

TOWN OF MONSON

"A town where friendliness is more than just a word"

June 25, 2020 – Select Board Meeting

Present – Buddy Martin, Eric Vainio, Tyler Adkins (via Zoom), Jim Thyng, Chad and Emily Davis, Bruce Thomas, Bobbie Crockett, Brian Turner, Ricky Clawson

- 1) Meeting opened at 7:00 PM
- 2) Selectboard approves prior meeting minutes and signs warrants
- 3) Buddy Martin officially opens meeting to public comment

PUBLIC COMMENT

Jim Thyng approached the selectboard for permission to extend the ATV access on the Willimantic Rd to the Willimantic town line. He presented a petition with 15 signatures of residents on the Willimantic road who are willing to allow the access. He explained that 2 families did not sign the petition. Jim then stated that the Abbot Explorers ATV Club is also in favor and is willing to provide signage. Daniel noted that several surrounding towns, including Guilford, are opening all their roads to ATV access. Tyler asked how the ATVs are currently accessing the Willimantic trails and Jim told him that they are trailering their ATVs. Buddy Martin is in favor of opening the road, but Eric and Tyler would like to speak to some residents before making a decision.

Bobbie Crockett expressed that she would like to thank Chris for trimming the brush and straightening the signs on the North Guilford Rd. She also noted that the sign company received their check and will be in town on Monday morning to finalize the placement of the new community sign. She is not sure when the installation will take place.

PUBLIC COMMENT CLOSED

TOWN MANAGER REPORT

Daniel stated that the downtown WiFi will be installed on June 30 and the signal should reach from Robinson's store to the gym. Also, work will begin soon on the dry hydrants and Daniel is also working on trying to get one installed on the North Guilford Rd.

Buddy asked if there is anywhere for residents to dispose of tires as the transfer station will not accept them. Daniel stated that people can get rid of tires once per year on the annual clean up day.

SELECTBOARD REPORTS

Daniel gave the selectmen a letter that was received from Brian Hogan regarding the donated fire truck. He explained that he spoke to Brian and told him that the truck has not been sold and that the town is not interested in receiving any more trucks from him.

Eric noted that many residents on the North Guilford Rd were concerned about cars speeding and thanked Daniel for getting the speed limit sign back up. Daniel then said that before the Covid-19 pandemic he had spoken to the Sheriff about having more of a presence in town and that perhaps they could use some of the space downstairs for a temporary office. Buddy feels that this would be a good idea.

Eric Vainio then raised the following concerns:

Can more sand be put at the beach? – Brian Turner stated that the town can't put any more sand there.

The North side of the gym still needs repair and the brush needs to be cleaned up. Also, the ditch along the entrance to the Doctor's office seems to wash out every year. Daniel will look at the ditch.

Rosalyn Smith's turnaround was damaged during plowing over the winter and there is a berm in front of 102 Water St from the paving that was done.

Will there be any work done on the old cemetery and will the canal fence be fixed? Daniel replied yes to both.

Eric then asked when the utility trailer will be fixed, and Daniel replied that he does not know. Eric noted that it has been almost a year since the trailer was damaged. Buddy stated that in the past, 2 large riding lawn mowers and 1 push mower had been hauled with the trailer and that had been a pretty heavy load for such a small trailer. Eric would like a timeline for the repairs.

Tyler then posed the following questions to Daniel:

When will the new valuation book be available on the web site? First week of July.

New website update? Daniel explained that the web site has not been user friendly and it is therefore being re-structured to allow more important information to be more easily found. He also explained that he will be transitioning the site to serve as more of a marketing tool. He is able to see what people are searching for on the web site and also what they are searching for to get to the web site.

How much will it cost to repair the tennis/basketball court? Daniel was quoted a price of \$16,000 so is looking for other options. He stated that a rubberized coating would have to be added to the tar.

Did Daniel send a sample receipt for the tax bills? Daniel explained that he is having some trouble with the project and if he sent a sample now it would be very generic. A database will need to be created and the tax bills entered into it. Daniel feels that he'll be able to get it done but will have to wait until after the school budget is passed.

Buddy Martin noted that the trees behind the Post Office were killed by the road salt and asked if they will be replaced. Daniel explained that there is some disagreement about who owns the trees. Rick Clawson feels that the trees should be removed as any new trees will also be killed by the salt. Buddy then mentioned that several residents would like to have the second dock put out at the beach.

TOWN COMMITTEE REPORTS

FESTIVAL COMMITTEE: Daniel stated that he spoke to the fireworks company and they are willing to do the fireworks display on July 18.

