

TOWN OF MONSON

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

January 28, 2021 – Select Board Meeting

Present – Tyler Adkins, Daniel Swain, John Moore, Joy Bueschen

Via Zoom: Buddy Martin, Eric Vainio, Brian Turner, Jenny Johnson

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

PUBLIC COMMENT

Joy Bueschen noted that Monson is one of three Maine towns selected to receive a CEP grant. The town will receive \$50,000 for entrepreneurial development and the planning team is suggesting using the meeting room as a co-working space for members of the community. They feel that using the space in this manner will encourage people to come to Monson and perhaps stay longer than they otherwise would.

PUBLIC COMMENT CLOSED

TOWN MANGER REPORT

Daniel is working on getting quotes for digitizing all the town records. Eric noted that Laurie Wing spent a lot of time scanning things as well and Daniel explained that most of her scanning was for the Utilities District. Eric asked if the rented storage space will still be necessary after the scanning and Daniel stated that he is not sure.

Public works has been able to keep up with plowing and sanding the sidewalks but there was an issue with the brakes on the loader. Eric asked if the hydraulics have been replaced. Daniel will ask Steve about it.

Daniel signed the contract with GiveIT, GetIT for universal waste. He mentioned that the town will be responsible for getting the bins to the lift gate when the waste is picked up. He met with Jim Bohrer to discuss the possibility of turning the recycling trailer into a loading dock. The cost for picking up the waste will be about \$150.00 each time and it will need to be picked up 3 – 4 times per year.

McKusicks will be working on the heat pump in the meeting room, the GIS firm is working on the online viewer for tax maps, 2 more snowroller signs have been ordered, the public hearing for the dangerous building on Mitchell street will be on Feb. 11, Daniel will meet next week with a fence fabricator about the canal fence and also with the sheriff. He will speak to the sheriff about ATVs speeding on the Elliotsville road, among other things.

Daniel has been working with the planning board on wrapping up the comprehensive plan. Joy stated that she would like the CEP group to be part of the meetings.

Premium choice would like a 3 year repayment plan for the town's portion of installing fiber in the town, rather than a 10 year plan. Eric noted that there may be a lot of expenses this year once the budget process begins. He suggested looking for other potential grant opportunities for the project. Daniel confirmed it did not sound the town wouldn't move forward with the three year repayment.

Daniel is still working on figuring out what to do with the trust fund money.

SELECTBOARD REPORT

Eric stated that during the snow storm on January 15 he received several complaints that the Elliotsville Road was not plowed until 10 pm even though it started snowing at 11 am. The road accumulated about 4 inches of snow before it was plowed and the contract states that plowing will begin at 1.5 inches and will not exceed 3.5 inches. Buddy noted that he also received some complaints. Daniel will speak to Chad.

Daniel stated that he does not want to add the public works "to do" list to the job description because it will make the job description too lengthy. Buddy feels that the list can be separate and is mostly just to ensure that annual tasks don't get missed or forgotten.

TOWN COMMITTEE REPORTS

FESTIVAL COMMITTEE: A downsized version of the snowroller festival is scheduled for February 20. Most activities will take place outdoors.

BICENTENNIAL COMMITTEE: No report.

OLD BUSINESS

New Employee Paid Leave Law/Personnel Policy Update: Daniel explained that the attorney reviewed the policy and made some changes and suggestions. The selectboard received copies of the updates and suggestions but it was decided to wait until the next meeting to discuss after everyone has had a chance to review the comments.

Assessor Contract: Daniel explained that he had thought the assessor contract would expire in June 2021, but it actually expired in December 2020, so the town technically has no assessor at the moment. He also spoke to Josh at Hamlin Associates about the RFP being sent out for assessing services. Josh was offended and Daniel explained that all long term contracts are being reviewed. Josh is now tracking all hours that he works for the town and will charge \$500 per day or \$75 per hour. He also stated that he would do a contract through the first week of July for \$8,000, however, if Hamlins decides to bid on the contract, the price will be substantially higher than in the past. Per Daniel, the options are to sign the \$8,000 contract with Hamlins until July or speed up the RFP process and hopefully have a contract with someone before commitment time. Tyler noted that many errors were found after the revaluation was done which is ultimately why the contract was put out to bid in the first place. Eric expressed concern that the town will end up paying more money for the service and having the same mistakes still be made. It was decided to speed up the RFP process. Daniel stated that he has a couple of firms that are interested in bidding. Jenny Johnson asked if Hamlins will be forbidden from bidding on the contract and if not, will the town have to accept their bid if it is the lowest. Daniel explained that Hamlins will be welcome to put in a bid, but the town is not obligated to go with the lowest bidder.

NEW BUSINESS

FY 2022 Budget Committee: Daniel requested that the selectboard submit names of people for the budget committee at the next meeting. He also suggested scheduling one meeting per week for a month and starting the meetings in late March or early April so if the meetings take longer than a month there will still be time to comfortably complete the process.

Meeting moved to executive session for 1 MRSA Subsection 405 (6) (F)- Poverty Abatement at 8:00 pm.