

# TOWN OF MONSON

*“A Town Where Friendliness is More than Just a Word”*

**July 26, 2018 - Select Board Meeting**

Present Selectboard Members: Buddy Martin, Eric Vainio, Brita Cronkite, and Town Manager, Daniel Swain.  
Townfolk in attendance: Collen Pinkerton, Brian Turner, Jim Greenleaf, Janice Hein, Bobbie Crockett, Amelia Trader, Jenny Johnson, Bob and Roberta Jarvis, Tracy Stebbins, and a visiting (Libra) Artist in Residence: Rachael.

1. The meeting began at 7:00 pm
2. Selectboard reviews warrants and unapproved meeting minutes.
3. Selectboard signs off all approved and necessary warrants and unapproved meeting minutes.
4. At 7:15 pm, Buddy Martin officially opens the meeting to **Public Comment**.

## **5. Public Comment:**

**Janice Hein**- Asked the board if they knew anything about Libras voting capabilities since they are not residents of Monson. The board assured her they could not vote. She then asked if Libra pays taxes, especially since the example of the Monson General Store’s reappraisal where the taxes went from about \$300 per year to about \$5000 per year. Buddy commented the tax bills were due at the end of the month, and it is difficult to tell right now – but the next tax season will tell more. Daniel Swain remarked that most of the purchases were residential homes. If more businesses were purchased, the taxes would be higher. We were reminded that Libra is non-profit and non-profit organizations are not required to pay taxes, but Libra does pay will have stated there are plans to not pay in the future. More questions and discussion regarding this subject went on for some time. Janice also raised questions about fiberoptic that she thought was brought into town but wondered why she had no access. Daniel explained that Libra brought Premium Choice into our area for their own service and use, but anyone who wanted it could call the company. Janice’s final comments were expressing concern that Libra owns most of the property’s (33 so far) and it seems no one is buying. She *feels* that in order to avoid mistrust and defensiveness, there should be a point person as there is no community communication.

**Colleen Pinkerton** then asked if anything could be done about her neighbor’s pigs as they destroyed their Victory Garden, and wondered if there was a town ordinance regarding zoning since they are in a residential area. The Game Warden and Sherriff’s department has agreed that if necessary civilians have the right to destroy any animal that trespasses, wanders off its owners land, or otherwise causes problems for others, albeit a firearm could cause more problems than its worth. Because it is a civil matter, aside from the obvious costly electric fence, all one can really do is take the neighbor to court for a lawsuit.

**Jim Greenleaf** expressed concern for Arnold Shorey, Headmaster for Dover-Foxcroft Academy was irate that it seemed just one of our selectmen was on a personal campaign to “move our children out of Dover-Foxcroft Academy to the school in Greenville”, and seemed to be speaking for the whole board. Eric Vainio explained the misunderstanding was he was only trying to gather some facts to bring back to the board. Also, the school superintendent of Greenville was supposed to be in attendance at this meeting, but asked to be slated for some time in October. Because most of the discussion was now “hearsay” and the person offended (Eric Gardy) was not present, it can be best noted that although there was some discussion regarding this issue, to close further discussion until the appropriate parties involved can either resolve it or be present at a future meeting. **Bob Jarvis** suggested the town manager Daniel simply contact the headmaster himself and patch up any further assumptions.

**Jenny Johnson** wondered why nothing has been done to fix her area of road since there seemed to be an abundance of money for the Steward road. Daniel explained the priority of ditching on the Elliotsville road. The Moosehorn road has been patched up, but not well. Daniel did explain we do not have any plans for paving roads, but is trying to get a grader and work done on the road.

**Tracy Stebbins**, a woodwright who works on National Historic Landmarks and wants to work here in Monson in the summertime, brought up her interest in purchasing 32 Center Street. Some discussion revolved around this purchase and some of the problems that go with it such as liens, quitclaim, and taxes. **Public Comment closed** following this discussion.

**Buddy Martin** made the motion to allow Daniel Swain to be responsible to sell 32 Center St. to Tracy Stebbins at \$14,000 provided Daniel has the legal right to carry it out. If he does not have the legal right the motion becomes void. Brita Cronkite seconded Buddy’s motion, motion passed unanimously

## **6. Town Reports:**

6a) **Gym Committee:** **Jim Greenleaf** commented the project is on schedule and moving right along. The restrooms should be ready by the first week of September. Also, the good news is they are under budget. They still have some roof

and ground work that needs to get done. Water seems to be getting inside through the bottom of the foundation. Purchases may include new appliances, and possibly an on-demand water heater. Floor tiles and down and Walls are painted. So far they have spent around \$65,000. A new sign will be ordered but separate from the budget. **Janet Hein** remarked that we should consider hiring extra help for the American Legion Yard Sale. Bob Jarvis said he may be able to rally up some guys to help out.

