

MEETING MINUTES
Town of Heath
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Community Hall
September 29, 2015

Called to order at 7:15 p.m. by Sheila Litchfield, with Brian DeVriese, and Bill Lattrell and Kara Leistyna, Town Coordinator present. See sign in sheet for others present – All Boards Meeting.

Reviewed Agenda: No changes.

All Boards Meeting:

Sheila Litchfield, Chair Select Board welcomed everyone and called meeting to order. Sheila provided an overview and purpose of gathering tonight. A potluck to honor retired Fire Chief, Mike Smith and Budge Litchfield was announced to occur on November 21st in Community Hall. More later. Sheila also announced that the Franklin County Tech School is seeking a municipal representative to sit in on the contract negotiations between the Administration and the Teachers union for the next three year contract (next ends in June). This involves a commitment to attend all the sessions which start in Oct. Meetings begin monthly and then every two weeks in March and April, 2-3 hour sessions. An update on fundraising efforts was provided for Friends of Jeff Aho. Town Clerk Reminders: Conflict of Interest Training (every two years) for all employees and volunteers; anyone whom has not signed appointment letters for FY16 should do so and see Hilma Sumner to get sworn in to become official.

Reports of Boards and Committees – Current Projects, Goals (3 min. update):

Assessors: Robyn Provost-Carson announced that the Assessors now have a full 3 member Board. They had their first official meeting last night that lasted nearly three hours. They reviewed budget calendar and listed target dates. They realize they have a lot to do in next month. Robyn shared that the group is energetic and hopeful to be successful. They discussed the hiring of a new Assistant Assessor - a position approved by voters at Annual Town Meeting. The Assessors would like to delay, by six months, implementing this new position due to circumstances of new members. The Board will request at the next Special Town Meeting some funds to help cover the current Administrative Asst. salary.

Board of Health: Karen Brooks reported that a new member has been appointed – Armand Clavette. Glen Ayers still serves as Health Agent. The Board is working on new ideas for the Town and ways to connect health issues in other areas e.g. Farmer’s Market. A new food policy for Heath has been set allowing residents to sell products in Heath without a certified kitchen. Well Regulations have been updated. Green Burial bylaw was approved. There are no longer blanket inspections at the Estates – more acute inspections will occur.

Agricultural Commission: Doug Mason shared that new members, Jessica Van Steensburg, Nina Marshall, and Walter Gleason have joined the Commission. The group has not met recently but would like to coordinate more with the Heath Agricultural Society to work on programs together.

Cemetery Commission: Claire Rabbitt, Commissioner for the North Cemetery, reported that the deed for the North Cemetery private portion has finally been transferred to the Town. All North Cemetery is now town – owned and people may purchase plots through the Town. Bob Viarengo, Graveyard Guild member stated that there is no one whom has come forward to lead a group to work on South Cemetery repairs. A leader is required and Bob requested publicizing the need.

Conservation Commission: Brian DeVriese offered the names of all Commission members. Currently, he serves together with Dennis Peters, Buck denOuden, Jessica Van Steensburg, Ellen Jenkins, and Bill Lattrell, Consultant. They meet as needed. Bill consults on permit applications to check site and address issues as needed. There have been no complicated issues this year.

Council on Aging: No one present.

Cultural Council: Kara offered an update. Applications for FY16 cycle are due no later than 10/15/15. This year's allocation from the Massachusetts Cultural Council is \$4,400. The Council will advertise and post a meeting no later than December 31, 2015.

Finance Committee: Don Freeman, Chair, explained three main issues of focus this year – Municipal Safety Complex Building, WiredWest/Broadband, and Regional Agreement with MTRSD. Tax rate was set at \$20.92 – a 4.8% increase. Total assessments fell 2%, educational costs rose, and new budget items were added to FY16 budget, and the winter months proved very intense causing increase in expenditures on maintenance & supplies. The Town will seek low interest borrowing for the Safety Complex and WiredWest/Broadband build-out. Heath needs one more family to hit 40% take rate and be deemed a Fiber Town. Everyone is hoping the project is on track. Town meeting voters approved \$1.269 Million for the build-out and \$4 Million for Safety Complex building. Free Cash was certified in the amount of \$168,743. This offers a buffer in case of bad winter or urgent matters. The Select Board, Finance Committee, and School Committee will be looking at the MTRSD Regional Agreement and ways it can be altered to benefit towns. Budget Planning for FY17 will begin in the next month or so. Don thanked Finance Committee members, Ned Wolf, Secretary, Town Coordinator and Select Board.

