

**MEETING MINUTES**

Town of Heath  
SELECT BOARD  
Virtual Meeting  
September 21, 2021

**Called to Order at 6:00 p.m.** with Robyn Provost Carlson, Susan Lively and Hilma Sumner, Town Coordinator, in attendance.

**Other Attendees:** See attendance sheet.

**Review Agenda:** Added: Tri-Wire news. Tabled Review of Minutes and moved up Fire House on the agenda.

**Public Comment:** None.

**Axon Properties:** Company personnel Ryan Jundt, Chris Yatooma, Mark James and Heather Gude joined the meeting to speak with the Board about their interest in purchasing a property in Heath and developing an adult-use marijuana growing farm with outdoor cultivation. The particular entity for their marijuana growing business is Crucial and is based in Michigan. Axon Properties is also involved in real estate development and construction work for utility companies.

It was explained that there would be no retail sales or onsite consumption involved in the work. They are looking to establish an office in Massachusetts for cannabis growth and real estate development. There would be a total of four cannabis growers who would each cultivate a two-acre parcel. Each farmer will have their own license with the CCC. The 145-acre property is located at 136 Hosmer Rd. East and is under contract. Company officials will be coming to Heath next Tuesday to talk with various individuals and would like to meet with some town officials as well.

The method of planting is to start seedlings inside and then move the plants in growing bags outside in spring. The plants continue to grow inside the bag and are fed nutrients and watered. Plants will be harvested and the product packaged on site but then shipped offsite for purchase. There will be an 8-foot fence erected around each two-acre parcel for security with video surveillance in place on the property. The grow-buildings will have solid walls so light will not be seen on the outside. There will also be flood lights on the outside that are activated only by motion. The company's hopeful timeline would be to do necessary construction during the fall, winter and early spring so that they would be prepared to begin their first growing season next spring.

The level of employees will fluctuate between five people in early spring, 10-15 people in late spring and summer, 20-30 people during the harvest in late September to mid-October. From mid-November to March, the farming operations will be closed. In response to questions about the weather, the company personnel stated that studies have shown similar climate and growing season to what there is in Michigan where they presently have farming operations.

The Host Community Agreement needs to be worked out between Crucial and the Town. They would like a reduced Community Impact Fee below the three percent but would not require justification for municipal cost reimbursement. Hilma will contact local officials that the company would like to meet with next Tuesday when they are in Heath and will communicate with Ryan to work out details. They will also return to the Select Board meeting next Tuesday evening.

**Fire House:** Summarization was given of the many existing concerns at the fire house and the E.O.C. office. Robyn, Emergency Management Director Tim Lively and Fire Chief Nick Anzuoni met with County Health Agent Randy Crochier on Saturday to review health hazards in the building. Randy deemed the E.O. C. office as uninhabitable; he will send a written report. He also recommended relocating the Fire Department turnout gear so it does not continue to become moldy. Monday afternoon Robyn, Hilma and Nick met with the Building Inspector David Roberts to address concerns in the building as well. He enumerated many structural issues including insulation and ceiling replacement in the E.O.C. office, replacing molded drywall and pouring concrete piers for the foundation. The fire garage needs ventilation so that exhaust from the engines has somewhere to vent. The space is too small to accommodate today's fire engines and there is no room to walk around them. The Inspector will also send a letter stating his findings.

The E.O.C. will relocate to the Jacobs Road building. The Select Board will look into the possibility of erecting a temporary building to house the fire trucks. Turn-out gear will be relocated to the separate garage. Heath firefighters will be going to the old Greenfield fire station to pick up their old metal lockers and any other useable small equipment. Robyn is getting a quote on installing an air circulation system into the fire garage.

A generator is needed at the school building in case of emergency. The possibility of moving the current E.O.C. generator and having the highway generator hooked up to the fire department bay doors will be researched.

**Office Relocation:** Robyn explained that the current plan would be to move the Town Coordinator, Town Clerk and Police Department to the new location by October 1<sup>st</sup>. Relocation of the Financial offices of Accountant, Treasurer and Tax Collector will occur in November. There has been feedback about how Sawyer Hall incorrectly gets used and these town employees need to be in places where they can work and function safely. The Board is also not providing proper access for the town's residents to the various offices. The move will make for a more efficient and cost-effective solution by having all offices in the same location. Following the relocation, the Board wants to explore how the town center can be used effectively and get the repairs done to the buildings that are needed.