6b) **Recreation Committee:** Bobbie Crockett remarked there was nothing new to report.

6c) **Festival Committee:** Bob Jarvis remarked that he had purchased 2 inviting banners for each end of town, since the **Monson Business Association decided** it might be best this year to not to sponsor any Fall festivities, rather to capitalize on the activities of the general area such as Greenville's fly-in.

6d) **Bicentennial Committee:** When the time comes, Glenn Poole will bring us an update.

#### **7. Old Business:**

7a) Regarding the special town meeting to vote on the clerical error regarding the school budget. The meeting will take place upstairs from where the American Legionnaires meet at the UCC building on the No. Guilford Rd.

7b) Town Hall Building repair and water damage. Brian Turner and a few others suggest some ways to fix some of the problems. Janice Hein asked if the building has ever been inspected – and wondered if it would make any difference. Brian remembered from the beginning (when the Town Hall was built in '67) thought the perimeter drain had always been the problem. Much discussion revolved around this topic, and was determined the town needed to make the repairs a priority or consider alternatives, Daniel will contact foundation contractors for quotes.

7c) **Waterfront Development Update:** Dan Swain updated us on the correct material needed for (plastic vs. wooden) floating docks, riprap, and the shoreline issues. Daniel brought up the possibilities of using the "TIF account" used for funding purposes. A little discussion followed regarding budgeting for next year and what our priorities might be for 2019.

7d) **Survey of Town Lot on Mitchell St:** Some discussion about whether or not to hire a surveyor to determine the property lines in order to take it to the next level – whether or not to develop this area. Daniel will contact other surveyors to see how the prices compared to Boynton's price.

7e) The Killam's will be brush-cutting four major roads: Elliotsville, Willimantic, Steward, and No. Guilford. Each road will take a day. The Greenville Roberts Bros. will come to see if they can cut better. **Brian Turner** expressed concern about the Lags on the excavator leaving tracks on Pleasant Street and the Indian Point area saying the weight of the dozer could ruin the roads. Daniel will contact them.

#### **8. New Business:**

8a) Nick Hanson of Shirley is town sexton (Cemetery Perpetual Care). Some present brought up a few other names of people that could do the job, for example, one suggested Andy Hunt of Greenville who has a business called Lakeside Landscaping; Bob Jarvis suggested asking David Ray who already has an established mowing service here in town.

8b) **Transfer Station Gate:** it has come to light that a Mr. Ed Doucette removed our gate at the far end of the area, and some parts, then reworked it for his own use. Our gate/fence is now on the ground. Daniel Swain contacted the sheriff. Since it may have appeared to be something abandoned its possible Mr. Doucette deduced nobody would miss it. However Brian Turner explained the back-story that at one time there was a fire in that area and the only way the fire department could get to it to put it out was to build a new way in to the Transfer station. Once the fire was out, the gate was put up in case the FD ever needed to get in there again. It has been there ever since.

#### **9. Items Not on the Agenda:**

Abatement Buildings were removed and were not reported to the town office. **Buddy Martin** made the motion to sign the abatement for map 11 and lot 29, etc., and Brita Cronkite seconded.

**Eric Vainio** suggested we look in to signs for the ATV Trails that say "No End of Access" to redirect riders correctly and help them to stay off the non-riding roads.

**Playground/Park Dedication:** Cheryl Woods asked about a special stone to be put in place to honor the Copland girl who had passed away on the playground grounds a couple of years ago.

**It was mentioned that we need to** re-level wood chips to bring the required levels of wood chips up to meet the arrows indicated on the playground equipment since the levels are currently below the arrow indicators.

Brian Turner and the Turning Page Farm: Brian explained his work and legalities regarding what Tim and Joy Bueshen can or can't do on their farm when it comes to serving the public; licensing, septic/leechfield, bathroom or privy issues, etc. There is an apparent loophole that seems to bring disagreement, so it was left that Brian did the best he could, and the Bueshen's are doing the best they can to interpret the laws. Agreeing to disagree...

• **Buddy Martin** called the *public portion* of the meeting to a close at 8:48pm. Executive Session ended at 9:35pm