Historical Commission: Margaret Freeman, the only current member of the Commission shared that the Historic District has been extended to the Hannay's home on South Road, and to 44 Hosmer Road, and includes the Fairgrounds. Application was submitted and after a long process, it was signed. Two more members are needed to make a full Commission.

Heath Telecom: Art Schwenger said that enough Towns have signed up for WiredWest for the project to proceed, albeit carefully. Make ready work (pole inventory, etc.) is the first step and takes the longest. The entire project will take roughly 40 months. Heath is in a good position to be one of first Towns "lit up." Heath needs one more to sign up. At the Select Board's request, Kara will sign up the Heath Highway Dept. for WiredWest, making Heath hit 40% take rate and therefore, be considered a 'fiber town.'

Library Trustees: Jan Carr reported not much activity renovating library. There is a small pot of money from the Felix Frankfurter fund. They are waiting to see how space needs will change if new building is constructed that will house the police dept. Looking at ways to use the space to enhance the library experience. The group has been 'weeding' the collection to make more room. The Trustees are happy with Librarian, Don Purington and Lyra Johnson-Fuller. CW Mars will provide WiFi to patrons.

Parks & Recreation Comm. Bob Bourke, Chair, said that the group has not been very active lately. He did attend a workshop recently on grant writing to apply for funds for parks. There are stipulations in the application process but money is available. The Comm. is working together with the Heath Veteran's Memorial Comm. on ways to collaborate and receive funding for the Center Common and the Memorial project. The Town needs to revise the Open Space Plan. Yoga program is still active meeting once a week in Community Hall. The Cross Country Ski Race may be revived – organizers are needed. Trails may need work but could work together with snowmobile clubs and use same trails. A lot of planning is needed so if anyone is interested, please contact Bob. The Basketball court is well used and the Comm. is working to upgrade swing set but may be delayed due to new code compliance.

Planning Board: Calvin Carr, Chair, reported that the Town Bylaws have been reformatted thanks to Hilma Sumner. The Zoning Bylaws were cleaned up with assistance from Bob V., Jan Carr, and Kara Leistyna. There have been some requests for special permits this year and the Board is working in conjunction with Board of Health on reviewing detached access apartments.

Recycling Committee: Karen Brooks self appointed herself as Chair of this committee that has not met. Karen said that the group will meet Saturday at the Transfer Station. Karen reported that the Salvation Army box is now located at the Transfer Station and only takes textiles and single shoes. She's interested in constructing a structure on skids to be located behind the SA box and will serve to house items for reuse by residents – e.g. a Free Cycle Shed.

Energy Advisory Commission: Steve Thane and Bill Gran present. Commission will work on Green Community's Initiative. Public grants will become available to Towns with this designation. Adopting Stretch Code is one of the criteria that helps Towns qualify. Kara will email Bill with group contacts.

School Committee: Budge Litchfield and Ken Roche in attendance, as well as Art Schwenger (FC Tech School). This year the MTRSD School Committee is looking at revisions to Regional District Agreement. This is not a simple document and revisions will be a large project. One amendment has already been on warrant last May. Looking at more changes for Spring, 2016, and 2017. Items to address include clean up of agreement, remove outdated 'junk,' admission of Rowe to 7-12, transition of District to PK-12 District. All other Towns are having similar discussions. Hope to have a School Committee vote by December and be ready for ATM warrants for spring. Discussed student count at Heath School and grade configurations. Grades 1-3, 4, 5-6 will comprise blended classrooms. This is a plus for students and results in cost savings on District-wide basis. School Committee will stay close in touch with principal of school in case of further deficits. School choice numbers remain same. Discussed budget issues. Enrollment is declining in all Hilltowns. School choice creates competition with other Districts. PK has been approved and in long run will raise enrollment numbers. This change has been suggested by the Long Range Planning Board and will encourage retention. Out of \$18 Million, there is a \$400k deficit. Mohawk students performing at solid rate and improving. Discussed home schooled students. Three have returned to public school. If we can be patient, Broadband can affect housing patterns, etc. in region and may cause gradual increase in population when those services become available.

