

MEETING MINUTES
Town of Heath
SELECT BOARD
Jacobs Road Municipal Center
Tuesday, June 18, 2024

Called to Order at 6:01 p.m. With Robyn Provost-Carlson, Elissa Viarengo, Will Emmet, and, Nancy Thane, Office Assistant. Hilma Sumner, Town Coordinator, was absent.

Others in Attendance: See attendance sheet.

The meeting was recorded.

Review Agenda: FCRHRA Brian McHugh will not attend.

Review Minutes: *On a motion by Elissa Viarengo and seconded by Will Emmet, the Select Board unanimously voted to approve the minutes of June 4, 2024, as amended.*

6:05 p.m. Franklin County Regional Housing & Redevelopment Authority: Brian McHugh sent a report about the FY20 HHR Grant Closeout report. Robyn read the break-down of dollar amounts that were applied in housing repair projects under this grant.

On a motion by Elissa Viarengo and seconded by Will Emmet, the Select Board unanimously voted to accept and sign final quarterly report of the FY20 Heath Community Development Block Grant, CDF G – 2020 Heath – 00891 to close out this grant.

On a motion by Elissa Viarengo and seconded by Will Emmet, the Select Board unanimously voted to transfer funds from construction to non-construction, \$7,658.93 from 4C Housing Rehab to 4A HR Program Delivery.

It was noted that FRCOG will send more information as it becomes available regarding further such opportunities.

Public Comment:

Barbara Gordon presented a letter regarding potential appointments to the Heath Cultural Council which will be held until later in the agenda when all appointments will be reviewed.

Pat McGahan spoke in favor of continuing the practice of the Town Office sending out non-municipal public-service announcements via Town email.

Ned Wolf brought attention to the fact that the Mass. E911 service was down earlier in the day but was running properly at this time.

Select Board Appointments: The Board followed the June 4th updated list.

On a motion by Elissa Viarengo and seconded by Will Emmet, the Select Board unanimously approved page one of the listing, except for Jeff Johnston as Highway Superintendent and adding Elissa Viarengo as Alternate FRCOG Planning Board Representative.

Appointing post office substitutes was delayed pending further review by Elissa Viarengo.

On a motion by Elissa Viarengo and seconded by Will Emmet, the Select Board unanimously voted to appoint Nancy Thane, Hilma Sumner, Cindie Garland, Sue Draxler, and Cathy Wilkins as election workers and Jenna Day, Doug Wilkins, and Cathy Tallen as alternates.

On a motion by Elissa Viarengo and seconded by Will Emmet, the Select Board unanimously voted to appoint Lyra Johnson Fuller as Senior Program Coordinator, Berenson & Bloom, Esquires, as Tax Title Attorney, KP Law, P.C., as Town Counsel, Claire Rabbitt as Town Nurse, Lee Lively as Transfer Station Attendant, Brian Brooks as Veterans' Service Officer, Dennis Peters as Veterans' Grave Officer and Veterans' Representative, and Dianne Grinnell as the Fred G. Wells Trustee.

On a motion by Elissa Viarengo and seconded by Will Emmet, the Select Board unanimously voted to appoint Molly Lane, Karen Brooks, Lorena Loubisky, Sam Lane, and Austin Sumner to the Agricultural Commission.

On a motion by Will Emmet and seconded by Elissa Viarengo, the Select Board unanimously voted to appoint Tucker Jenkins to a three-year position on the Board of Health.

On a motion by Elissa Viarengo and seconded by Will Emmet, the Select Board unanimously voted to appoint Gene Garland to a three-year position on the Board of Health.

On a motion by Elissa Viarengo and seconded by Will Emmet, the Select Board unanimously voted to appoint Claire Rabbitt, Jerry Gilbert, and Eric Sumner to the Cemetery Commission.