OLD BUSINESS

Season Wrap-Up with Chad Davis: Daniel explained that it is customary to have the townspeople meet with the plow contractor at the end of the season to discuss how things went over the winter. Buddy told Chad that he had done a great job plowing and asked if he has had any luck finding a loader. Chad said not yet but he is still looking. Daniel suggested having Chad continue using the town loader for \$500 per month as the town made some extra money last year doing it that way. Buddy was not in favor of continuing that arrangement as the loader is old and the extra use may cause it to break sooner.

Eric stated that he spoke to about 125 residents and no one had anything but good to say about the plowing. He also noted that every year the roads and ditches get soft in the spring, causing the roads to break. Chad stated that he has purchased a smaller truck in order to avoid that happening. Eric then asked Chad if he has a good back-up driver in case next winter is not as mild as the last. Chad replied that he does have another driver. A discussion then ensued

regarding the Witmer property line on Homer Hill. Chad explained that he had made an arrangement with Daryl Witmer to plow his driveway in exchange for using the driveway as a turn-around. The arrangement was not working out, so Chad plowed up the road and then backed all the way down, rather than turn around in the Witmer's driveway. Buddy suggested making a new turn-around for the plow contractor. Chad then thanked the selectboard for the use of the town loader last winter.

Sand Bid: One sand bid from Bruce Thomas was opened and read. The bid was for \$28,500 (\$14.25/yd). Buddy Martin motioned to accept the bid, seconded by Tyler Adkins. Eric asked Daniel why he ordered 2000 yards of sand, Daniel said that is how much would likely be needed but that he would start off with 1500 – 1600 yards. Eric then asked if there was any way to recycle the sand that is outside the sand shed, around the edges. He feels that there is a lot of excess sand there. Brian Turner explained that when the shed was built, the engineer had instructed to town to bank the outside walls with sand. Buddy feels that it makes more sense to stock up on the sand early in the season rather than buy more at the end of the season. Brian noted that 150 yards of mixed sand can be stored outside the shed.

Road Plan Update: Daniel presented the updated road plan to the selectboard and explained that the plan now includes all the town roads. He also included paving quotes that he received for the last 2 roads that need to be paved. The plan goes to 2026. He also explained that Tyler feels that the road plan should extend out for many years but he feels that it doesn't make sense to go more than 3 – 5 years because there's no way to know what will happen with prices. However, he did project out the cost of the projects that are done each year, such as grading and mowing. Daniel noted that the end of the Elliotsville and Willimantic roads are deteriorating quickly and suggested doing the Willimantic road this year and Elliotsville Road next year.

Tyler reiterated that the point of the plan is to show how much it costs to maintain the roads. He feels that this can not be done without a long- term plan. He asked if it would be prudent to consider taking a bond to pay for the paving of the final 2 roads. He asked Daniel what is happening with the road plan program. Daniel said it has not worked right since the day it crashed and that he has spoken with Maine Local Roads and is waiting to hear back from them.

Town Meeting Re-cap: Lots of good feedback was given about the voting happening during the day rather than at the actual meeting. Everyone was pleased with the better turn-out of voters.

Daniel then stated that normally, in Monson, the Selectboard Chair is the person who has served the longest. He recommended having an official appointment/vote for the position and, also stated that the selectboard does not have by-laws to define to role of Chair. Daniel will draft documents and submit for a vote.

Dangerous Building Enforcement Update: Brian Turner explained that there have been recent changes made to the dangerous building laws and that Monson had 3 dangerous buildings, 8 Mitchell St., 32 Water St. and 19 Center St. He sent letters to the property owners with a 10 day deadline to submit a 30 day plan. The owner of the Mitchell St. property does not know what she wants to do with the building. Brian feels that it needs to be torn down and the carpenter agrees. The next steps for Mitchell and Water St is to have a public hearing. MMA suggested that Daniel contact the town attorney to find out how to proceed. As for the Center St. property, the owner's daughters are trying to get the property in their names and will tear down the building. Brian noted that there are many stray animals living there. Buddy stated that the procedure is going to start costing the town money. Daniel said that the town could possibly tear down the buildings with a court order. The selectboard decided to continue with the legal process.

Brian then stated that the late Carl Vainio's family is going to court to try to evict Edwin Duquette from the Moosehead Manufacturing building. Brian will send a letter to the Trust stating that Mr. Duquette is also in violation of town ordinances.

Bobbie Crockett mentioned that there has been prior discussion about putting a pile of sand behind the municipal building for residents to use in the winter when the transfer station is closed. Daniel said that no sand can be kept behind the building because of the water.

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 PM