

TOWN OF MONSON

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

September 10, 2020 – Select Board Meeting

Present –Tyler Adkins, Buddy Martin, Edward Lyons and son, Daniel Swain, Bobbie Crockett, Brian Turner, Loretta Dube, John Moore

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

PUBLIC COMMENT

Dangerous Building Issue

Edward Lyons of 31 Water St. asked the selectboard for more time to clean up and fix his property. Daniel and Brian expressed concern that the building is not secure and that children have been playing in it. Ed and his son promised to board up the doors and windows so the building can not be accessed. When asked what his plan is for the property, Ed stated that he plans to fix it up and live there. The selectboard gave the Lyons 1 week to secure the building and an additional 30 days to make progress cleaning up the property.

Bobbie Crockett noted that although the Legion Hall is a nice meeting place, it is hard for her to climb the stairs. Daniel assured her that the meetings will only be held at the Legion temporarily.

PUBLIC COMMENT CLOSED

SELECTBOARD REPORTS

Tyler asked Daniel for a Road Plan update. Daniel stated that he does not have an update at this time as he has not had a chance to work on it. He will email the next draft of the plan to the selectboard when it is ready.

Buddy stated that he saw the rented excavator on the Willimantic Road. Daniel explained that they are working on berms for the snowplow.

Eric Vainio did not attend the meeting but asked Daniel to put forth the following concerns:

1) Eric has heard complaints from residents on the Elliotsville Road about ATV use. Tyler noted that he has heard complaints as well and has also seen ATV activity on the Blanchard Road. Eric feels that the town might need to reconsider allowing ATVs on the Elliotsville Road. Tyler is in favor of allowing ATVs on the roadways but feels that it should not be allowed in bits and pieces as people ask but should be part of a broader discussion. Daniel suggested inviting the local ATV clubs to attend a selectboard meeting to discuss the matter.

2) Eric also feels that not enough work has been done with the excavator considering the town has had it for 5 weeks. Daniel then explained that the town has only had the excavator for 2 ½ weeks. He noted that the machine has been used to do berm work on the Elliotsville Road, Willimantic Road and Chapin Ave as well as fixing the snow plow turn around and drainage on Forest Ave. He further explained that the Public Works Department has also been working on other projects as well such as the sand pile and tree trimming. Buddy suggested finishing the sand pile and then using the machine to complete the other projects one at a time.

TOWN MANAGER REPORT

Daniel noted that the town has purchased a new printer to speed up the registration process and that many residents are now using the online renewal program to renew their registrations. The dry hydrants are being installed this week and Daniel is considering purchasing cement barriers for the transfer station. The WiFi project is back on track and the electrical work at the church should be done soon. Work has been started on replacing the headstones at the church cemetery. Daniel then noted that he will be attending a workshop on the new marijuana laws. The town clock has been repaired and should be delivered soon.

Tyler asked about the new, updated tax maps. Daniel has not heard anything from Hamlin's yet.

TOWN COMMITTEE REPORTS

FESTIVAL COMMITTEE: Bobbie Crockett stated that they are considering having a scarecrow contest in the Fall. Dee will call and talk to Daniel about it.

BICENTENNIAL COMMITTEE: No report.

OLD BUSINESS

Allstate Payment Discussion: Daniel explained that the selectboard met with Allstate Paving but that no decision about payment has been reached. He stated that a special town meeting

will need to be held if the town is going to pay the bill. Daniel noted that Eric suggested paying for the unquoted materials used, which would be about \$50,000. Tyler feels that if the initial quote had been correct, perhaps the town would not have decided to use Allstate. He feels that the town would have a strong court case and that Allstate should make the town an offer to avoid court costs. Buddy agreed with Tyler, Daniel will call Allstate tomorrow to discuss.

Spring Public Access Update: Daniel explained the situation to Buddy who was not at the last meeting. He also noted that the town attorney has advised that there be no action on the matter until it has gone through the appellate court. More research also needs to be done. Buddy explained that many years ago, the town decided to maintain the road only as far as the turn around. He then asked Loretta where the gate is. Loretta explained where it is and also noted that she bought 50 acres and a camp on the property and that a nasty offensive note had been left on the gate, stating that she must close the gate after going through. Loretta stated that she will NOT close the gate when she goes through. The selectboard decided to wait to take any action until more research can be done.

Road Mowing Quotes: Daniel submitted a quote from Chris Gray for mowing and tree trimming 10 miles of road. The price was \$1900.00. Daniel mentioned that Steve Vainio is interested in doing the mowing and has offered to do the work for the same amount as Gary Killam had charged. Daniel will find out if Chris Gray would still be interested in doing the tree trimming without the mowing.

Tyler stated that he is uncomfortable with the process of getting the quotes and feels that the work should be put out to bid. He also asked why mowing is being discussed in September. Daniel explained that Chris Gray is the only person he could find who has the equipment the town wanted and he did not find him until July.

Buddy stated that he would like to give Steve the opportunity to do the mowing. Tyler reiterated that he feels strongly that the job should be put out to bid. Daniel will advertise the bid for tree trimming and find out exactly what Gary Killam did for mowing every year and what time of year it was done.

Canal Fence Quotes: Daniel submitted photos of the proposed fences that were quoted and explained the differences in the quotes. Tyler feels that the fence should be decorative and suggested having a design competition. No one liked the idea of a 5' fence. Daniel will talk to Dan Bouthot at Monson Arts about a possible competition.

NEW BUSINESS

General Assistance Maximums: The selectboard signed the Maximum Allowable General Assistance forms.

North Pond Fish Crossing: Daniel explained that the Nature Conservancy was awarded a grant that would pay for the application and study for a fish crossing at North Pond Brook, which would enable fish to cross the road through culverts. The grant would pay \$125,000.00 towards the crossing and the town would be responsible for paying \$50,000.00. Tyler suggested looking for alternative funding and Buddy feels that it would not be right to ask the taxpayers to pay for the crossing. Daniel stated that the town has until November to apply for the grant.

Meeting adjourned at 8:40 pm