On a motion by Elissa Viarengo and seconded by Will Emmet, the Select Board unanimously voted to appoint Heather Rowe, Pam Porter, Brian De Vriese as members of the Conservation Commission and Bill Lattrell as Conservation Commission consultant. There remain two vacancies.

On a motion by Elissa Viarengo and seconded by Will Emmet, the Select Board unanimously voted to appoint Susan Lively, Margaret Freeman, Cathy Tallon, and Donna Hyytinen to the Council on Aging. There remains one vacancy.

On a motion by Elissa Viarengo and seconded by Will Emmet, the Select Board unanimously voted to appoint Heather Row, Sarah Coe, Heather Wynn and Doug Wilkins to three-year terms on the Cultural Council.

On a motion by Will Emmet and seconded by Elissa Viarengo, the Select Board unanimously voted to appoint Jerry Gilbert, Peter Smith, and Hormidas Lively to the Veterans' Memorial Commission, Nina Marshall and Susan Gruen to the Historical Commission and Mike Cucchiara, Shahid Jalil, Robert Dane, and Chelsea Jordan-Makely as members and Lyra Johnson Fuller, and Pat McGahan as es-officio members to the Parks and Recreation Commission.

On a motion by Will Emmet and seconded by Elissa Viarengo, the Select Board unanimously voted to appoint Brian De Vriese, Hilma Sumner, and Bill Lattrell to the Renewable Energy Advisory Committee.

On a motion by Will Emmet and seconded by Elissa Viarengo, the Select Board unanimously voted to appoint Alice Lee Thompson, Lyra Johnson-Fuller, and Rebecca Dorr Sampson to the Building Use Committee.

Appointment of members to the Community Hall Windows Fundraising Committee will be postponed until the updated charge and overview is completed.

Robyn noted there were only two members appointed to the Historical Commission. Since the Commission has five seats, a quorum to hold meetings cannot be obtained. By default, if there is no quorum, a Select Board member will be appointed. Elissa will reach out to current members Nina Marshall and Susan Gruen about the need for new recruits. Elissa will ask Hilma for charge of this Commission and if it is legally binding on the town to have this (or any other) commission.

Hilma will be asked to compile a full list of appointments that will be shared with social media and other groups in town indicating what positions remain vacant.

Annual Town Meeting (ATM) Continuation: Robyn extended a thank you to all who attended the meeting and voted. Robyn reiterated a request by Budge Litchfield, Heath's sole School Committee Representative, to everyone in town to please complete the Sustainability Study Survey distributed by the Mohawk Trail Regional School District. The Board will continue to talk to the Finance Committee about our participation in MTRSD going forward. Heath needs a second School Committee Representative. We lose a vote on the School Committee each time there is a decision.

Elissa was proud of how well-informed people were, and Will expressed pleasure at how respectful attendees were. Elissa said that she spoke with Budge and gave him credit for the difficult situation he was in and how well he handled himself. The Select Board also extended a thank you to Ken Roche for offering his school funding information sessions. The entire Board wants to move forward with the school district in a cooperative manner.

Boards' Clerk Job Description: *On a motion by Elissa Viarengo and seconded by Will Emmet, the Select Board unanimously approved the revised Boards Clerk Job Description.* The Select Board will review the job description with the new employee after a few months on the job to see what, if any, adjustments should be made.

Town Facilities Committee: It was noted that this committee has not met since the Facilities Report was completed two years ago. The Select Board will meet with the Building Maintenance Coordinator to review that facilities report, bring it up to date, then decide if/who will be on a revitalized committee. Robyn will send the coordinator a note asking him to take a few weeks to review the previous report and make to-do and items completed lists. He and the Select Board will do a walk-around, then proceed with identified tasks. This report can be a living document; to be followed and updated as needed.