Tech. School: Art Schwenger reported that seven Heath students are attending Tech School. The school is performing very well. Capital projects are underway. Attending Tech School helps students to prepare for life after high school. Curriculum offered follows same as high school but allows for additional training in a concentrated skill area.

Town Nurse: Claire Rabbitt shared that last year the Town had to purchase flu vaccine. When it arrives, Claire will schedule a clinic. There are funds in the budget to pay for the vaccine which in the past was State funded, but this program has since been discontinued. 60 doses will be purchased for Heath. An emergency dispensing clinic will be held on 10/31, 9-12 at Hawlemont School. Open to all.

Heath Veteran's Memorial Committee: David Howland, Chair, reviewed the history of committee beginning in 2012, and listed members. They have met 8 times in 2013 working to gather names of veterans. After extensive research, they have compiled a consolidated listing of 211 people whom have served from Heath. Also, the committee is working with the Conway School of Landscape Design to design a memorial site. The committee will report to BOS in October. Larry Sampson is creating a fundraising sign to show the progress towards meeting goal. By next spring, they hope to proceed.

Fire Dept.: Ken Gilbert, new Fire Chief, shared that the department has had a surge of energy. The station has undergone a cleaning, and wives have helped set up the office space/files. Some former members have joined or said they would join. Chimney cleaning is available – call fire dept. to make

appointment. This service is free. Engine II is not functional – it is too old to get repaired. Most mechanics will not work on it due to age and this issue gets worse with time. Heath may have to rely on mutual aid in case of a structural fire. Need to upgrade electricity at station. Locks have been changes on doors. Ken shared that new regulations/codes require suppression systems for food vendors such as the Heath Fair food booth. Legislators have been contacted to try to get relief as this code creates a hardship. Ken would like to encourage people to post house numbers for emergency response. When numbers are not visible/posted, it creates unnecessary and dangerous delay in response. The dept. is always looking for volunteers. Firefighter's Assoc. welcomes everyone, even if you are not a firefighter.

Other Committees: Art Schwenger notes other committees on which he serves that people may not be aware of such as:

Community Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) – through FRCOG, a 3 year commitment;
And Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership Advisory Committee – through FRCOG, a 1 year commitment. Thank you, Art!

Municipal Safety/Highway Complex Committee:

Status: funding for Municipal Building: Bob Bourke, Chair of Committee, explained to attendees that the Commonwealth of MA terminated the contract between Heath and the ANF/Commonwealth of MA even though we had a signed contract. The committee and Select Board are pursuing strategies to restore funds. One is to raise the profile of the problem in the press, perhaps including other Towns that have had similar funding loss. They are working with legislators and perhaps a PR firm or lobbyist who will work on Heath's behalf. A PR firm will help make inroads to Administration to make us more visible on State level. A public records' request has been made and we are awaiting a response. Trying to get Heath's project on next budget cycle. Still going to pursue property purchase as it is an ideal location. Property owner is drafting a deed for review by Town. At same time, will try to sell Bray Road property to off-set cost of new property. Will persist in trying to get funding restored. Have met with legislators, and John Robertson from MA Municipal Assoc. Best we can hope for is to get money reallocated, or a new grant issued similar to what we had. Certainly time is of the essence as with each delay, costs increase. These matters will be added to next Special Town Meeting warrant.

Budget Planning Calendar and due date for committees and departments: Bill Lattrell reviewed budget calendar and target dates. This structured schedule helps everyone to stay on track in an effort to get forms completed and submitted and tax rate set, as well as be as efficient as possible in planning budget and preparing for Town Meeting.

Thank you to all for your attendance tonight.

