand toys at the Community Hall playground. Children often play there after library story hour. The Town has received two free bicycle racks from a program through FRCOG. The equipment box at the basketball court has been replaced with a wooden box and contains balls, etc. for use. The committee is looking into hosting a movie night in the summertime and skating in the winter. Some members have met with the Franklin Land Trust in an effort to research ways to utilize town-owned land for walking trails. They will assist in mapping town areas including the Shapiro land. There is a grant available for an assessment including timber use that could produce revenue for the town. Assessment will also include hiking areas, wetlands, bird and wildlife. The town also received a pollinator grant that enabled plantings in Town Center. Thank you to Lorena for helping to create and maintain town gardens.

Planning Board: Calvin Carr, Chair says the board has been busy this year doing site plan reviews for solar projects which involve public hearings. The board has also met with the Energy Advisory Committee regarding Green Communities Initiative. Met with Board of Health to discuss bylaws relating to additional dwellings. Worked with Franklin Land Trust on the Crowningshield property. The board also covered issues regarding open space, closed and unmaintained roads, and currently in discussions regarding recreational marijuana temporary moratorium to allow the town time to formulate applicable bylaws. Bill Gran is working with town clerk on streamlining the special permitting process with instructional step by step instructions. Need to coordinate with Board of Health and Zoning Board of Appeals so that the processes are more collaborative and easier to process.

School Committee (MTRSD & FCTS): Bob Gruen and Budge Litchfield are current representatives for the MTRSD. Art Schwenger serves as Franklin County Tech School representative. Budge emphasized that Bob is filling in by agreement and although he is a wonderful asset, he has served for many, many years but needs a replacement. The goal of the Budget Sub-Committee is to help towns keep assessments as low as possible without lowering services to ensure student's needs are met. The Excess & Deficiency account is often used to lower assessments. Currently it is \$917,893. Budge reported on Elementary School transition. 41 children from Heath are attending the Hawlemont School. He's received positive feedback from parents and staff. Classrooms are mid-teen to lower 20s per class/grade. Financial support is needed for more staff to accommodate increase in students. Able to do this because of the tuition income/agreement. It's working and is a model that can work for communities. 31 students at the Heath School was not educationally or financially viable. That is the sad reality but we're having a positive outlook with this new arrangement. The Town is seeking a grant to help transition and to create a model that other small, rural communities can use that does not result in a lawsuit. Other Districts have had great difficulty and conflict dealing with similar issues. Heath's partnership with Hawlemont has been very positive – a nice model for others struggling with similar issues.

FCTS: Art reported that renovations are going very well and almost complete – the school looks great. There are new doors, roof, and lighting. The educational program is still improving. The number of students from Heath is 12. Art also serves on Curriculum Committee.

School Building Transition Team: Sheila noted that there is a process to request items at the Heath School. Everything has been inventoried and well cared for. The Town is not letting go of certain critical items such as common area couches, items in library, etc. Tables/chairs in cafeteria will remain if groups need to use the space. Brian DeVriese, member, shared that Hilma Sumner serves as chair. They have had two meetings so far where they have organized and brainstormed ideas for the re-use of the building. Phil Pless was invited to a meeting to talk about real estate in area. He provided helpful information. Will pursue more publicity soon. The meeting for tomorrow has been cancelled. The group is jump starting but will soon discuss issues more in depth. Nothing is off the table at this time. Mark Cohn is going to meet to discuss commercial real estate. The town needs to generate revenue in order to maintain the building/property.

Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership Advisory Committee: Art Schwenger reported on the work of this committee. The purpose is to bring recognition and additional financial and technical resources to municipalities primarily via special designation by US Forest Service and MA Exec. Office of Energy and environmental Affairs to increase economic development related to forestry and natural resource based tourism; support forest conservation on private lands and use of sustainable forestry practices, and to improve fiscal stability and sustainability of the municipalities. Legislators have a bill before them. If it passes, the next step is to seek funding from the Federal Government in an effort to carry out the goals of the project. Art has testified in support of the project before a hearing and to present the plan. Volunteers are welcome. Contact FRCOG or Art Schwenger.

Community Economic Development Strategy (CEDs): Art Schwenger, a man of many hats, reported on this on-going work through FRCOG. The revised strategy is on FRCOG website. It is packed with

information useful especially when seeking grants; it's a great resource. Broadband availability is always a top goal for economic development.

Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA): Pam Porter, member, reported that this group meets as needed. She is enthusiastic that the Planning Board and Board of Health will collaborate to improve communication between committees.

