

Town of Colrain
Select board Meeting
55 Main Road/Town Office Building
7:00 P.M.

MINUTES OF March 4, 2013

Present: Mark Thibodeau, Eileen Sauvageau and Duane Scranton

Others Present: Geoff Rogers and Ann-Renee Larouche – HCOG, Mike Friedlander, Jason Fenenc – Colrain Board of Health, Marybeth Chichester – Finance Committee
Paula Harrison – Office Clerk, Town Coordinator – Kevin Fox

Meeting was called to order by Chairman Mark Thibodeau at 7:00 PM.

Meeting Minutes February 25, 2013

MOVED: Eileen Sauvageau moved to accept the minutes for 2/25/2013, as written, Mark Scranton seconded and it was voted unanimously.

Warrants: Vendor and Payroll Warrants
Select board signed the warrant.

Appointments Geoff Rogers/Ann-Renee Larouche – HCOG – Solar Program
Geoff Rogers explained that the Hampshire power contract has been signed about a year ago. Geoff is here to explain the Hampshire Solar program. He discussed the history of the program and how it has included solar credits. Ann Renee Larouche explained the Hampshire Solar would allow the town to save 21% on any municipal electricity accounts. Ann-Renee gave a history on the Massachusetts renewable energy program and how that has resulted in the formation on Hampshire Solar. She explained how net metering works. They sent out an RFP to find a vendor to then help distribute these credits for net metering. NEXAMP was the company that was awarded the RFP. She explained the process to join and continue with net metering thru NEXAMP. She reviewed the billing process. Ann-Renee explained that the net metering agreement is a 20 year contract and would need a Town Meeting vote. This is an opportunity which has a small window and would have to be done soon. Discussion on renewable energy programs and the Boards concerns regarding large solar field being located in Colrain. Geoff stated that the 21% savings is guaranteed for the life of the contract. 20 years is a standard solar contract because the company has to sell all their credits during that time. Discussion on the contract terms and the company NEXAMP. HCOG is having an open house on March 21, 2013 7 to 9 pm at the Northampton Senior Center. A presentation on Hampshire Solar will be given that evening.

Ann- Renee explained municipal aggregation which is for residential and business electrical accounts. The town would need to vote it in for the residence and businesses in the town. Geoff explained that this would be the Towns aggregation

and then the residents would use this as default service. Residents could then opt out if they do not want to be in this program. Geoff explained how the municipal aggregation process would work. There are about 6 suppliers that are competitive for customers in this area.

Jason Ferenc – Blue Block

Jason discussed the Blue Block and explained that currently a bank owns the Blue Block and has been working on evictions in the building. Right now the building is empty, secured and the water has been turned off by permission from the Fire District. Discussion on any outstanding taxes, the condition of the building and the receivership process. Receivership was developed due to landlords that would keep the rent and not put any repairs into their buildings. The rents would be paid to a receiver who would put the money into maintenance and whatever is left would then be paid out to the landlord. This can also be used for banks that are sitting on an empty property. The State of Massachusetts has a program that will give free legal counsel to any town that is considering using receivership. Jason has been in contact with the bank to inform them that there are concerns regarding the property being secured and some of the plumbing may have been removed. The Board of Health and/or the Board of Selectmen could initiate receivership Discussion on the Bailey Block and that currently the building is condemned. Discussion on the back septic system and what part of the building is connected to the septic. When the current residents are ready to apply for occupancy permit a Title V will have to be done.

New Business

FEMA HMP Grant Application for Generators

Kevin informed that board about this grant and that it has been initiated by Jack Cavolick – Emergency Management Director. This grant is now done and due on March 15, 2013 for a total of \$60,500. Kevin has applied for one generator at the Fire Station and one generator for the Town Office. It is an application with no commitment and FEMA is pushing this because of where we are located.

MOVED: Eileen Sauvageau moved to approve going forward on the applications for two generators through FEMA HMP grant, Duane Scranton seconded and it was voted unanimously.

FY 2014 Budget Discussion

Kevin gave the board the new school budget assessment as of the School Committees meeting on Thursday night which was increased by approximately \$15,000. If all the requests are granted this year the tax rate will increase by approximately \$1,40. We are still under our levy limit by about \$27,000. Discussion on the Police Department budget. The board would like Kevin leave the police budget as is and inform Jason that he should prepare an alternative budget. If Jason would like to meet with the board he is welcome to come back to a meeting. Look at cutting the Police protection line item. Kevin reminds the board that COLA needs to be added to that line item. Discussion on the budget and stabilization funds. Discussion on the fire truck and that it will not impact this year budget but it will have an impact on next year's budget. Discussion on the need for a new truck vs. keeping the current trucks and the fire truck grant. Marybeth from the Finance Committee informed the board that the Finance

Committee has not made a decision on the fire truck because they have not seen all the departments budgets yet. Discussion on where the budget can be cut down in order to decrease the tax increase. The Select board would like Kevin to look at the police departments budget over the last three years so we can compare them to this years. Kevin informs the board and Marybeth that the finance committee is an advisory board and at Town Meeting the Selectmen's budget is presented with Finance Board recommendations.

Approve/Sign Letter of Support For House Bills 1899 and 1902

Kevin has drafted a letter for the support for a house bill that would provide relief for out of district vocational education tuition costs.

MOVED: Eileen Sauvageau moved to approve the letter to Honorable Anne M. Gobi about the out of district costs to the towns, Duane Scranton seconded and it was voted unanimously.

Old Business

Town Coordinator Review/Goals and Objective Setting for New Year

The board supports his current goals. If the board would like to add anything to his current goals just give him a call.

Pitt House Lease Agreement

Kevin informs the board that the lease agreement is almost ready and should be ready for your next meeting.

Not Anticipated
At time of Posting

Franklin County Land Trust Bike Race Map

Kevin informed the board that the routes are the same as last year. The board reviewed the map. Discussion on the time of the ride. The Board would like the bicyclists to abide by the rules of the road as cars do.

MOVED: Eileen Sauvageau moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:10 PM. Seconded by Duane Scranton and it was voted unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Accepted by the Board of Selectmen

Paula Harrison
Office Clerk

Mark Thibodeau - Chairman

Eileen Sauvageau

Duane Scranton

Documents

- Selectmen's minutes for February 25, 2013
- Warrants
- Franklin Land Trust "D2R2" Bike Race Map
- Memo from Board of Health regarding Blue Block and Bailey Block
- Letter to Representative Gobi – Out of district tuition rates
- Town Coordinator Goals/Objectives
- FY 14 draft budget