

Town of Monson - Select Board Meeting Agenda

February 8, 2018

Present were: Select board – Buddy Martin, Brita Cronkite, Eric Vainio, and Town Manager, Daniel Swain.

Several Town members attending): Ed Hoover, Cindy and Brian Turner, Holly and Allan Melia, Andy Sterling, Jim Greenleaf, Roberta Jarvis.

Immediately following the Budget meeting, at 7:10 pm, Buddy Martin motioned the meeting to open for **Public Comment**:

Ed Hoover opened public comment by reminding everyone present that Snow Roller Day was fast approaching and encouraged everyone to come out to the festivities. Ed brought up the example of the kick sled races and kick sled displays along with some other Snow Roller Day activities. At that point, the discussion turned away from public comment. At this point Buddy Martin asked if there were any other Public Comment; to which there were none.

The meeting moved to a petition that over 50 people had signed regarding the poor winter road maintenance problem. Consequently, all discussion was about the problem with the Herrick Bros. and their constant failure to make Monson a priority.

From that discussion came another problem with someone coming into the Town Office and making inappropriate comments to office staff about how their street was not properly plowed. Daniel Swain came out of his office and redirected the person to himself. This seemed to be another example of Herrick not doing their job, which caused this domino effect spinning off tempers of Monson residents. However, it seems the problem may have been due to Herrick not having a place to turn around. Apparently, the cleaning up of rocks and debris on Spring Street was left too long, and froze solid. This was where Herrick was to turn their plows around. Brita pointed out that just because this one problem for the Herrick Bros. existed on Spring Street, was no excuse for Herrick's poor plowing on the many other roads. Daniel had to send Herrick Bros. a certified letter. Their response seemed to be more responsible, but the truth is, they are really not doing any better than before. We spend \$105,000 annually on plowing. Some discussion was regarding the cost and whether or not we should hire a new company next year to do all the plowing or, share the burden with a smaller company, or find a way to do it all ourselves. Buddy suggests posting the petition on the town website. The meeting was moved to **Old Business**.

Under Old Business, Daniel mentions that the reason they are spending so much time crunching the budget is to get it done in time for the auditor. Much of the delay was due to a lack from the previous Town Manager. Also we are not going to outsource copying the town report after all because we need more time on the budget and the printer wanted it before we could be ready.

Regarding Library Funding: Issues came up as to whether the town of Monson fully employs the Librarians. For the time being they were resolved by putting off the decisions for a year to give the library as a corporation time to work out some details regarding a move to (Libra's) Monson Arts Center. Also, one issue was how the town was to pay them – either by donation only or to have them on the town payroll. Some discussion was about this 501C3 grant(?) that the library *could* use to pay their employees; but it was suggested by someone it *could* be better if the 501C3 grant money was better used for many other library needs and *not* for payroll – rather, the question being would the town be the one to pay the Librarians? Ed Hoover asked for clarification of parameters and possible hindrances, to which the reply was that it was best to wait for a while to see how things pan out over the year especially with Libra, and the Library's need to identify their goals and what they want to do. Eric Vainio suggested the library as a corporation really should try harder to get their own funding. Ed Hoover replied we had an obligation to help. Discussion rose about their move to the Libra building and all the benefits of using their building, with no rent being one of them. The Arts building has many conveniences. The

library could sign a 5-year lease with an annual lease to follow. This helps insure their stay for a little while anyway.

The next subject was the Quit Claim from the Smith family on Tenney Hill. Daniel said they came and paid all their taxes and all that was necessary at this point was for the Select-board to sign the Quit Claim. Some wondered if the animals were gone. It is unknown at this time for sure, but assumed, as the Smiths were required to adhere to the town ordinances regarding animals. Time will tell.

The next subject brought up was the public use of the Gym and the policy for rental. A few corrections were made on the first draft. Eric Vainio offered to find similar policies and procedures that maybe the local Grange would use, and we could base our policy on theirs.

At this point, three people left the meeting, as the discussion shifted to **New Business:**

Daniel brought up a group called Maine Land Public Trust Opportunity, (MLPTO) a non-profit (?) group that apparently can help towns like Monson learn they value of 'community envisioning'. This would teach us the value in buying local land for sale, (such as Barrows Falls) for resource protection and even be used for conservation purposes that could help us envision the real goals for our town. Through other large foundations, this group will try to get funding for Monson. Lucas Butler volunteered to be the Monson town rep for this outfit, as he was the one who found them to begin with. Both Lucas Butler and Daniel Swain met with them and agree this could be great for Monson. There was some sort of Maine competition for their attention – and it came down to three: Rangeley, Kingfield and Monson as finalists. We all hope Monson wins. The Select-board gave Daniel the go-ahead 'blessing', as it will cost Monson little to nothing to get involved with the MLPTO.

Although the subject of the disposal of Septic Waste contract was on the agenda, there was little to no written discussion.

The next subject was the Fire Department. However, because much of the discussion was hearsay and not concrete, factual information at this time, it's better to wait. It was determined by the Select board and Town Manager that it may be best to ask for a special meeting between the Executive Board and the Chief of the Fire Department alone, before we can actually have any worthwhile discussion in a public forum.

This town meeting ended at 8:25pm., and the Select board stayed behind for their Executive meeting.