

## MEETING MINUTES

Town of Heath

SELECT BOARD

School Building, 18 Jacobs Road

February 26, 2020

**Called to Order at 6:02 p.m.** with Brian DeVriese, Robyn Provost Carlson, Gloria Cronin Fisher and Hilma Sumner, Town Coordinator, in attendance.

**Tripp Tree Farm (TTF):** Ruben Seyde and Daniel Shenk-Moreno were present to discuss the Host Community Agreement and answer questions. They stated that they had advertised, sent notices to property abutters and posted a notice at town hall. There were five people in attendance at the informational meeting. The Board explained that they had spoken with the Highway Superintendent about the condition of Taylor Brook Road. The superintendent advised that, if the need arises, the road would need to be widened with guardrails installed and have a gravel buildup. Approximate cost for this work would be \$106,000. If an additional 1 ½ inch top gravel was added, the cost would be an extra \$80,000. Ruben remarked that he thought they would be able to help with the road construction costs. Use of roadways for the beginning is estimated by TTF to begin with one shipment per month with one or two trucks.

Water use is estimated at 40,000 gallons per year. The well company who drilled the original well on the property was consulted about the water capacity. The company plans on installing a system to capture and re-use water on the plants. Waste water must go into a sealed treatment facility. Ruben stated that they are hoping to recycle 100 percent of the water which will be without any pesticide content. The greenhouse will be powered by solar and a windmill. The house will be used either as a processing center or as a dwelling for Ruben. The Board recapped that part of the process of facility development would be complying with Board of Health, Conservation Commission and Planning Board regulations and permitting. An environmental study would also need to be completed.

Long-term goals include being a zero-carbon facility, having 10 to 30 job opportunities and the development of a cannabis industrial park at the location. A discussion ensued about property valuation after development. In some locations a cannabis business provides economic advantages according to Ruben. Robyn stated that she did not think a blanket statement could be made about either an increase or decrease in property value due to the many variables that are in any given area. Levels of police and fire presence are regulated by the Cannabis Control Commission.

Future use and development on the property by other companies would require the Town writing and signing a separate Host Community Agreement with each company. Brian stated that any type of traffic study or impact study that needed to be completed would need to be paid for by TTF.

***On a motion by Gloria Cronin Fisher and a second by Robyn Provost Carlson, the Select Board unanimously voted to sign the Host Community Agreement with Tripp Tree Farm.*** The document was signed by the Select Board and Ruben Seyde CEO, Tripp Tree Farm.

**Fire Chief and Department:** Fire Chief Nick Anzuoni presented a request to move the Fire Department office and Emergency Operations Center (EOC) office to a room in the former school building. He explained that the heat in the current space is unreliable, there is no insulation, and no plumbing. Without adequate facilities, personnel returning from an emergency call have no means of cleaning themselves or their gear before returning to their daily activities. Because the space is small, the fire chief and the emergency management director are unable to hold separate phone or face-to-face conversations and be able to hear and maintain a level of confidentiality. Their desks are six feet apart.

The Fire Chief stated that they would like the room on the front of the school with a separate entrance. It is large enough to accommodate both offices and install a room partition to separate the two. Portable communication radios receive signals at this location and the department could install a temporary antenna. There is a new radio system that is being implemented in the response district with 800 mhz radios that will require new antennas for both fire and police. Estimated cost for a new antenna tower is \$7,000 which will have to be installed when the new radios are put into service. It is estimated that that will possibly be two years from now for the fire department.

Most of the EOC programs are online and, because of this, it is essential to have reliable, high speed internet to receive up-to-date information during heightened alert times. For a source of emergency power a 50 kilowatt generator would power the entire building. A used generator is estimated to cost around \$19,000 or less. Fire department personnel would could prepare the cement pad and trench for the electric line themselves. An electrician would need to be hired to do the hook-up.

Chief Anzuoni explained that Phase 2 of his move-in plan would be to erect a steel building across the driveway that would house the vehicles and other equipment but would only need to be heated to prevent freezing. In response to questions about the ability of a fire truck being able to cross the Branch Brook bridge, he stated that there would be no problem; the fire vehicles can cross now if needed. The bridge would also be considered part of the critical infrastructure and, as such, may get more immediate attention. The Select Board will take this under advisement and give a response at a later time.

**Treasurer Budget Hearing:** Treasurer Kris Nartowicz was present and reviewed her proposed FY2021 account requests. She stated that because final borrowing has not taken place for broadband, the town will only need to pay the interest on the two amounts that have been borrowed. After the borrowing is finished, it will be rolled into one loan and repayment of the principal will begin. Kris said that the \$1,000 in this year's Interest on Temporary Borrowing account can be transferred to pay accounts needing additional monies.

**Town Coordinator's Report:**

- Request for Globes: Lyra Johnson-Fuller had requested to give two world globes to her son's classroom at Hawlemont. She said that the teacher was in need of globes for instruction purposes. *On a motion by Gloria Cronin Fisher and a second by Robyn Provost Carlson, the Select Board unanimously voted to allow Lyra to give two world globes to the Hawlemont teacher for classroom use.*
- FY 2021 Landfill Expenses: Hilma had received an email from the Hawley Town Administrator asking about expenses. The Board affirmed that the only expenses known at this time were well-testing, annual DEP inspection, advertising and field mowing, and the gate replacement.

**Annual Report:** Brian stated that he would draft the Select Board submission for the 2019 Annual Report.

**Annual Report Dedication:** Suggestions made were: Ruth Johnson, Richard Gallup, Richard Sumner and Volunteers. It was agreed that the Board would give some thought to ideas for the dedication through the week.

**Special Town Meeting Warrant:** Articles for the March 24<sup>th</sup> STM were reviewed. Hilma reported that the Police Chief had given permission to use \$1,000 from his Police Expense budget for transfers. The Board said that probably most transfers would have to be made from Free Cash.

**Coronavirus:** Board of Health (BOH) chair, Betsy Kovacs, reported that the BOH had held discussions and been in contact with Lisa White of FRCOG. Susan Gruen and Tim Lively had gone over the emergency equipment supplies and that some new equipment was coming to replace what was outdated. The Board of Health will meet on March 3 and will be discussing the current status of the virus and what measures and/or information disbursement should be taken.

**Town Building Use:** Robyn stated that she had asked this topic be added to the agenda because the Board would soon be receiving the report of the Town Facilities Task Force about the buildings in the next few weeks. She thought that the Board needed to formulate their own questions in regards to this topic. Brian added that the Town Facilities Task Force needs to present their report first then a period of public discussion will be determined. Robyn also remarked that if a town entity comes with a request, then the Board has a duty to respond. If the answer to a request is ‘no,’ then it is the Board’s duty to provide an alternative.

Following discussion and a remark from Bob Gruen saying that when he asked the question at the 2019 Annual Town Meeting, the answer was that any use of the former school building would need a two-thirds vote at a town meeting, the Board agreed that town counsel needed to be asked what was in the Select Board’s purview about this matter. The Board asked Hilma to compile all the previous correspondence regarding this conversation/topic and send to the town attorney and ask for a definitive answer.

**Documents Approved and Signed:** CDBG application.

There being no further business to come before the Board: *On a motion by Gloria Cronin Fisher and seconded by Brian DeVriese, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn at 8:50 p.m.*

Respectfully submitted,

Hilma A. Sumner  
Town Coordinator