

**MEETING MINUTES**  
Town of Heath  
**BOARD OF SELECTMEN**  
Sawyer Hall  
September 15, 2015

**Called to order** at 7:02 p.m. by Sheila Litchfield, with Brian DeVriese, and Bill Lattrell and Kara Leistyna, Town Coordinator present. See sign in sheet for others present.

**Reviewed Agenda:** Added to Other Business: Community Compact, Highway Supt. position, Sawyer Hall Safety Matter, and Landfill Mowing Bids.

**Sawyer Hall Safety Matter:** Sheila shared that an incident has occurred in Sawyer Hall. A criminal complaint will be filed in District Court. The Select Board is taking this matter very seriously.

**Landfill Bids:** The Select Board reviewed the two bids that were submitted for Three-Town Landfill annual mowing. One included hand-trimming. Kara will find out if the other bid includes this as well. *On a motion by Brian DeVriese, and seconded by Bill Lattrell, the Board voted unanimously to award the landfill mowing to the lowest bidder to include hand-trimming.*

**Highway/Fire Vehicle:** Last week, the Select Board assigned the Ford Escape to the Fire Dept. Mike Shattuck has expressed that the superintendent needs a vehicle, as the last two highway superintendents have had. He uses the vehicle for road checks, emergencies that involve trees or road blockage. He travels back and forth from jobs. The crew truck is often used and is equipped with tools needed by the crew. The truck is registered to the highway dept. and affixed with a highway decal. Board discussed possible solutions including purchasing a vehicle for the fire dept. out of existing funds, but may require a Town vote. Ken and Mike currently share the Ford Escape. Fire emergencies take precedent and in that case, Mike will use his personal vehicle. Ken shared that he looked into options. He says to obtain a vehicle including prep work to set it up as a fire vehicle will cost roughly \$8,000. Ken is sorting out the department and determining what is needed. He says there may be some outdated equipment. The dept. needs a computer and updated software. Budget lines will be reviewed. All bills are current. Discussed transition. The Board encouraged close tracking of costs to get an accurate picture of what is needed during budget planning and keeping track of time is helpful for accurate picture of what job entails. Propane tank is old and deteriorating at the fire dept. It is not in compliance with current codes. The tank is being replaced and within compliance. Mike Shattuck has agreed that highway crew will help prep area where tank will be placed.

*On a motion by Brian DeVriese, and seconded by Bill Lattrell, the Board voted unanimously to authorize highway crew to assist fire dept. to prepare area to relocate propane tank.* It was assured that the placement of tank will not interfere with snowmobile trail.

**Public Safety/Highway Complex:** Roughly 25 people in attendance to discuss how to restore funding for the construction of a new public safety/highway building in Heath. On July 24, 2015, The Executive Office of Administration and Finance (ANF), Commonwealth of MA terminated the signed contract with the Town of Heath for a matching grant up to \$2 million. David Travers, a new Heath resident, and an attorney who works with contractors in the public construction arena, was asked to attend tonight in an effort to help brainstorm ways the Town can work towards restoring the grant. David can offer ways to help the Town improve our position to hold onto the money. He added that the issue of public safety is especially important. A friend, Alex Bloom, also an attorney in Boston area who works with public entities when funding issues go away, offered his perspective via telephone. Both men offered their time on a volunteer basis, and merely as consultants to help the Town begin to plan and strategize. Bob Bourke, Chair of the Municipal Safety Building Committee, offered a summary on correspondence

between the Town and ANF since January when the grant was announced to the Town. The first benchmark, July 15, was met. Bob Bourke spoke with Karen Dillard, the point person, who received a copy of the signed contract back in January. Mr. Bourke referenced how the termination is contrary to the Governor's Rural Policy Advisory Commission and efforts to give rural, Western MA a voice. Public awareness in Boston of rural communities in Western MA is a good idea. The reason the contract was terminated was unavailability of funds. However, it is the understanding that Gov. Patrick took funds from Muni IT fund – unused money from projects from previous FY that either didn't finish or came in under budget and left a balance. It was advised to get the story into the news as well as to use Mass Municipal Assoc., of which Heath is a member. It may not be a priority for them but could find out if there is a large trend of funding cuts. They advocate for communities and Heath needs to reach out to them to start the process of finding out whether other towns have suffered the same loss. It could certainly draw the interest of the Boston Globe. Certainly this termination of funds for a public safety building is less than thoughtful to the needs of Heath, a small, rural community in Western MA. It was learned that Heath's termination was one of several funding cuts by the Baker Administration. To cancel a signed contract for a public safety building grant is a most egregious example of a funding cut. It has a chilling effect on any contract, and on volunteers whom have spent a lot of time on the effort. Discussed possible strategies and contacts. Legal recourse is an option but costly. A Public records' request has been made by Town Counsel, this legal recourse combined with media is an option. This is an unfair situation and can affect change by raising profile through media. Heath will need a PR person to handle press/advocacy with expertise. Heath is a small town with a small budget and needs help to get this funding restored. The scope of the project of constructing a public safety building certainly falls into necessary. A fact sheet can be organized integrating specific concerns for distribution to press. Kara will work on preliminary draft and forward to committee for review. Discussed regionalization but this could take a long time. If a facility is existing, the other Towns who use the building could help to reduce Heath's debt service. This is the time to act – no matter what happens, we have to do something now. The possibility of contacting other legislators was discussed.

