

TOWN OF MONSON

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

July 9, 2020 – Select Board Meeting

Present select board members: Buddy Martin, Eric Vainio, Tyler Adkins, Town Manager, Daniel Swain.

Sheriff Bob Young, Brian Turner, Dee Adams, Ricky Clawson, Jan Martin, Jim Thyng

- 1) Meeting opened at 7:00 PM
- 2) Selectboard approves unapproved meeting minutes and signs warrants

PUBLIC COMMENT

Eric Vainio introduced Sheriff Young to speak about ATV use on public roads. The Sheriff stated that 35 out of 50 states currently allow ATV use on public roads. Some of the concerns regarding such use are ATVs are not required to be insured, Visibility due to the ATVs small size, and the fact that manufacturers do not recommend use on the roads because they are not built for it. The Sheriff also stated that, surprisingly, there are very few accidents between ATVs and cars in Piscataquis County. Buddy reiterated the concern about ATVs not having insurance and mentioned the fact that some drivers seem much too young to be operating an ATV. Sheriff Young stated that children under 10 are not allowed to operate ATVs and between the ages of 10 and 16, operators need to complete a safety course and to have someone 18 or older riding with them. When operating an ATV on a public roadway, drivers must obey traffic laws. There is no specific speed limit for ATVs.

Buddy noted that in all the towns that allow ATV use on roads, drivers seem to behave responsibly. He is in favor of allowing ATV use on the Willimantic Road as long as residents who live on the road are ok with it. Eric wondered if the Town has any liability if there is an accident. Daniel said that the Town will only be liable if the roadway is not safe. Eric would like to see more signage on the routes, especially "End Route" signs.

Jim Thyng stated that with all motorsports, there will be a few "bad apples" but for the most part people are cautious and courteous while riding ATVs. He will make sure that the signage is adequate and acceptable.

Buddy Martin motioned to approve ATV use on the Willimantic Road from Brian Turner's house to the Willimantic town line, for a trial period of one year, to be effective when the signs are put up, seconded by Eric Vainio.

PUBLIC COMMENT CLOSED

TOWN MANAGER REPORT

Daniel stated that the Fire Department bought a rescue boat from the Bangor Fire Department for \$3,500.00.

Mike Witham feels that the new community sign does not conform to the Land Use Ordinance. Brian Turner and Daniel both read the ordinance, and neither could find any reason why the sign can not be installed. Mike feels that the state road is a property line and the sign must be 10 feet back from the line. Brian noted that the road is not a property line, it's a right of way and therefore the sign can be installed. It was decided to go ahead with the installation.

Eric asked how much right of way is on the Blanchard road for a sidewalk. Daniel explained that the Blanchard Road is a state road.

Daniel then noted that over the next few months, there will be ordinances and policies to discuss, such as when to put things out to bid, how to sell foreclosed properties and Fire Department billing for assisting non-residents. Such billing would require someone in the office to be trained in insurance billing and who would collect the information from the Fire Department and send the bills.

SELECTBOARD REPORTS

Eric Vainio posed the following questions and concerns:

Is the town truck being worked on? Daniel stated that the truck is having some rust repaired.

Has the sand been delivered? Per Daniel, 1500 yards have been delivered. Eric then mentioned that he understands that the shed needs to be banked but there is quite a bit of sand on the west side. Brian noted that it is winter sand and it will be used. Eric also stated that Pete Coughlin (Maine Local roads) said that some sheds do need to be banked but it depends on how they are built. Pete said he'd have to see the building to know for sure and Eric encouraged Daniel to reach out to him to set up a meeting.

The north side door of the gym needs to be fixed. Daniel stated that he has spoken with Jeff Killam about it. Eric feels that a small roof would help the situation.

Buddy asked about the broken dock at the beach and Daniel noted that Chris has been on vacation this week. Buddy also noticed that a couple of the legs on the dock are bent.

TOWN COMMITTEE REPORTS

FESTIVAL COMMITTEE: Dee informed everyone that there will be fireworks behind the gym on July 18th. She asked if she needs to post any notices about social distancing and Daniel replied No. Dee is also looking for some solar lights for the new community sign.

BICENTENNIAL COMMITTEE: Daniel stated that there is a meeting scheduled for August.

OLD BUSINESS

Dangerous Buildings Enforcement Update: Daniel showed the selectboard pictures of 31 Water St. Brian turned the matter over to the selectboard. Daniel stated that the town has 2 options, go to court for non ADK Compliance or have a public hearing at which the owner would have the opportunity to submit a plan. The selectboard to have the option to accept or reject the plan and if rejected, the town could remove the building at the owner's expense. Tyler asked if there could be one public hearing for all 3 dangerous buildings. Brian stated that it would not be recommended. Daniel noted that the public hearing option would be the quicker and less costly of the 2 options. Buddy asked if the fire department could burn the dangerous buildings and Brian stated that they are probably too close to other buildings to be burned.

Buddy Martin motioned to hold a public hearing to address the dangerous building at 31 Water St, seconded by Eric Vainio.

Mil Rate Discussion: Daniel presented 3 potential mil rates and noted that if a rate could be agreed upon, it would avoid a special meeting next week. The proposed rates are as follows:

17.6 – would include \$15,000 overlay which would cover property tax discounts.

17.7 – would include \$25,000 overlay which would cover discounts and leave an additional \$13,000 for abatements (Recommended).

17.9 – would include \$40,000 overlay.

Eric asked how much more money is expected to come in due to the revaluation. Daniel stated that the property valuations went up by about an average of 15%.

Buddy asked why someone would request an abatement and Daniel explained that an abatement could be requested if the assessor made a mistake or missed something during the assessment.

Buddy Martin motioned to accept the mil rate of 17.7, seconded by Eric Vainio.

NEW BUSINESS

Audit Preview: Daniel stated that after some adjustments and work with the auditor the net budget should be close to 0 and that the revenue was right on target or possibly a little better given the economic situation. Eric asked how much the town has in the bank and Daniel said the town currently has approximately \$385,00 in the bank.

Deputy Code Enforcement Officer: Daniel proposed that he should be the Deputy Code Enforcement Officer because he feels it would be a good idea to have someone in the office who can answer general code enforcement questions. He will take no money for the position as it will be strictly educational. He also explained that it is common practice for a town manager to also be the Code Enforcement Officer. Buddy agreed that it would be a good idea to have a back-up CEO. Eric asked how much time it will take to do the job. Daniel feels that it should take about 5 hours per month.

The select board signed the appointment for Daniel to be the Deputy Code Enforcement Officer.

Electricity Supplier Bids: Daniel explained that Central Maine Power currently performs delivery service and that Fairpoint is the supplier. The town is currently in a contract with Fairpoint until December 2021. The current rate is 6.9 cents per kwh, but a company called Constellation is offering 6.7 cents per kwh for a 24 month period. Buddy Martin motioned to accept the bid from Constellation, seconded by Tyler Adkins.

At Daniels request, the meeting moved to executive session to address a property matter at 8:35 PM.

The board voted to come out of executive session at 8:53pm and a motion was made by Buddy and seconded by Tyler to adjourn the meeting.