

TOWN OF MONSON

A Town Where Friendliness is More than Just a Word

May 10, 2018 - Select Board Meeting

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

Town – some townfolk in attendance: Bobbie Crockett, Brian and Cindy Turner, Jim Greenleaf, Ed Hoovler, Jan Martin, Amelia Trader, Rick Clawson, Roberta Jarvis.

- 1) The meeting began at 7:05 pm., with Daniel Swain
- 2) Selectboard reviews and signs off all necessary warrants
- 3) Review of unapproved meeting minutes.
- 4) At 7:15 pm, Buddy Martin officially opens the meeting to **Public Comment**.

Public Comment: Ed Hoovler brought up a topic from a “concerned citizen” who was not present at the time. The person had concerns that the planning board regarding the dismantling of the stage in the gym was simply not timed well – or maybe better put - was not communicated well to the non-members of the board when the choices came up to keep or dismantle the stage. The person felt dismissed when the subject was brought up to a member or members of the select-board. Buddy Martin remarked that only one person came to the last meeting they had.

Ed Hoovler, again representing another concern from an unnamed citizen, brought up the citizen’s remarks that had been previously brought to the attention of the select board regarding the town managers dog, *Ellie, who was allowed *[but pre-approved] in the town office. The unidentified citizen complained about a certain dog odor, as well as potential allergies for their concern of themselves or others.

Brita Cronkite felt the dog offered a welcoming feeling to the office as well as many other offices and public places today – other townfolk also chimed in with positive remarks, and all are quite fond of the town managers dog, Ellie. *(Ellie who belongs to Daniel Swain, was invited and welcomed to be a part of the office before Daniel was hired as the permanent Town Manager.) Daniel Swain felt compelled to acknowledge that there was one particular day when Ellie was ill, and it was possible that on that one single day this undisclosed person may have experienced the odor she or he was complaining about.

Brian Turner revisited the first subject regarding the gym and the complaint from the mysterious citizen; he wished to emphasize once again that the committee that was overseeing the remodel of the gym had been meeting together for at least a year, and in that time no other person came to any meetings nor were there any complaints regarding the redesign of the stage area. No person tried to change anything, nor did any offer any new options. Ed Hoovler representing the person complaining added that since there was seemingly nothing posted regarding the gyms stage destruction, maybe we all should/could try and look into new ways to communicate better in order to avoid these divisions. He proposes we consider making regular [monthly?] updated reports available to the public for anyone’s review – like maybe posting a draft on the town’s website or similar.

Since there was more discussion revolving around this subject, it can be summarized that those involved in *any* committee are willing to be responsible for their decisions, and we all need to keep in mind that they are freely sacrificing their time for the sake and the benefit of Monson. Buddy Martin’s final comment was that the burden of communication must be on the towns-people, as the committees can only do so much. Each concerned citizen must consider involvement if they have issues with decisions from entire working groups of people who are in agreement.

- 5) Cindy Turner brought a report from the Planning Board meeting and explained proposed areas they are seeking for a cell tower, and she explained the use of fireworks for Monson. She passed out copies of their meeting minutes, and a guide from the State of Maine regarding the legal use of fireworks to the select board: the “General Guide to Consumer Fireworks Use” from the State Fire Marshal. Cindy asks if it would be possible to make copies of the guide and have one placed in every town mailbox. This would enable the select board to sidestep the task of having to form their own ordinance since this guide is already in place – and all we need to do is mail them. She also explained some of the barriers we still need to overcome in order to be a priority for a cell tower.

Bobbie Crockett, representing the Gym Committee, explained how the committee was working closely with the Killam's so they can be a part of the project as they go along. They are planning for a nice sign. Brian Turner added some of his thoughts as well. The Recreation Committee also is planning a movie night and a pizza party for kids. They also planned a senior social. They are trying to find venues to meet together. The Festival Committee is planning once again for the town Summerfest to be held July 21st. They would like to see everyone get involved. They try to make improvements every year. Amelia Trader asked how one gets in touch with persons of the Committee. Amelia adds that the web site is there for our use, and it is suggested that Rec/Fest overseer Dee Adams and Amelia need to communicate more regarding getting word out earlier since Amelia is the overseer of the town website, additionally, by mid-June the announcement of Summerfest should be on our site. Also the town-wide spring clean-up should also be visible on the site.