Discussed purchase of land. There is an ideal spot and an offer in hand – the only response to the RFP. The owner is aware of the funding predicament. Time is of the essence. The Committee will meet and have a face to face with Senator Downing on this subject. David Travers said that he will contact MMA. Everyone was thanked for their efforts.

**Highway Dept.:** Discussed job of highway superintendent with Mike Shattuck. *On a motion by Brian DeVriese, and seconded by Bill Lattrell, the Board voted unanimously to appoint Mike Shattuck to serve as Highway Superintendent provisionally during which time a GED/HEQ will be pursued.* Pay rate to be determined. The Board offered positive comments and support.

**Update:** Dell Road is half ground. It will take two days to cure. Warner Bros. will pave Rt. 8A Friday, to be completed by Sept. 24. Bills and paperwork have been submitted regularly. It is a tight schedule with STRAP project but will be complete by deadline of Sept. 30. George Durante, State contact, has been very helpful and offered additional time if needed.

#### **Other Business:**

1. Community Compact: Discussion postponed till 9/29/15.
2. Bill will inquire with Mike Shattuck regarding dent in Ford Escape.
3. Status of Dog Matter: Margo feels there is good coverage. Town Counsel and Margo Newton attending arraignment. It was continued for 30 days.
4. FC Housing and Rehabilitation (HRA): Sheila met regarding rehabilitation project in Town. Homeowners are current with agreement. Family has met with HRA. They have been advised to sell a parcel of land and use the proceeds to pay principal of outstanding taxes.

**Minutes:** *On a motion by Brian DeVriese, and seconded by Bill Lattrell, the Board voted unanimously to approve the minutes of 8/25/15 Select Board meeting as amended.*

**Mail/ Email:**

1. Email from Jeff Aho. Please appoint Jessica Van Steensburg and Nina Marshall to the Agricultural Commission.
2. Emails regarding Safety in Sawyer Hall
3. Email from Hilma Sumner expressing concern over road treatment chemicals. A fact sheet was suggested about road chemicals. Difficult to find what causes affects on vegetation.
4. Emails re: Electrical Aggregation/HCOG. Discussed recent solar project in Montague. Heath should pursue possible projects yielding high revenue for Town. Energy Advisory Comm. will be asked to explore with Planning Board.
5. Email from Sheila re: town vehicle/highway/fire dept.
6. Email from Sheila to Board of Assessors re: property line issue in Rowe/Heath. Simple process to correct matter.
7. Letter from HRA (previously submitted in mail/email but no action taken) they need a citizen to be appointed to serve on the Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) for the CDBG grant. ***On a motion by Brian DeVriese, and seconded by Bill Lattrell, the Board voted unanimously to appoint Brian to serve on the Citizen Advisory Commission for CDBG grant.***
8. Email from Bill Lattrell and follow up regarding work to be completed by Tom Carlson. Discussed project slated for Fire Dept. ceiling tiles. Brian will assess it this week-end.
9. Email from Art re: FCTS School Committee meeting follow up. Kara will prepare an announcement for the All Board's Meeting on 9/29.
10. Report from ZBA re: Doherty
11. Email from Sheila to Mike Shattuck re: follow up from meeting 9/8/15
12. Email from Sheila to Accountant re: separating costs from HD/FD
13. Email from K&P eUpdate

**Other Separate Documents:**

14. Town Coordinator Report. Kara will advertise the open position on Highway Crew.

**SIGNED:**

1. Treasury Warrant
2. Draft Approaching Storm Ready (for review)
3. Payroll Warrant
4. Vacation Requests
5. Letter to Jeff Johnston

***On a motion by Brian DeVriese, and seconded by Bill Lattrell, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn at 9:45 p.m.***

Next meeting scheduled for 9/29/15 at 7 p.m. (All Board's Meeting).

Respectfully submitted,

Kara Leistyna  
Town Coordinator