Other Business:

- **Schedule:** Board will meet weekly going forward: Oct. 6, 13, 20. No meeting on 27th. November 10, 17. No meeting on Nov. 3 (Election Day).
- **Highway Matters:** Top coat on Dell Road was not included in contract. Will be okay and addressed next year. Need to meet with superintendent after six months to review progress on GED.
- **Community Compact:** Kara will meet with Phoebe Walker for clarification on program.
- **Highway Laborer position:** Four applications have been submitted. BOS will conduct interviews with Mike Shattuck on Oct. 13, 2015.
- **Highway Superintendent Position:** Discussed pay rate for Mike Shattuck. *On a motion by Brian DeVriese, and seconded by Bill Lattrell, the Board of Selectmen voted unanimously to pay highway superintendent in FY16 at an hourly rate of \$20.17 with a review by December 15, 2015.*

- **Work on Sawyer Hall:** *On a motion by Bill Lattrell, and seconded by Brian DeVriese, the Board voted unanimously to hire Justin Lively to complete work on Sawyer Hall to repair roof and install ice shields – aluminum snow belt at a cost of no more than \$6,200.*
- **WiredWest:** The Board authorized Kara Leistyna to sign up the Heath Highway Dept. to join WiredWest. Cost of sign up shall come from Board of Selectmen Operating Expenses. This will bring Heath over 40% threshold and make Heath a Fiber Town.
- **Landfill:** Annual well sampling is due per MA DEP rules. Kara will ask Bill Hoyerman of CHA for price and schedule.
- **Special Town Meeting:** Land purchase, Disposition of Bray Road property, Assessor's Administrative Asst. salary, Fire Dept. vehicle purchase, and some prior year invoices are issues to address on warrant so far. More planning will occur.
- **Fire Dept. Vehicle:** *On a motion by Brian DeVriese, and seconded by Bill Lattrell, the Board voted unanimously to authorize Ken Gilbert, Fire Chief to purchase a fire dept. vehicle in the amount of \$7,545 to come from Highway Dept. Vehicle/Maintenance account and an extra \$1,000 to equip for emergency in the amount of \$1,000 to be paid from Fire Dept. Supplies/Training.*
- **Dog Matter/Safety at Sawyer Hall:** Margo Newton, Chief, will attend hearing. Bill will reach out to her to see if Town Counsel should be present.
- **Appointments:** *On a motion by Brian DeVriese, and seconded by Bill Lattrell, the Board voted unanimously to appoint David Travers to serve as Heath Representative to the FRCOG Planning Board in FY16. Also, On a motion by Brian DeVriese, and seconded by Bill Lattrell, the Board voted unanimously to appoint Walter Gleason to serve on Agricultural Commission in FY16.*

Mail/ Email:

1. Email from Sheila re: Highway Supt. hourly rate (1 page)
2. Email update from Mark Reich re: Public Records Request (5 pages)
3. Two estimates for work from Justin Lively (4 pages)
4. Email notice from Phoebe Walker, Annual CPHS Meeting Save the Date (1 page)
5. MTRSD School Comm. meeting, Nov. 18, 7 p.m. (1 page)
6. Free Cash Certification, \$168,743 (2 pages)
7. Email from Sharon Fleck – re: Broadband (2 pages). Kara will respond that Heath is interested in finding out more about shared expenses for broadband project.
8. Info. from BOH regarding Community Health (6 pages)
9. Email from Ken Gilbert re: new vehicle (2 pages)
10. Email update on Landfill monitoring (1 page)
11. Emails re: Safety in Sawyer Hall (6 pages)
12. MEMA announcements – Emergency Preparedness Month (7 pages). Add to website.
13. Email from David Travers re: Safety Complex (1 page)

Other Separate Documents:

14. Town Coordinator Report
15. Highway Laborer applications
16. Invoices for Highway Bathroom/Water problem

SIGNED:

1. Treasury Warrant
2. Payroll Warrant
3. Mileage Reimbursement Request
4. Vacation Request

On a motion by Brian DeVriese, and seconded by Bill Lattrell, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn at 10:14 p.m.

Next meeting scheduled for 10/6/15 at 7 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kara Leistyna
Town Coordinator