

MEETING MINUTES

Town of Heath
SELECT BOARD
Virtual Meeting
March 31, 2022

Called to Order at 4:31 p.m. with Robyn Provost Carlson, Susan Lively, Brian De Vriese and Hilma Sumner, Town Coordinator, in attendance.

Others in Attendance: See attendance sheet.

Appointment of Election Workers: *On a motion by Susan Lively and a second by Brian De Vriese, the Select Board unanimously voted to appoint Dena Briggs, Cindie Garland, Susan Draxler, Cathy Wilkins and Hilma Sumner as Election Workers, and Doug Wilkins and Cathy Tallen as Alternate Election Workers.*

Board of Assessors' Recommendations: Robyn explained that the Assessors met and voted to recommend to the Select Board a change in the Assistant Assessor job description to eliminate the restriction that an elected assessor cannot hold the position. For the same person to hold both positions simultaneously, the Select Board also needed to declare all three assessors as special municipal employees. *On a motion by Susan Lively and a second by Brian De Vriese, the Select Board unanimously voted to strike the restriction in the Assistant Assessor job description that this position could not be held by an elected assessor and that all three members of the elected Board of Assessors are deemed as special municipal employees.*

Broadband Loan Repayment Schedule: The recommendation of the Finance Committee was reviewed in that their recommendation was to use an 18-year repayment schedule. *On a motion by Susan Lively and a second by Brian De Vriese, the Select Board unanimously voted to select the 18-year repayment schedule for the broadband loan repayment.*

Colrain Central School Capital Project: After review of the article wording to be presented to the Annual Town Meeting, *on a motion by Susan Lively and a second by Brian De Vriese, the Select Board unanimously voted to approve the article wording to authorize the project and borrowing to fund the project.* School Committee Representative Budge Litchfield, who was present at the meeting, will share the decision with the MTRSD building subcommittee and school committee.

FY22 MTRSD Operating Assessment Error: Budge asked if the Board would make a decision to move forward with working out a payment plan for paying the school district the amount of the assessment error. By doing so, MTRSD would be able to apply to the statehouse for a bond that would allow the district to close its financial books for the fiscal year. Robyn addressed this by stating that the subject was not listed on the agenda and the Board would not be making any decisions at this meeting but would continue discussion at the next meeting.

FY23 Budget and Salary Review: As introductory explanation, Robyn provided the analysis that she and Hilma had completed in their work together. Salaries for two positions were currently behind the mid-range for the pay grade of each one. The two positions are the Highway Superintendent and Town Coordinator. The position of Mechanic/Operator is proposed to be increased greater than the 6 percent COLA because of the current wage being significantly lower than wages listed on the FRCOG Wage and Salary Survey. The Treasurer's wage was in a similar position and was increased

by about 15 percent. Robyn also noted that the increase in the Town Coordinator salary was not only to raise it to mid-range pay grade but also to increase the position to 40 hours per week.

Several positions need to be re-evaluated in the coming year such as Tax Collector, Treasurer, Town Clerk and Police Department positions.

Special Projects: To have a number in the budget worksheet, \$10,000 was added to this account line. Hilma will pursue estimates for this year's projects, in particular the Community Hall double doors and either mending or replacing the cement steps.

Robyn stated that she had obtained a copy of the deed and restrictions for the Bray Road property. She had also spoken with the seller's attorney to make certain of understanding. According to the documents, the Town can store salt on the property, but it must be contained within a building, not outside in piles. There can also be communication antennae, but no building is to be higher than 30 feet. The Board discussed the possibility of beginning with building a new salt shed on the property and making plans for other construction needed for the highway department, fire department and emergency services. Board members discussed the possibility of appropriating funds to hire an operation planning manager and developing plans in case there is opportunity to apply for federal infrastructure money when it becomes available. It was also noted that the Town needs to reach out to its state representatives in the near future and begin talking about these needs.

Boards Clerk: Hilma presented a rough draft of likely work tasks and qualifications needed for the position. The description was written for a position that would combine clerical duties for Planning Board, Conservation Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals and Board of Health. This will be further reviewed and discussed. Robyn will contact the Board of Health chairman to discuss the planning process.

Green Communities Update: Brian reported that an audit of the Jacobs Road building needs to be updated for the air sealing and insulation work that has been approved. Franklin County Technical School will be able to do the energy exchange of updated light fixtures on the outside of the building.

5:35 p.m. On a motion by Susan Lively and a second by Brian De Vriese, the Select Board unanimously voted to enter into Executive Session pursuant to G.L. c. 30A, sec. 21(a)(3), To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation and the chair declared that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body; For deliberation and strategy in New Cingular Wireless PCS, LLC d/b/a AT&T mobility v. Town of Heath, Town of Heath Planning Board, and not to reconvene in open session.

Susan Lively Aye

Brian De Vriese Aye

Robyn Provost Carlson Aye

Respectfully submitted,

Hilma A. Sumner
Town Coordinator