Selectboard Meeting

May 20, 2021

7:00pm

Present were Darlene Wyman, David Bemis, Janet Perry, Denise Randall, Hannah Regier, Tina White, Lynn Morgan, April Lyman, Amber Stevens, Don Capponcelli, Wichie Artu, Matt Perry and Dennis Mirante.

David called the meeting to order at 7:02pm.

Adjustments to the agenda: David stated the representative for the USDA grant would not be available until the June or July meeting.

Minutes: Denise made the motion accept the prior meeting minutes. Janet seconded. Put to a vote. The motion carried.

Public comments: Wichie asked about plastic bags for recycling. He wanted to know what type of bag could be used and whether they could be sold at the town office. David stated it could be any plastic bag and he uses the leaf bags. David stated it was a possibility to resell bags at the town office, but bags are available at any store. Lynn reported that there was a great turnout for Green Up and there will be a report in the upcoming Athenian. She stated she could use more volunteers so anyone interested may contact her. Hannah asked if the town had any plans or plan to plan for the emerald ash borer and the dead ash trees along the roadways. David stated the state has put out traps to see if the ash borer is here and hasn’t received any reports that we have the ash borer here. David stated the tree warden, Bob Anderson, has been looking into the matter and talking to the road crew about it. David suggested it may be good to email Bob and see what information he has on the matter. Wichie stated that the state was looking into giving money to towns for housing. He asked the town to consider tapping into that for our community. David stated there is also the Housing Rehabilitation fund the town has to help for repairs. David stated we had talked to an individual who works with grants and he will be meeting with the budget committee at their next meeting. Wichie stated the money would be coming from the American Rescue Plan Act and he is willing to help out anyone interested in this grant.

Boards and officials: Janet reported for Sherry that the Meetinghouse committee is anticipating the grant agreement ready for David to sign next week. They can approve the scope of work before beginning the soliciting of contractors for bids. There are already three contractors interested in the project. Four members of the committee went to the Brookline meetinghouse earlier this month to see their building and they hope to collaborate and support each other’s efforts. The committee is planning a concert and ice cream social for August 8th. Also the fourth annual plant sale will be held May 29th from 10:00am-12:00pm. They will also be dedicating a dogwood tree in Eleanor’s memory for all the years she worked on the committee. Amber reported the budget committee were going through their notes and the 6 wheeler is up for replacement in 2023. She stated it takes 1-2 years to process for a new truck. She asked if the selectboard would be thinking about replacing the truck. David stated the board approved the repairs to the truck last year and had bought an extended warranty in hopes we would be able to keep the truck for another year or two beyond 2023. David also stated the board could start looking into the purchase of a truck. Amber also reported the listers would be holding a grievance meeting on May 26th at 4:00pm. If anyone has a grievance it needs to be in writing and contact Amber for an appointment. Lynn reported that Jack Bryar presented the case to the state concerning the WNUESD remaining a union after the withdrawal of Westminster. This was approved by the state. Athens/Grafton will remain together as the WNUESD. Westminster will be their own district. This will be starting in 2023. The school board has hired Angela Cartier as principal for the Athens/Grafton elementary school for the 2021-2022 school year. Laura Vogel has been hired for the 3rd and 4th grade teacher. The board will be looking for a 1st and 2nd grade teacher to replace Kelley Hallock. Lynn reported since the April meeting, there have been not reports of covid cases or guaranteeing in the union elementary. The 6th grade graduation will be held outdoors on June 8th with limited attendance. The location and time have not yet been determined. There will be a summer school for all the SU schools this year. There will be academics in the morning and the afternoons will be outdoor activities. Don reported there will be a cemetery commission the first Wednesday in June. Denise stated she was contacted by Mr. Osgood stating the plow truck took down his mailbox and he would like it replaced. Also on Mill Hill there was quite a bit of extensive damage done to a stone wall and garden by the plow truck as well.

USDA grant: Sandi has been looking into the grant for the town garage bathroom and weatherization. The person who was to attend tonight contacted David after the agenda was posted and stated she would prefer to meet at the June or July board meeting.

Warrants and mail: David made the motion to approve the warrants. Denise seconded. Put to a vote. The motion carried. The mail was reviewed.

Roads: Matt stated everything was going well. The backhoe was down for about 2 ½ weeks for a sensor repair. The ledge on Walker Road has been blasted. The road crew is working on the underdrain on Brookline Road. A new cutting blade for the grader needs to be ordered. Matt has working on grants with Sandi and Dennis. Matt stated he had ordered culverts from WW Building Supply and they recommended ordering extra culverts because the prices were going up. After discussion, David made the motion to order four two foot culverts and eight eighteen inch culverts at the state bid price. Janet seconded. Put to a vote. The motion carried. The road crew are working on the entrance to the town garage was discussed. To finish that, the mail boxes need to be moved to comply with what the state requires for an entrance. David stated the board would send out notices to the residents to either move the boxes across the street or move them up. It will be up to the residents to decide where to put the boxes. Tina stated it was her understanding the mail boxes go where the Chester post office states. She stated the town would have to contact the Chester postmaster and ask them where they would prefer the mail boxes go. Matt stated he had stopped at the post office and asked the postmaster and she said moving the boxes to the other side of the road would not be an issue. David stated we would send out the notices and hopefully everyone can agree as to where to put the boxes and if the post office agrees it can be done. The notices will go out and it will be discussed again at the June board meeting. The boxes need to be moved by July 1st. Denise asked if the town would move them or if the residents would do this. David stated the residents would move them, but the town could help. April stated the mail boxes had been there for over forty years and couldn’t imagine the state requiring the boxes be moved. Matt stated that it had been brought to his attention the entrance was not legal so he is trying to remedy the situation. David made a motion to send the letter to the residents and if people have issues with it, it will be discussed at the June meeting and let everyone know it needs to be done by July 1st and the town will help with the moving of the boxes if need be. April asked who told Matt the entrance needed to be changed. Matt stated it was in some paper work that he saw. April asked for a copy of the paperwork. Janet seconded the motion. Put to a vote. The motion carried.

Executive session: At 7:35pm, David made the motion to move into executive session to discuss a personnel matter where premature general public knowledge would clearly place the town of Athens at a substantial disadvantage. Janet seconded. Put to a vote. The motion carried. David made the motion to move out of executive session at 7:50pm. Janet seconded. Put to a vote. The motion carried. No decisions were made and no motions were made.

Matt asked about purchasing more gravel. David stated if gravel was needed to contact him and he will be in touch with the board members then they will decide if it is needed. David asked Matt to get prices on the gravel. Matt also asked about putting the winter sand out to bid. The board decided to have the bids ready for the July meeting.

Further business: April asked if the mail boxes could be moved to the left so the trucks can move straight out of the entrance. David stated this could be done if there is a safe space or move them across the road. April asked who he had spoken to at the post office. Matt stated he had talked to the postmaster. April asked for a copy of the paperwork concerning the entrance to the garage. Darlene stated she would contact her when she has it.

There being no further business, David made the motion to adjourn. Janet seconded. Put to a vote. The motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 7:57pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Darlene Wyman. Town Clerk