

Meeting Minutes
Town of Heath
SELECT BOARD
18 Jacobs Rd.
Nov. 15, 2022

Call to Order: 6:01 by Robyn Provost-Carlson, Chair, with Brian DeVriese present. Susan Lively was absent. Also present, Nancy Thane, Office Assistant.

See sign-in sheet for other attendees.

Review of the Agenda

1. Table the minutes from Nov. 1, 2022
2. Jonathan Diamond and David Arfa, not the entire board of directors, will be attending for Hilltown Youth Performing Arts Program due to inclement weather.
3. MTRSD finance dispute update
4. MIIA contract approval
5. Executive Session was tabled.

Review of Minutes: *On a motion by Robyn Provost-Carlson and seconded by Brian DeVriese, the Select Board unanimously voted to table, until the next meeting, the minutes of November 1, 2022.*

Updates: Sue Lively is out for medical reasons, Hilma Sumner is on medical leave. Return dates for either person are unknown.

Public Comment:

A resident spoke of enjoying the Bones in Balance class taught by Claire Rabbitt at the Community Hall, offered the opinion that the nurse's office in the Community Hall is a private and safe space. He also remarked that it's important to have something happening in the town center and felt that there was no reason to move the nurse's office.

Mail: Robyn summarized all mail

1. Email from the Council on Aging in expressing support of relocating the nurse's office to Jacobs Rd.
2. Email correspondence with Gene Garland, Chair of the Board of Health. The Board of Health did not meet because they did not have a quorum, but Gene talked to each member individually about their continuing concerns regarding the relocation of the nurse's office.
3. Two more suggestions for the name of the building at 18 Jacobs Rd.
4. A resident expressed regret that the town of Charlemont did not inform Heath residents of the recent two-day closure of Route 8A near the Heath/ Charlemont border.
5. A resident expressed appreciation for the fact that the town has a policy of allowing the public to use the Jacobs Rd. building gym on a drop-in basis during regular hours.

MIIA: approved continuing participation in the MIIA property, liability, and workers compensation programs for FY24 and FY25. Renewal includes a rate change of 0% for FY24 and up to 2.5% for FY25. MIIA is a non-profit insurance provider for municipalities.

Other Business:

Deciding on a new name for the building at 18 Jacobs Rd. will be postponed until a future meeting.

More accurate signage is needed both at the Jacobs Rd. building and in the Center. Robyn would like to see a sign with the notice board attached like the one at Sawyer Hall for the Community Hall for announcements of upcoming events. There also needs to be a kiosk for postings at Jacobs Rd.

Schedule for upcoming meetings:

- Nov. 29
 - Naming of the Jacobs Rd. building
 - Review of decision-making process regarding the location of town offices.
 - Possible vote to accept the Finance Committee letter.
- Dec. 13
 - Ask Budge Litchfield if he can attend to discuss the MTRSD budget process.
 - Possible meeting with Finance Committee.

Research into possible purchase of an OWL to enhance remote access to meetings. Hilma began research through Northeast IT, Nancy to research, as well. Review of policy for Select Board attendance given a Zoom option: the chair and a quorum must be present in person.

FRCOG: The Board would like to pursue an RFP user plan review of all buildings but will wait until Hilma is back.

Nancy noted that the Franklin County Tech School is making good progress on the upgrade of the lighting at Jacobs Rd. Exterior lights are mostly replaced. The Tech School will assess the needs and prepare a bid for interior lighting.

Salt Shed; Brian sent the Highway Superintendent, Jeff, a copy of the deed to the Bray Rd. property for review of its few restrictions. A site design is needed. Brian will get the original plan to Jeff since many parts of it will still be relevant. The salt shed would need to be sited so that it would not interfere with any future construction on the site. An RFP for the salt shed may be needed from FRCOG.

MTRSD: A Zoom meeting held Nov. 7 was attended by Brian DeVriese, Bob McGahan, Russ Dupree (MTRSD Atty) and Ken Rocke as he was on original team of developing a transition plan for elementary students. Attorneys representing Heath who were present were Atty. James Lampke and Atty. Robert Kerwin. Also attending were Budge Litchfield, the MTRSD Business Manager and Treasurer. There is disagreement as to the terms of the agreement in regard to our relationship with Mohawk and Hawlemont during the time in question. The Heath

representatives at this meeting asked for more information in terms of the expenses incurred by the district while serving Heath students.

Heath attorneys will write a synopsis of where the town is now. The Board agreed that future discussion will be needed after the requested information is obtained. It was noted that that Board is striving to do their due diligence in terms of taxpayer's dollars.

Town Nurse Office Location: The public, Board of Health, and Council on Aging have taken the opportunity to offer opinions, thoughts and concerns, which have all been heard by the Select Board. Robyn spoke to Claire Rabbitt, town nurse, today to get information directly from Claire. During the conversation, Claire said that, given the choice, she would like to stay in the Community Hall office.

Robyn indicated that the process to decide to move the nurse's office has been questioned. However, the proper process of discussion with the Select Board, speaking to the chair of the Board of Health, and talking directly to the nurse was followed. Fact-oriented concerns have been answered. COVID concerns have been addressed. The theatre students are respectful and do not create disturbances. Security and safety is better at Jacobs Rd. The Bones and Balance class is partnered with Claire's office hours, so Claire agrees that it would be more sensible to have the class held at Jacobs Rd. Brian noted that Claire's office in the Community Hall would provide much needed storage, as it did in the past.

On a motion by Brian DeVriese and seconded by Robyn Provost-Carlson, the Select Board unanimously voted to relocate the nurse's office from the Community Hall to the former school nurse's office in the building at Jacobs Rd.

Robyn indicated that careful scheduling of the move will take place. Brian will call Claire tomorrow and Nancy will email the BoH to relay this information. Nancy will check with Hilma for her tentative moving plan.

Related discussion: the last update of the nurse job description was in 2006. It should be updated early in the new year. Barbara Gordon spoke to the value of having a town nurse, unlike most neighboring towns that use FRCOG's nursing program. Towns pay-in for the service (instead of paying a nurse's salary). Barbara stated that, by having its own nurse, the Town has been able to get grants.

Hilltown Youth Performing Arts Program (HYPA): Met with Jonathan Diamond and David Arfa regarding updates to the lease of rooms at Jacobs Rd. Jonathan expressed appreciation that the BOS has worked through lease technicalities, and they now have program proposals. Jonathan also expressed his appreciation for the use of space in the building and spoke to the value of how the Town is re-purposing the building. He noted that having a permanent campus is a "game changer" in terms of the growth of this program.

HYPA is getting a refrigerator and freezer for one of their rooms but would like use of the building's industrial freezer in summer. Only adults would have access. They want a slop sink installed in one room. They would buy the sink and asked that the Town install it. They propose

making a musical garden area near the playground that is currently not used. Jonathan will provide a map for reference. They would like to paint murals on concrete walls in gym (above the bleachers). The murals would be guest-artist designed and kid-crafted. Jonathan will provide proposed images for approval.

The Board noted that they had heard no complaints about the program's presence in the building and that everyone needs to respect that there are multiple uses of the building.

7:31 p.m. *On a motion by Brian DeVriese and seconded by Robyn Provost-Carlson, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn at 7:31 p.m.*

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Thane
Office Assistant