

MEETING MINUTES
Town of Heath
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Sawyer Hall
April 14, 2015

Called to order at 7:01 p.m. by Sheila Litchfield, with Bill Lattrell, Brian DeVriese, and Kara Leistyna, Town Coordinator present. Also present: **See guest sign in sheet.**

Reviewed Agenda: Will review meeting minutes from 3/17 and 3/31 at next scheduled meeting. Add: 7:15 p.m. Al Canali and Bob V. to discuss WiredWest and offer brief on recent WW meeting.

Dog Matter: Board offered update on on-going dog matter. A resident reported the dogs have been loose on several occasions, she said they were out on Sunday afternoon, in the road, all over the place and saw the owner chasing the dogs down the road to get them in the car to go home. She added there are at least six dogs and also reported she's seen that dog owner has adverted a breeding and kennel service. All of these are considered infractions. Resident was encouraged to submit complaint in writing. Resident took another complaint form. Ed Grinnell will be invited to a BOS meeting so everyone is updated on matter and steps going forward.

WiredWest Update:

- Bob Viarengo attended WiredWest meeting on April 11. He shared his notes that he took at the meeting.
- Heather Row, a Heath resident, has helped make sense of the business plan. She's away but offered to help further upon her return. Bob, Heather, and Al will meet with Jim Drawe regarding business plan. He's not suggesting the plan is not viable, just needs better data.
- MBI originally put the project together as a private/public venture thinking Verizon/Comcast would take over. This didn't happen so MBI and WiredWest met. A Capital Plan has been devised and the bond issue was a topic of much discussion at April 11th meeting. They covered how the bond issue was set up and technicalities. WiredWest continues to work on the business plan. This should be ready in several weeks. The Corporate Structure should be ready in several months, according to Bob Viarengo.
- MBI has been conducting outreach via Western MA Connect. They have to offer underserved towns the option of 'going it alone.'
- The project cost is roughly \$109 million. \$40 million has been allocated by legislators. Uncertain what portion goes to WiredWest. Each town then will raise the balance to build out the network.
- Bond Counsel fee, according to Bob Viarengo. , is \$3.50/\$1,000 borrowed. Rick Manley was the Bond Counsel present at the April 11th meeting.
- There was some confusion on whether each Town hires Bond Counsel of WiredWest, as an entity, hires a Bond Counsel for all participating towns.
- Discussed sign up numbers so far. Three of 32 Towns have currently met goal of 40% subscribers. WiredWest does not expect to be at goal by Annual Town Meeting and they seem okay with it, according to Bob Viarengo. If as a whole, 40% goal is not met, it should be taken from warrant.
- Discussed model. Viability based on number of households in total. Towns with higher sign up rate will get built first. If 40% of potential subscribers sign on, according to the model, the project is viable. If more, there will be a profit. At 40%, model predicts revenues will cover debt service.
- Discussed DSL. Verizon will not renew accounts once they are closed. If a homeowner with DSL service moves, the new owner will not have DSL option. DSL is the 'aging' technology.
- Discussed worse case scenarios. Get fiber installed and if WW fails, it will be more attractive for optional network provider to get involved if fiber network is in place. Al included the option for

increasing or lowering rates as needed. There are lots of options and member towns will have control as members of cooperative.

- AI will be holding a Q&A meeting at the Community Hall on Thursday, April 16.
- Clear answers will be needed for Annual Town Meeting. Need number to plug into warrant article for authorization to borrow. If goal is not met, a postponement of vote at STM may be allowed.
- The Board thanked AI Canali and Bob Viarengo for their work on WiredWest issue.

Municipal Safety/Highway Building Project:

- Discussed impact of project on tax rate. Don Freeman shared that the latest estimate would be about \$2 on the tax rate. Once after year five or six when revenues are generated from WiredWest subscribers, the affect on rate will lower to roughly \$1 on the tax rate. 40% subscriber rate is a break even mark according to the model – revenues cover debt service. If the Town has a 60-70% subscriber rate, according to model, a profit will be generated which may help to offset the Safety Highway/Fire project, according to Don Freeman.
- A resident asked if there were any other large items on the warrant. Sheila responded perhaps the transfer station project (compactor replacement and attendant's shed) but this project is still in discussion.
- Transfer Station and Salt Shed are not part of new building.
- Discussed land and whether other sites in Town considered. The committee chair said that they have met 23 times and no one has approached the committee regarding land. Colrain Stage & Bray Road parcel has some slight restrictions such as a request for buffer of trees on Colrain Stage Road side and entrance shall be located on Bray Road. The Committee did research various other sites but the one included in plans is uniquely suitable for this building project and was on the market for sale at the time of the first plan. It is centrally located and sloping is suitable for the proposed structure. RFPs are not necessary if a parcel is uniquely suitable for building.
- The building will not act as a public water supply and any run off issues must meet storm water standards.
- Cell tower: This was a possibility but not part of project or within the scope of committee.
- The Board shared that the contract for this project is secure. It is signed by both the Commonwealth of MA and the Select Board.
- Discussed impact of this project, and WiredWest on other needs for the town. Stabilization funds have been created in order to save each year to lessen financial impact when a piece of equipment is purchased or improvements made to school buildings, for example.
- Finance Committee shared that these two projects are both needs not wants. The town has to make these hard decisions. WiredWest potentially brings money to town and improving the highway/fire building eliminates the risk the Town has for getting shut down due to code violations.
- Jeff Simmons suggested a Long Range Capital Needs Committee be formed to look at needs in order to plan over time.
- Bill Lattrell thanked the group for the friendly tenure of the meeting. He encouraged everyone to remain friends despite difference of opinions or what is decided at ATM. He encouraged a respect for one another.