Community Hall Windows Fundraising: Robyn presented an updated overview and charge. In reference to an email from Bob Gruen requesting that the committee not be disbanded, but continue beyond August 1, Elissa explained that the committee wants to see this project through. They say that they are asked questions regarding on-going progress and wish to be able to provide answers. They understand that there will be no active fund raising after August 1. As per

the highlighted bullet points in the updated charge, the committee will stay engaged and be kept informed of what is happening in the process going forward. Robyn will adjust some of the language in the charge document and send it back out to Board members for review. She will add that the “Committee will be kept apprised of progress.” Amount raised to date: \$20,283.15.

Community Hall Update: The dish sanitizing machine has a leak. Robyn will call Hartnett Plumbers and will talk to the Building Maintenance Coordinator about kitchen inspections. Elissa said that all dishes were washed, sanitized, and wrapped in plastic. She will continue sanitizing the kitchen space when the sanitizing machine is fixed. On a motion by Elissa Viarengo and seconded by Will Emmet, the Select Board unanimously voted to re-open the upstairs of the Community Hall for meeting use but with no use of kitchen.

On a motion by Elissa Viarengo and seconded by Will Emmet, the Select Board unanimously voted to accept as amended, the Draft Press Release regarding a Community Hall Windows Fund Raising concert presented by Barbara Gordon, as amended. In paragraph #2, there is a change from “anticipated” to “potential”. A publicity subcommittee oversees distribution.

Salt Shed Update: All site related information has been sent to Walter Kudnofski. Two building sizes will be considered. The site plan will be back by July 5 and needs to be returned and attached to an RFP. The RFP is a top priority.

Highway Department: Robyn is asking Snows Landscaping to do our summer mowing.

Jeff Johnston has submitted a letter of resignation from his position as Highway Superintendent. A Select Board meeting has been called for June 20 at 6:00 in the JRMC. The crew has been invited to attend.

- Robyn met with the crew to answer questions and concerns.
- The Select Board Highway liaison, Will, will stop in to the garage on a regular basis.
- Jeff has generated a list of potential upcoming projects.
- The most recent job posting, and job description will be reviewed, with input from Jeff.
- Budget will also be reviewed with this change in staffing in mind, as will the current computer system.
- Robyn is pursuing different avenues for interim employee arrangements.
- Need to know what vacation times are scheduled by the crew. There needs to be more than one person for many jobs for safety reasons.
- The Town has a Personnel Policy with which the Select Board needs to become familiar.
- Robyn stated that she will recuse herself from anything involving Kyle Jarvis’ position, workload, etc.
- **Process:** A vote to accept resignation will take place when a final date of employment has been confirmed, most likely at the June 20th meeting. Interim arrangements will be made as soon as possible. A three-member interviewing committee will be appointed to make recommendations to the Select Board.

Mail:

- J. Clark re: resignation from Cultural Council— ***On a motion by Elissa Viarengo and seconded by Will Emmet, the Select Board unanimously voted to accept with thanks and regret the resignation of John Clark from the Heath Cultural Council.***
- H. Wynne re: volunteer for Cultural Council
- S. Coe re: volunteer for Cultural Council

- D. Wilkins re: volunteer for Cultural Council
- R. Gruen re: thoughts for continuance of CHWFC
- G. Ponce re: Colrain Ambulance update—The Select Board expressed appreciation for staffing enhancements of the Colrain Ambulance.
- M. Wilmeth re: complaint of number of signs
- S. Litchfield, MLP re: follow-up to resident complaints
- FCSWMD re: Recycling Dividend Program and May processing expense
- J. Johnston re: letter of resignation
- MLB (Broadband) re: FCC complaint
- S. O’Neill re: Pouring license fee—Request to fee waiver was not on agenda; application will be returned for corrections.
- B. Gordon re: draft press release
- B. McHugh re: 2020 CDBG appointment

Next Meetings:

Thursday, June 20th, 6:00 p.m.—to meet with Jeff Johnston.

Tuesday, July 2nd

8:12 p.m. *On a motion by Elissa Viarengo and seconded by Will Emmet, the Select Board unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting.*

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Thane
Office Assistant