

MEETING MINUTES
Town of Heath
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
ALL BOARDS & COMMITTEES MEETING
Community Hall
March 3, 2015

Called to order at 7:13 p.m. by Sheila Litchfield, with Brian DeVriese, Bill Lattrell, and Kara Leistyna, Town Coordinator present and attendees listed on separate sheet (approximately 22 attendees in total).

Reviewed Agenda: No Changes.

Sheila welcomed everyone to the All Boards & Committees Meeting. She announced open offices up for election in May. Nomination papers are due March 25th to Town Clerk.

Everyone was encouraged to reach out to the Select Board at least annually to check in regarding objectives, training, budget, etc. If anyone would like to meet with Select Board, please contact Town Coordinator, Kara Leistyna, for placement on agenda.

Annual Town Meeting will take place on May 9, 2015 at the Heath School. Town Election is May 8, 2015. Polls are open from noon to 7 p.m.

A reminder to everyone that anyone elected/appointed must complete on-line Ethics training every two years. Check with Hilma Sumner, Town Clerk to see when you are due. A link to the training is on the Town's website.

Reports of Boards and Committees:

Agricultural Commission: Doug Mason reported that the committee just met this evening. New members include Doug Mason, Jeff Aho. Doug attended the State Agricultural Meeting and met many folks in the field. The committee reviewed goals/objectives for the coming year including uses for town-owned land, an updated property map of land for agricultural use, possible forestry plan for 340 acres of Town-owned land. The Ag Commission would like to work together with the building inspector so that permits are issued after assurance that no easements are present.

Board of Assessors: No report.

Board of Health: Betsy Kovacs offered a report thanking past members, Rebecca Allen, Elizabeth Nichols, and Jenna Day. Glen Ayers, FRCOG Health Agent has been helping with new on-line permitting. Free Tick Testing program was successful and is extended to end of June. Clean Sweep was a success and this year it may be deemed, Clean Sweep and Swap Day. New extended Perc Season has been a success as well. 50 abandoned trailers so far have been removed from Town in a Town-wide clean up effort. We appreciate the Town Nurse who offers double the time that most towns offer. The Oversight Board helps keep communication open with other towns. Betsy Kovacs is Acting Chair during Karen Brooks' absence.

Cemetery Commission: Claire Rabbitt reported that the Town is still in process of transferring deed From North Cemetery Corp. to the Town of Heath combining with the North Cemetery. Volunteers have continued work on keeping stones maintained. Refer to Town Report for more information. Help to keep our cemeteries beautiful is always needed.

Community Hall Comm.: No report.

Conservation Commission: Brian DeVriese reported that he has been Chair for the past four years. Current members include Dennis Peters, Ellen Jenkins, Buck Den Ouden, Jessica Van Steensburg and consultant, Bill Lattrell. The Comm. meets as needed. On line permits are approved with help from Bill Lattrell. Consultant has helped tremendously and results in less meetings needed.

Bill also helps with the scientific process and has the expertise to help with difficult matters. Training is offered through State. There are funds in budget to help defray costs to members. There are frequent opportunities statewide and through FRCOG.

Cultural Council: No report.

Finance Committee: Don Freeman shared that the Committee tried to keep the FY15 tax rate as low as possible however it came in \$1.04 over estimate. Valuation dropped \$1.75 million but tax Bills should remain stable. Estimated local receipts figure has been the same for the past six years and this proves problematic when calculating the rate and amount of free cash. This year they hope to press for a more realistic number to estimate more accurately. A suggestion by the DOR was to form a financial team and the Committee feels a group meeting would be helpful during the DOR certification process. Two major financial issues are upcoming this Annual Town Meeting. 1) Safety/Highway building. Voters will be asked to authorize to borrow up to \$2 million. The State gave the Town a grant of up to \$2 million towards the cost of the project. In total, it is estimated to be about .94 on the tax rate. 2) WiredWest Initiative. This is a moving target of currently \$1.6 million the Town has to authorize to borrow; about \$93,000 per year or \$1.05 on tax rate over the course of 20 years. If 40% of potential customers in Town sign up, based on the model of WiredWest, we are assured revenue will cover debt service. 2/3 vote is needed for authorization to borrow; no debt exclusion vote is needed for either project. Don announced the recent resignation of Kathy Inman and the appointment of Jan Carr. Don also expressed his appreciation to Ned Wolf as Secretary, and Kara Leistyna, Town Coordinator.

Historical Commission: No report.

Heath Telecom: Al Canali will present a more in-depth report later in the agenda.

Library Trustees: Deb Porter shared that the library continues to be busy. Computers are popular as well as Lyra's story hour. There are two goals for this year: The collection will be weeded of books no longer read and the Library would like to offer educational programs; storytelling; workshops in various skills e.g. how to sell on Ebay. Space and ADA compliance remains a concern but we're happy to take a back seat to the Safety/Highway Building project.