Budget Meeting:

- Discussed COLA. Kara provided a chart with several options to review from 1% to 1.7%. Social Security is 1.7% and FRCOG has a budget draft asking for 1.5%. Two positions need review. Town Coordinator is below job rate and Tax Collector has requested an increase to keep par with area towns. Some Finance Committee members do not recommend any employee increases this year.
- Kara will investigate whether it's legal for the Town to pay for police coverage at the Heath Fair.
- Discussed Tax Collector software and compatibility issues. Tax Collector received upgrades as recommended by the DOR Tech. Support Team. Will consider Patriot software in future but the cost is prohibitive this year.

- Discussed the next few weeks and tasks to complete before ATM.

9:40 p.m. Finance Committee members Don Freeman, Gloria Fisher, Jeff Simmons, and Jan Carr left meeting.

Town Coordinator Report and Other Business:

1. Need to discuss long term borrowing for Irene with Kris Nartowicz and when next tax taking auction will be held.
2. Board will review all sources of cash with accountant.
3. Heath General Bylaws: Reviewed Hilma Sumner's questions regarding kennels and strong chief bylaw. Board agrees with Town Counsel – kennel shall be defined as more than four dogs. Kara will inquire with Hilma on specifics of questions regarding strong chief.
4. Community Hall Inspection Items: Kara will ask building inspector for more time to remedy issues. Brian will write report on stairwells/fire escape egress.
5. CSC/Carbonite Back Up: Kara will get prices from Mark Smith for other back up options. CSC program is not working properly and has been problematic from the start.
6. Film link on website: Two residents had issue with a film made by volunteers that illustrates the need for a new Highway/Fire Dept. building. The Select Board, even though the appointed Safety/Highway Building Committee approved the link, has asked that it be removed from website. The Board feels it is inviting potential complications/risks for building violations. However, they suggested that the firefighters show it at the upcoming pancake breakfast.
7. Kara will inquire whether Margo Newton or Mike Smith would like to put in request for FRCOG Traffic Count.

Mail/ Email:

1. Various emails regarding Safety/Highway Building Project
2. Various emails regarding Compactor Project
3. Various emails from Mike Smith Regarding Highway business
4. Notifications of Chap. 90 allocation
5. Various emails regarding Carbonite Back Up
6. Accrual Balance
7. Various emails from accountant
8. Various Emails regarding WiredWest
9. Email response from Town Counsel and what he sent to Bond Counsel on April 7th
10. Email from Hilma Sumner re: General Bylaws (see Town Coordinator report)
11. List of Heath Debt from Treasurer
12. Various letters sent to Supt. Buoniconti from Town of Buckland
13. Email from Cabot Insurance with quote for increasing weekly indemnity
14. Note from Charlene – door found left open again.
15. Email from Andrea Woods regarding Fuel Bid Timing. Answers needed by May 19, 20, or 21.
16. Traffic Counting notice from FRCOG
17. Note regarding DEP Small Scale Initiative Grant. This past year we used \$500 towards green products.
18. Email request from Sheila to schedule meeting with Supt. and Business Admin. MTRSD and follow up request.
19. Notice of PARC grant application. Bob Bourke email follows. Bob Bourke may apply for grant on behalf of the Town of Heath Parks & Recreation Comm.
20. Notice of set date for special election on June 23 for Tech School Capital funding
21. Email from Colrain Ambulance
22. Heath Nurse Monthly Report
23. Kara's request (x2) to Doug Wilkins to attend BOS meeting. No response
24. Letter from HRA, Charity Day, Housing Consumer Education Center.

Other Separate Documents:

1. Town Coordinator Report
2. FY16 Budget Spreadsheet
3. Draft of ATM Warrant
4. Transfer Station Compactor Project checklist for budgeting
5. Accountant's Cash Reconciliation Report March 2015
6. Article from Boston Globe, April 5, 2015, Grass-roots broadband
7. Grade ladder with proposed COLA options

SIGNED:

Request for Leave

Treasury Warrant

On a motion by Brian DeVriese, and seconded by Bill Lattrell, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn at 10:23 p.m.

Next meeting scheduled for April 21, 2015 at 7 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kara M. Leistyna

Town Coordinator