**Town Redistricting:** Following the 2020 U.S. census, congressional districts and municipal voting precincts are redrawn. Because the Town's total voter population is below 5000, Heath may remain as one precinct. *On a motion by Susan Lively and a second by Robyn Provost Carlson, the Select Board unanimously voted to affirm the accuracy of the town boundary lines and to approve that the town will remain as one precinct.*

**Rural Roundtable:** Sue Lively and Budge Litchfield will attend this discussion that will be hosted at Mohawk Regional High School to highlight the adverse impact of state aid to rural school communities.

**Tri-Wire Declaration of Bankruptcy:** A letter had been sent to the Town to notify the Board of the declaration of Ch. 11 bankruptcy that had been filed by Tri-Wire. Hilma has reached out to town counsel to determine what, if anything, the Town needs to do.

**Town Coordinator's Report:**

- Northeast IT: Technician Shawn has been in town two separate days since the Board last met to continue working on the muni network which includes setting up the wireless services located at all four town buildings. There will be two guest networks and a password protected town employee/official network.

- Regionalization Grant: Filed the final report for original 191 regionalization grant. After approval of the report, the Town was released to reapply for the new grant, 191A, for the unspent balance from the original grant. That was completed last Friday with the requested amount of \$34,370.
- STAM Annual Meeting: The meeting was held at the Northfield Golf Club on Thursday, September 9<sup>th</sup>. Besides annual reports of the organization, there was a representative from DLS who provided information about the final weeks of spending for the CARES Act funds and final reports that will need to be completed. A second state official addressed infrastructure needs across the state and the reorganization of the various applicable grants. STAM members sent a challenge to the state to increase Ch. 90 funds. The argument presented was that the funding level has remained the same for many years although construction costs have greatly increased. This has resulted in municipalities, especially the small towns, being able to accomplish less and less with each succeeding year.
- MVP Meeting: The next meetings will be the ones divided into the three focus areas. Infrastructure workshop: 10/25 (1:00—2:30 pm); Society workshop: 10/25 (3:00—4:30 pm); and Environment workshop: 10/27 (2:00—3:30 pm).
- FireFighters Association: Just this afternoon it was reported that the FireFighters Association is most likely going to be purchasing a squad vehicle on Saturday. There is currently research being done on insurance costs, timing of getting it registered, etc.

#### Mail:

- HRST re: update for publication-- *On a motion by Susan Lively and a second by Robyn Provost Carlson, the Select Board unanimously voted to approve the statement for release.*
- STAM re: advocacy letter with Bill S-2029—Hilma will draft a letter to send from the Board
- G. Garland re: BoH reporting—Hilma will send a reply
- S. Lively re: ACO committee meeting
- S. Stanton (MTRSS) re: COVID testing policy
- D. Allard (Colonial Power) re: electric rates
- K. Nartowicz re: report of town debt
- W. Ennen re: Sept. BB meeting
- M. Sumner re: Heath Census precinct information
- R. Honeycutt re: resignation from Parks & Rec— *On a motion by Susan Lively and a second by Robyn Provost Carlson, the Select Board unanimously voted to accept with regrets the resignation of Robert Honeycutt from the Parks & Recreation Committee.*
- V. Burrington re: COA draft of Sr. Program Coordinator job description—for future agenda
- G. Garland re: BoH potential member appointments
- G. Garland re: BoH request for vehicle idling signs—The Board agreed; Hilma will contact the Highway Superintendent to order and install signs.
- L. Lively re: state regulation of vehicles idling
- D. Porter (Library Trustees) re: meeting minutes, state visit, visit report—request for a future appointment.
- FCTS re: negotiation subcommittee—Hilma will find details about who is to be appointed.

#### Next Meeting:

Axon Properties: Hilma will contact town counsel, they will present a clear outline of what they are looking for.

Office relocation—vote

Fire House  
Future meeting dates  
Tri-Wire  
Board of Health members-new appointments

***On a motion by Susan Lively and a second by Robyn Provost Carlson, the Select Board unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 8:22 p.m.***

Respectfully submitted,

Hilma A. Sumner  
Town Coordinator