Other: Art Schwenger also reported that he serves on the Yankee Atomic Spent Fuel Committee along with Dawn Peters. They are still awaiting a long term plan for storage from the Federal Government. This is a very costly endeavor but the waste is well cared for in Rowe and thoroughly monitored.

Sheila briefed the group on the recent damage sustained as a result of the rain storm. The basement experienced some flooding which damaged some records and the elevator controls. Sandri assessed and restarted the boiler but only the switch needed replacing. Tim Lively is working diligently to remove any water logged items and to dry out the entire area. The insurance company has been notified.

People also serve on the many committees for the FRCOG: Representatives serve on the Building Inspection Program (FCCIP) – Brian DeVriese; Regional Transit Authority (FRTA) – Brian DeVriese; Planning Board – David Travers; also the Franklin County Solid Waste District – Kara Leistyna, and Franklin County Selectmen's Association – Brian DeVriese.

Communications: Sheila noted the Important Dates hand-out for folks to be apprised of critical events happening and on what date. A reminder to see Town Clerk if you have been appointment to serve on a board or committee – it's important to be sworn in to make it official. When appointed, you'll have 30 days to complete the process or that position will be considered vacant.

Budget Requests for FY19 will be coming out in December. Thank you to everyone in attendance tonight. Larger group dispersed.

Board of Selectmen Other Business:

Reviewed Agenda: Add to Other Business: Heath School Use Forms (2); Roadside Dumping; Update on Efficiency and Regionalization Grant Application

Mail/ Email:

- Notice of pre-construction conference 11/21 at 10 am for Bridge construction Jacksonville Stage Road;
- Emails from Betsy Kovacs, BOH
- CC of letter from Hilma to Melinda Herzig
- Emails from Ned Wolf re: Talking about assessments
- Emails re: roadside dumping
- Emails from Tim Lively re: items at Heath School
- Email from Brian DeVriese re: tree removal
- Email from Bob Viarengo re: Wasiulewski Matter
- Email from Sheila re: BOH question
- Notice from National Grid re: Pole Sets
- Email from Mary Tuturice (Holan) re: grant application submitted/ Parks & Recreation Comm.
- Email between Sheila and Lorena Loubsky re: landscaping

Other Separate Documents for review and/or signatures:

- School Use Form applications (2)
- The Beacon, November 2017

- Revised Budget Planning Calendar FY19
- Vacation Request
- Cash Reconciliation Oct. 2017
- IT Grant Completion letter
- Authorization Letters to Verizon New England and National Grid (WGE)
- Reimbursement request
- Western MA Law Enforcement MAA
- WiredWest Draft MOU
- Minutes 10/17/17
- All Boards Meeting hand outs (Open Meeting Law and Important Dates)
- Town Coordinator Report

Other Business:

- **SBTT:** *On a motion by Brian DeVriese, and seconded by Sheila Litchfield, the Board voted unanimously to appoint Tom Carlson to serve on the School Building Transition Team.*
- **MLP Board:** *On a motion by Brian DeVriese, and seconded by Sheila Litchfield, the Board voted unanimously to appoint Jan Carr, Ned Wolf, and Art Schwenger to serve on MLP Board.* At this time uncertain if these appointees should be elected or may serve in advisory capacity. Kara will follow up. The MLP Board will meet same time as the BOS. Discussed location of hub – the hut located on roughly 9x16 pad. Need to determine location by Dec. 13 to begin design. Need property plan map of area near basketball court and 5 Ledges Road (although still awaiting pricing for asbestos testing and removal).
- **WiredWest MOU:** This newest version is a non-binding agreement for operational services. WiredWest needs to know which towns are going to commit or have intent to participate. Currently, Rowe, New Salem, Washington, and Windsor have signed on. Town counsel has not reviewed agreement yet. Westfield, Gas & Electric will provide same services but WiredWest may be able to offer revenue sharing. Will revisit when full Board in attendance. Art recommends the Town sign.
- **Heath School Use Applications:** Discussed applications from Jonathan Diamond, Good Neighbor's Food Pantry. Kara will add Jonathan to agenda on Dec. 12.
- **Benches from Heath School to Heath Veterans Memorial:** Board approved that the benches can be moved to the Town Center.

Signed documents.

On a motion by Brian DeVriese, and seconded by Sheila Litchfield, the Board voted unanimously to sign:

- Completion letter closing out Community Compact IT grant for Assessors' mapping project Phase I.
- Western MA Law Enforcement Agreement

Next meeting scheduled November 21, 2017 at 7 p.m. at Sawyer Hall.

There being no further business to come before the Board: *On a motion by Brian DeVriese, and seconded by Sheila Litchfield, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn at 10:12 p.m.*

Respectfully presented,

Kara M. Leistyna
Town Coordinator