

TOWN OF MONSON

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

February 11, 2021 – Select Board Meeting

Present –Tyler Adkins, Eric Vainio, Daniel Swain, John Moore

Zoom – Bobbie Crockett, Brian Turner

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

PUBLIC COMMENT

Bobbie Crockett feels that not enough time is being allowed for adequate budget meetings. Daniel explained that he is planning 4 weekly meetings and there will be 3 – 4 additional weeks left in case more meetings are needed. It was decided to leave the meeting schedule as it is. Meetings will begin late March.

Bobbie asked if the selectboard will review the ordinance regarding non-residents being charged for emergency services and if a decision has been made about Premium Choice. Daniel explained that the selectboard will review the ordinance and that there will also be a public hearing on the matter. Premium Choice will accept 3-year repayment terms. Eric stated that he would like to matter to be voted on at town meeting and Daniel noted that it will be on the warrant under 3rd party requests.

PUBLIC COMMENT CLOSED

TOWN MANGER REPORT

Daniel provided updates on the following:

The town office entrance has been temporarily moved to the side of the building to better comply with Covid-19 guidelines.

Steve Vainio will be taking a trip with his family at the end of February and Chad Davis will filling in doing snow plowing if there are any storms during that time. The roads will remain Chad's priority along with the fire station. Chad has agreed to include this additional work in the monthly payment he receives for the plow contract.

Chris Gray will begin doing tree work soon.

Jim Bohrer has had surgery and Brian Turner is filling in at the transfer station.

Jeff Moore fixed the compactor at the transfer station. It was found that mice had chewed the wires. Daniel noted that the compactor is now approximately 5 years past its life expectancy, and he will be including a new one in the capital projects budget.

The Parcel Viewer is now available online and there is a link on the town website to the tax maps. The information will be updated each year and more information will be added.

Daniel spoke to the owner of the lot between Bozin's and the old clinic about the possibility of the town using the lot to place an artist's cottage to be used for things such as an annual plant sale. The owner is interested in discussing the matter further.

The sheriff told Daniel that they will have a deputy patrol the Elliotsville Road during the spring and summer to monitor ATV speed. There is a 'No Thru Trucks' sign on the Monson end of the North Guilford Road but not on the other end. There will need to be a sign on the other end in order to enforce. The sheriff also explained that Piscataquis County is so large that the department needs to allocate their resources to high problem areas. If the town chooses to budget money to be paid directly to the Sheriff's Department, they will hire a part time deputy to cover Monson.

Daniel met with a fence fabricator, Ben Leavitt about the canal fence. The cost to fabricate and install a new fence will be approximately \$15,000. Other companies would charge approximately \$2,500 however, Ben would design, fabricate and install the fence himself. John Moore suggested fixing the existing fence.

Tillson has submitted a plan to install the new cell phone tower on top of Tenney Hill.

Northern Light Health has asked if they may use the gym as a central covid vaccination center for the county. They will need to use the gym every Friday for now but will probably add one more day once more vaccine becomes available. The selectboard agreed to let them use the gym. Bobbie noted that the gym will be needed for the Snowroller Festival on February 19 and 20.

Last year, the town election was held during the day before the town meeting. It will be done the same way this year due to Covid-19, but Daniel would like to make this a permanent procedure by having a vote at the town meeting. The selectboard agreed.

SELECTBOARD REPORT

Eric mentioned that he saw Steve working up on the roof using a rickety wooden ladder. He suggested that a better ladder be used in the future. He also noted that there had been many varieties of complaints regarding the assessing but questioned how much of it was fair. He spoke to the previous town manager and clerk and they stated that they had proactively informed Hamlins of changes in homestead and veteran's exemptions, deaths etc. Daniel stated that changes in owners and deeds are sent to all assessors by the registry of deeds but that the town's sends them in case they don't get them. Also mentioned was the number of error or sloppiness that was found over the last couple of years.

Eric then asked Daniel if new Snowroller signs had been ordered. Daniel stated that the existing signs had been found so he canceled the order.

TOWN COMMITTEE REPORTS

FESTIVAL COMMITTEE: A downsized version of the snowroller festival is scheduled for February 20.

BICENTENNIAL COMMITTEE: Daniel noted that the committee met earlier today. They are working on a logo and have found a company to make merchandise such as t-shirts and mugs. The committee is considering starting to sell the merchandise now for fundraising purposes. He also mentioned that the new beautification committee is very enthusiastic and will be using the rest of their budget to replace the whisky barrels for the flowers and also ordering banners.

OLD BUSINESS

Personnel Policy Changes from the Attorney: Daniel briefly read through the changes that the attorney made to the policy. He will retype the policy to reflect the changes and the new policy will be approved at the next meeting. Eric mentioned that the personnel policy states that in the event of sexual harassment, the accuser will be protected from retaliation and should report to the town manager. He asked who someone should report to if the town manager is accused. Daniel stated that someone would then report to the selectboard. Eric suggested that the first selectman should be the one reported to.

NEW BUSINESS

Grading Bid: After a short discussion it was decided to put the grading out to bid.

Façade Grant Re-Payment: Daniel explained that in 2013 or 2014 the Lakeshore House had received a \$20,000 Façade Grant from the town. Whereas the Lakeshore House is being sold,

there was a question as to whether the grant would have to be repaid. It was determined as long as the new owners did not change the façade, the grant does not have to be paid back.

Leftover TIF Funds: Daniel was informed by Maine Revenue that the remaining \$4,500 in the TIF account can not be spent. The money can be left there or put into surplus. If it was put into surplus it would raise the valuation of the town by \$50,000. Although it wouldn't change much, it would need to be voted on. The selectboard decided to leave the money where it is.

Map 4 Lot 20-8-1 Quit Claim Deed: Daniel explained that the aforementioned property is being sold and that the Real Estate Attorney found an old tax lien that has not been discharged. The quit claim deed will clear up the matter. The selectboard signed the quit claim deed.

Opening of IT Service Bids: Daniel presented two sealed bids for IT services. The selectboard opened the bids. Daniel will review them and make a recommendation at the next meeting.

Meeting moved to Executive Session for 1 MRSA Subsection 405 (6) (A) – Personnel Matter and 1 MRSA Subsection 405 (6) (F) – Poverty Abatement at 8:45 PM.