- 6) Opening of bids for 32 Center street – no bids
- 7) Spring clean-up at the transfer station dates are May 19th, thru the 23rd.
- 8) **New Business:** Amelia Trader asked why the town bulletin board area is in such bad shape – in that old information is still in it, the back of the kiosk is falling apart and even the front is looking shabby from many winters. Cindy asks if there is anyone who can repair it. Brita asked about other options such as an electric sign for the town to communicate to the people.

Roberta Jarvis expressed her concern over the many houses that are already in bad shape being purchased for storing medical marijuana in residential zones *and* where many of the children play. The houses are typically in dilapidated condition and nothing is being done to improve the house or lot. The concern was that it makes the whole street (in this case, Water Street) look really bad because there is no care for the property. Roberta asked if we could put a limit – or an ordinance, or if there was anything legally we could do to change how these houses are sold. Right now all we have in place is that we don't allow retail sales of marijuana. It's not really about what the houses have inside as much as it is about the condition, and that it adds no value to the look of Water Street, but brings it down.

 - a) Spring Grading/Grading Specs: Some minor chat regarding the road conditions and the future grading of some roads. Daniel said he will be removing posted weight limits on some roads. Buddy said that grading the roads too soon could be problematic and we need to be certain the roads are sufficiently dried out.
 - b) ATV trail; permanent loop through town: Eric Vainio took the initiative to knock on many doors on Water street to find out a general consensus regarding the ATV uses. Most of those asked said they didn't mind the ATV traffic. However there were a few complaints about a handful of lawbreakers. Eric also found out that many others were speeding on both the No. Guilford and Willimantic Roads. Eric suggested and made the motion to extend our ordinance for another year as we continue working out kinks. It was determined the trails should be better monitored and controlled, and added that Larry Dagget is the trail master. Cindy Turner suggested better signage. Buddy Martin seconded the motion and was carried.
 - c) Town Equipment maintenance schedule: Daniel Swain created some spreadsheet templates for ease of use to track when and how, repairs needed, who uses the equipment, etc., and that each piece of equipment will have its own page. Likewise every road will also have its own page as we track the conditions. Eric asked about the rusting bucket loader and wondered if there was a practical way to stop the thing from continually rusting, and concerned that someone could get seriously hurt. All agree this is a good idea. Brian added that some equipment is 30 years old or more. Cindy remarked that there are some areas where the bamboo grows so thick that it creates blind spot danger for walkers and others. Eric observed that we need to trim back the willow tree located by the public landing, or take it down. Rick Clausen noted that there was a lot of debris left by the tree from the plowing.
 - d) Winter Sand/plowing future plans: Daniel Swain comments that we have one more year with Herrick. After which we will break the plowing job into three areas of 10 miles each, then hopefully hire three different contractors to take care of the roads. The hope is that the smaller portions will be easier to care for. Cindy suggests that the contractors could even rotate their route areas. Some discussion revolved around the cost of the sanding of the roads, and who we will use as a supplier, since the sand we last had contained too much clay. Bruce Thomas may supply the sand offered to sign a three year contract with the town but the select board agreed to it was better to go out to bid. Brian suggests clay testing, in that the state uses a sieve test that separates the clay from the sand.
 - e) Ball field damage and repair: Some vandal in a pick-up truck rode around the ball field creating a lot of damage. Daniel said Chris Later will fix some as well as John Wentworth offered to fix some. It was

suggested that we try for a grant to repair the damage, as some ideas were discussed as to how the already underused ballfield could be used other than a ball park – such as a dog walk area.

- f) Illegal snow dump complaint: It turns out there was no snow dumping, rather it was a large snow bank and was dismissed.
- g) Playground update: The playground is finished. Hardwood Products graciously donated some woodchips for the area, and never asked for anything in return. Buddy made a motion to reimburse the Woods for their help in rebuilding the playground. Brita and Eric both seconded the motion.
- h) Bicentennial Committee: Daniel suggested a committee be formed regarding the Bicentennial only 4 years away. After some discussion, a motion was made by Brita, and seconded by Buddy regarding the forming of a Bicentennial committee.

****Next meeting slated for May 24th.**