Please use the Heath Herald, deadline 3/10/15, to post information regarding Town Meeting.

Public Safety Complex Comm.: Bob Bourke, together with Brian DeVriese, will present a more in-depth presentation later in the evening.

Parks & Rec. Commission: Bob Bourke, Susan Draxler, Betsy Kovacs, and Robin Jenkins serve on Commission. A yoga program, tailored to all levels, has been popular in the Community Hall on Mondays. The Commission has worked in conjunction with the Heath Veteran's Memorial Comm. and the Conway School of Landscape Design to assess the Town Common and provided an in-depth, comprehensive report with various suggestions for the Veteran's Memorial and park design. The Comm. is asking for an expense account and funding for projects. Currently, the work depends on only donations.

Planning Board: Cal Carr was present to report that the Board has worked on various issues. The Zoning Bylaws were overhauled and reformatted. Some small changes will be presented The Annual Town Meeting. Goals and objectives for the coming year need to be determined. Everyone's input is always welcome.

Recycling Committee: Not active in 2014.

Energy Advisory Comm.: Bill Gran reported that the committee was re-formed from the Renewable Energy Advisory Comm. There have been inquiries from a couple of solar developers but no action or further inquiry. No activity towards Green Communities Initiative Designation but this is a goal for the group.

School Comm.(Mohawk & FCTS): Budge Litchfield and Ken Rocke were present to share an overview of the FY16 school budget. Overall assessment for Towns is up 5.7%. The \$18 million budget shows an increase of 3.6%. Pre-school at a cost of \$220,000 is a new expense. This will increase pre-school to 5 day/week for all schools in the district. Budge shared there is a clear educational benefit for children and student sustainability when they begin at the Pre-K level. However, MTRSD is not considered a Pre-K thru 12 District. Ken shared the two articles coming up for presentation at ATM. One relates to

accepting Rowe back into the district (grades 7-12). School Committee supports this proposal that they feel will create collaboration and cohesion. The other article pertains to the Regional Agreement which currently states that students must be educated in Town where they reside. The change will allow towns to try new options e.g. Heath combining with Colrain, grades 3-4, in one school. This encourages positive, experimental educational opportunities. A change will require a vote at ATM and majority vote of the School Committee. Closure and re-assignment are excluded in the change and will require a yes vote by all Towns.

Art Schwenger represented the FC Technical High School. Art reported on capital needs for the school. This is the first time the school has asked for funding for capital projects. A special election shall take place in June. All Towns will vote on same day. The roof is one issue as well as the parking lot. Heath's assessment is up due to increase in pupils from Heath from 4 to 7.

Heath Veterans' Memorial Comm.: Dave Howland, Bob Bourke, Jerry Gilbert, Peter Smith, and Dennis Peters serve on Comm. Their focus is to create a memorial honoring veteran's whom mustered from Heath. They have 190 names from Rev. War to present. They have visited various towns, businesses to study memorial examples. The Conway School, spearheaded by student Janice Schmidt, helped to design the common space for a nominal fee of \$450. The Comm. attended a presentation at the School in November. Dave feels it is excellent data for the Town. The Comm. will meet with the Board of Selectmen and the public to consider options/funding/Town's desires. \$440 has been raised so far and they have a \$150 budget (requested \$500 for FY16). Materials will be available for review.

WiredWest: Al Canali gave an overview of the WiredWest project. To sign up for service you may visit www.wiredwest.net or there is a link on www.townofheath.org. There is a request for \$49 refundable deposit. They are looking for a 40% sign up; we're already at 8% after 24 hours! A 2/3 vote is required at ATM for authorization to borrow Heath's share of the cost of project. \$40 million has been approved and released from the State and the remainder to come from the towns who are members of the WiredWest Cooperative. Envelopes containing information, a contract, and pamphlet will be mailed soon to all residents. A series of small meetings will be held in various homes. Al will be present to answer questions and clarify the process of installing fiber network to all homes/businesses in Town, also called the "Final Mile." Massachusetts Broadband Initiative (MBI 123) will collaborate with WiredWest in building this final mile network. Towns will mobilize to vote this year to borrow the remaining funds needed to complete the project. WiredWest meets regularly and they are open to public unless they enter into Exec. Session. Al shared that there is a lot of misinformation out there so he urged people to attend meetings to get clarification. Art and Al worked on completing the premise maps of Heath to determine number of potential households/businesses. In order to be considered a "fiber town" Heath will need 161 potential customers to sign up to complete the 40% goal. If 40% signs on, debt service will be covered by revenue. If 60%, then extra money will be distributed back to towns. Al stressed that DSL is deteriorating; Verizon is no longer taking new customers; property values are dropping due to lack of services. Without high speed internet, Heath will not attract new homeowners or business. These services are vital to Town's survival. It was requested that WiredWest provide a business plan with clarification on cost to Town to show assurance that it will be viable. Al said he would get the plan from WiredWest.

