

**MEETING MINUTES**  
Town of Heath  
**SELECT BOARD**  
Jacobs Road Municipal Center  
May 16, 2023

**Called to Order at 6:00 p.m.** With Robyn Provost Carlson, Susan Lively, Elissa Viarengo, and Hilma Sumner, Town Coordinator.

**Others in Attendance:** See attendance sheet.

**Review of Agenda:** Added Broadband email and Fuse Energy.

**Review of Minutes:** *On a motion by Susan Lively and seconded by Elissa Viarengo, the Select Board unanimously voted to approve the minutes of May 1, 2023, as amended. Elissa Viarengo abstained.*

*On a motion by Susan Lively and seconded by Elissa Viarengo, the Select Board unanimously voted to approve the minutes of May 6, 2023, as presented. Elissa Viarengo abstained.*

**Fuse Energy:** Hilma explained the proposal from Fuse Energy to give the town a 10 percent credit on the different electric bills that the town receives. The contract agreement is for 12 months and is intended to help toward utilizing solar energy. The Board asked for references of other entities involved in the program and asked that the Energy Advisory Committee be approached to review the information.

**Calvin Carr Appointment:** Calvin explained that he wanted to talk about MGL ch. 30A, sec. 20 (g) that speaks to the authority in open meetings sitting with the chairperson of the committee whose meeting is being held. He spoke in relation to the meeting held on April 13<sup>th</sup>, which he was present at, and the unruliness of the visitors. He stated that he thought if the Board had allowed a couple of people to speak, it would have helped people feel heard. He also noted the advisory written by the then Attorney General, Maura Healey, in 2018, stating that time should be allowed in a meeting for peoples' comments.

Robyn responded that some of the Board meetings will contain a public comment time but that will not occur at every meeting. According to laws and a recent court ruling in Massachusetts, during a public comment period, people may speak on a topic of their own choosing as long as they are not threatening another person.

**Annual Town Meeting Review:** Since the article to purchase a new truck was not passed, there is about \$37,000 Free Cash that is not designated to be transferred for a specific purpose. The different options for reappropriation and aspects of holding a Special Town Meeting will be conveyed to the Finance Committee who meets on Thursday.

In preparation for winter snow, the Highway Superintendent and Finance Committee liaison, Will Emmet, will be asked to begin polling people about their availability to fill in to plow.

The cost of the various town buildings needs to be evaluated during the coming year to work on determining what can be done to reduce costs and/or increase revenue from rental usage.

The Board also expressed concern about the lack of residents attending town meetings and wondered if anything could be done to encourage voters to attend. There was speculation about whether changing the day or time of day would make a difference in attendance, and if offering child care would attract younger residents to participate.

It was agreed that a study group will be formed to reorganize the presentation of the general budget accounts to be voted on at next year's Annual Town meeting. The group will be composed of a Finance Committee member, the Accountant, a Select Board member and the Town Coordinator.

**Cartographic Associates, Inc., Contract:** The Board reviewed the agreement for the town regarding assessors' mapping services. *On a motion by Susan Lively and seconded by Elissa Viarengo, the Select Board unanimously voted to approve the agreement with Cartographic Associates, Inc., for a \$1,800 annual fee and an additional fee of \$20 for each card change.*

**Salt Shed Site Assessment Liaison:** *On a motion by Susan Lively and seconded by Elissa Viarengo, the Select Board unanimously voted to appoint Brian De Vrisa to serve as the liaison between the Town and the landscape architects.*

**Fire Alarm Systems Repairs:** The Board reviewed the proposals to repair faulty detectors in Sawyer Hall (\$491.92), Fire Department (\$601.82), and Jacobs Road Municipal Center (\$3,815.45). It was determined to pay for the repairs with funds from the Maintenance & Utilities accounts if there are sufficient funds. If necessary, money from Special Projects will be used. *On a motion by Susan Lively and seconded by Elissa Viarengo, the Select Board unanimously voted to approve the three repair proposals from Fire Equipment, Inc.*

**Community Hall Floor:** Hilma presented a financial report recapping the expenses from the flooding of the lower floor, a replacement estimate and the amount of the insurance claim payment. The replacement estimate was to remove and replace the vinyl 12-inch tiles. Robyn will contact the company to get an estimate on replacing the tiles with an epoxy finish.

**Trailer Complaint:** The property on Bray Road is located in the Agricultural and Residential zone in town. The trailer in question (green) is a job-site trailer and is not defined in the town's zoning bylaws. The Board raised concern about the additional complaint that the trailer might be a health and safety hazard. The Board discussed that there are other equivalent situations located in other parts of town. Robyn will draft a response letter which will be finalized at the next meeting.

**Select Board Meeting Public Attendance & Public Comment Period Policy:** It was agreed that, for the immediate future, the Public Comment period during the meetings would continue when time allows given the other items on the agenda. *On a motion by Susan Lively and seconded by Elissa Viarengo, the Select Board unanimously voted to approve the revised Select Board Meeting Public Attendance & Public Comment Period Policy.* The old version will be removed from the website and new one uploaded in its place.

**11 Bellor Road:** The Board would like to obtain more information from the Building Commissioner in regards to the Cease and Desist notices that were issued. The Board would like an email sent asking how long a party is given before enforcement litigation is initiated. KP Law will be copied in this correspondence. A separate email of update will be sent to the neighboring residents who have issued the complaint.

**Telephone Systems:** After reviewing the information from Granite Communications, the Board decided to gather more information and determine exactly how many phone extensions are needed for town offices. *On a motion by Susan Lively and seconded by Elissa Viarengo, the Select Board unanimously voted to approve the procedure of negotiations with Granite Communications for VOIP service.*

**Transfer Station Bag Sticker Fee:** The request for the Finance Committee to examine the financial information and consider a recommendation to increase the bag sticker fee from \$1.50 to \$2.00 has been sent. Hilma will research and prepare a report showing both the annual transfer station expenses and the income from usage.

**Broadband Email:** The MLP Manager had sent an email asking if there would be a method to report the annual income as anticipated revenue so that it could be available in the same year. The idea is that it would then help to reduce the annual payment amount of the broadband loan principal and interest. It was decided that Robyn and Hilma would approach the Accountant and try to determine there was a method through which this transfer could be accomplished.

**Summer Meeting Schedule:** The following dates were selected on which the Select Board would hold meetings during the summer months:

May 30; June 13 & 20; July 11 & 25; August 8 & 22; September 5 & 19.

**Mail:**

- CAI re: tax Map maintenance proposal
- Fire Equipment Inc re: agreements for repairs
- D. Fierro, Accountant re: Free Cash not spent
- SB Public Attendance Policy—outdated
- Parks & Rec re: Participation Waiver form.
- HAS re: draft letter to Palmeri
- Mass Cultural Council re: notification of non-award
- J. Gran re: Letter about long-term planning
- A. Wozniak (FinCom) re: response to J. Gran
- S. Litchfield, MLP Mgr. re: money transfer
- S. Lively re: summary of BoH meeting
- C. Rabbitt re: April Town Nurse report
- FCSWMD re: MRF Processing report for April
- V. Grimes re: invitation to EDPC listening session
- P. Dolinski re: invitation to Northern Tier Rail briefing
- Franklin Land Trust re: self-guided recreational bike ride announcement
- National Grid re: Vegetation Management Plan

**Next Meeting:** May 30<sup>th</sup>—Continuation of unfinished items of business.

**9:36 p.m.** *On a motion by Susan Lively and seconded by Elissa Viarengo, the Select Board unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting.*

Respectfully submitted,

Hilma A. Sumner  
Town Coordinator