Public Safety/Highway Building Project: A contract has been signed by and between the Commonwealth of MA and Town of Heath for funds up to \$2 million towards cost of project. It is a matching grant so the Town has to agree to borrow up to \$2 million towards project. USDA is offering 30 year loans with 3.75% interest. Town has various benchmarks within the contract but will be reimbursed within 30 days of any request if conditions are met as specified in grant. The Committee has reduced the cost of the project to \$3 million so the Town would need to authorize borrowing of \$1.5 million, a 50% reduction in cost. This all awaits Town approval at ATM in May. The grant is a one time opportunity. If not approved, we lose the

funding. The building is needed and critical for the future of the Town. Prospective site of project is across from the Heath Fairgrounds as presented at last year's ATM. The entrance would be on Bray Road and there would be minimal aesthetic impact on cemetery/fairgrounds. Town has had the Bray Road property appraised at a selling value of \$42,000. If sold, this could generate funds towards the project and put the land back on the tax revenue generating properties.

All Boards & Committees Meeting adjourned and Board of Selectmen Meeting continued.

Mail/ Email:

1. Email from FRCOG re: Local Technical Assistance Projects
2. Email from Hilma Sumner re: open offices for election
3. Email from Robert Bourke re: can he put video of fire dept./highway on You Tube? Board suggested to wait.
4. Email from Sheila re: Machinery/Maint. account research
5. Series of emails re: Water/frozen pipes at Highway Dept. (see update below)
6. Email from Sheila with Eric Glazier re: Pre-School budget for FY16
7. Email from Jan Ameen re: upcoming vote on MRF contract at ATM
8. Email from Jan Ameen re: Town Recycling Rate. Heath's rate has decreased 1%. Our paper recycling stayed steady and containers are down a bit. Trash is up a bit and scrap metal is steady.
9. Note from Betty re: Assessors
10. Email from Sheila to Judy Willis with attached letter
11. Memo from S. Litchfield re: Notes from MTRSD budget meeting
12. Email from Rol Hesselbart re: energy committee meeting with Mike Daly of Greenskies Renewable Energy.
13. Memo from Planning Board requesting some bylaw changes at ATM
14. Email from Sheila with some Bylaw suggestions re: Personnel
15. Email from Sheila re: water temp at Sr. Center
16. Emails from Bill Hoyerman re: Landfill
17. Email from Tech School with attached letter re: Capital Projects and ATM
18. Don Purington's Performance Eval.
19. Emails from Art Schwenger and Al Canali re: WiredWest
20. Email from Doug Mason with review of Ag Commission meeting he attended
21. Letter from Franklin Land Trust re: D2R2 race in August with map
22. FC Selectmen's Assoc. meeting announcement. Sheila will attend.
23. Email from Margaret Freeman re: Historic District Boundary with map
24. Email from Ted Harvey re: Reg. Kennel meeting
25. Email from Bob Bliss. Heath has been added to FY16 TAP Program list
26. Email from Judy Willis with attached (on flash drive) Preschool Project studies

Other Separate Documents:

1. Town Coordinator Report
2. FY16 Budget Spreadsheet
3. Treasury Warrant
4. Bray Road Appraisal

Other Business:

WiredWest Premise Maps of Heath: Reviewed maps provided by MBI of Heath. Art and Al worked with Armand Clavette on Mohawk Estates. Kara will meet with Art tomorrow to finalize count of premises and report back to MBI with numbers.

Update on meeting with Assessors: Bill provided update on meeting 2/23/15 with Assessors. Sheila will meet with Margo and Dick Gallup to review classification/grading process. The instructions will be put in

writing for the handbook and future use. Discussed software issues/conflicts. A meeting with Zack Blake from DOR was suggested to clarify some of the ongoing issues and his recommendations. Compatibility is important. Kara will prepare classification/grading packets. Tabled till further discussion.

Update on water situation at Highway Dept.: Disruption of water to the Highway Garage continues. The pipes are frozen or damaged. Tom Carlson has worked on assessing the matter. Need to locate well and it was suggested to run a temporary line. The Board also discussed the option of digging the ground behind the building at foundation to locate pipe and repair it.

Dog Matter: Arraignment on 3/13/15. Officer Mattson will attend. Kara will ask Ed Grinnell to attend as well and ask them to seek court order so they can obtain records.

SIGNED:

1. Treasury Warrant
2. FC REPC Endorsements

On a motion by Brian DeVriese, and seconded by Bill Lattrell, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn at 10:20 p.m.

Next meeting scheduled for March 10, 2015 at 7 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kara M. Leistyna
Town Coordinator