

Town of Hawley
8 Pudding Hollow Road
Hawley, MA 01339
(413) 339-5518

Town of Hawley, Massachusetts
Minutes of Selectmen's Meeting – April 5, 2016

Present: John Sears, Bob Maclean– Board
Cass Nawrocki – Administrative Assistant
Virginia Gabert, Pam Shrimpton, Chris Tirone, Lark Thwing, Wendy Ferris, Greg Cox, Hussain Hamdan, Rick Keene, Bob O'Connor, Peggy Sloan, Lloyd Crawford, Melanie Poudrier.

The meeting was called to order at 7:33 p.m.

- **Review and signing of treasury warrant.**
- **Review and acceptance of prior meeting minutes.** None.
- **Peggy Sloan (FRCOG) and Bob O'Connor (EOEEA) to present on the recommendations of the Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership Plan recently completed and discuss next steps for the project** – Peggy gave an update on the program, giving the Town a copy of the Advisory Group's Plan. Outreach to the various communities has yielded that most interest is for economic development. FRCOG wanted the process to be community driven. Advisory group is very broad in scope. Plan has been produced by the Adv. Group (given to the SB). The Partnership will be looking for \$20 m from US Forestry and \$5 m from the state – which will go into a trust fund, the income from which would sustain the Woodlands Partnership. Greg Cox, Hawley's representative to the Advisory Group, said that Hawley is most interested in the economic development component of the plan. Bob O'Connor said that he has been updating the US Forest Service as the plan has developed and the Forest Service is enthusiastic about it. Peggy would appreciate a letter of support for the project to the State Legislature. John expressed frustration at DCR's lack of response to its responsibilities for their existing woodlands property and asked Peggy what role DCR might have in the Woodlands Partnership.
- **High Speed Internet warrant article (\$150k).** Lark withdrew the article because he thinks it is premature to go to Town Meeting with it at this point.
- **Cemeteries in Town – Kevin Richardson and Melanie Poudrier.** – Chris Tirone attended in Kevin's stead to represent the interest of veterans. Melanie said some of the cemeteries are in bad shape - Doane and Brynne, particularly. Kevin and Chris are concerned about the veterans' graves. Mowing is done regularly, but other maintenance of shrubbery and stones is mostly nonexistent. A number of resources that could be helpful were suggested: Nancy Garvin, Ashfield Historical; Hawley Historical

Commission, Mohawk Trail Schools, Jerry McCarthy (who manages a cemetery on Long Island).. At Melanie's suggestion the selectboard authorized a work party to clean up Doane cemetery. It will be publicized on the town website and by e-mail.

- **DCR proposed land purchase in the State Forest.** - Some previous discussion regarding this issue in Item 3. SB signed a strong letter of concern to DCR drafted by Greg Cox. John said that the owners are aware that the state wants to purchase the land. Access to the state forest for emergency vehicles remains a primary problem from the town's viewpoint. Hussain suggested a copy of the letter be sent to the *Recorder* reporter Diane Broncaccio.
- **Stretch Code: Town Meeting Warrant / Informational Meeting.** – Lloyd explained that the Planning Board has been working to put the adoption of the stretch code on the warrant for the town meeting. It is a stricter code for new construction or major renovations/additions. The town must pass it in order to be eligible to become a Green Community. There will be a 4/13 public meeting with Jim Barry, regional Green Communities program representative, coming to explain what adopting the stretch code will mean for the town.
- **Next Selectboard Meeting** – Bob is to be away 4/19, so due to no quorum, need a new date. Will be 4/26 instead. Virginia asked that the SB sign the payroll warrant on 4/15. Discussed also overdrawn accounts – SB ok'd articles on the warrant for the transfer of the funds.
- **School District Warrant Articles** - Discussion of three major articles and how to present at Town Meeting. Hussain expressed concern that these had potential of much confusion and discussing them at town meeting might be a very long process. He floated the idea of a special town meeting later on instead. The selectboard agree that a safety valve idea would be the best approach. If debate dragged on, the moderator could elect to continue the meeting to a later date if necessary. The informational meeting on the school warrant articles was helpful and materials will be available before and on Election Day, on the town website, etc. John will contact Town Counsel [Cass: a council is a meeting; a counsel is a lawyer] re wording.
- **School Budget Update** – Lark says 14% higher, but not a problem for the overall budget.
- **Mohawk “BEST” Committee (formerly the Strategic Planning Committee)** – Lark reported that 4 meetings thus far. Have been reviewing facilities and finance, made recommendations to the Superintendent and School Committee. Several possible planning scenarios have emerged.

Hussain shared that Hawlemont needs more data regarding rejoining the District and possibly merging Hawlemont with another elementary school.

- **Personnel Committee/ Highway Superintendent Position** – Rick provided a draft of the job description – Bob moved to adopt, John seconded, vote unanimous. Position needs to be posted.
- **Communication Committee** – Lark reported that Hybrid Wireless meetings are coming up. Asked that Pamela Shrimpton be made a full regular member of the Committee, not just an alternate – she’s a valuable member. SB ok’d the CC to become a 6 person Committee.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:35 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Cass Nawrocki, Administrative Assistant

Minutes accepted by Board of Selectmen:

John Sears

vacant

Robert MacLean

Appendix A - Relevant documents:

- Mohawk Trail Woodland Partnership 2014-2015, with Appendices (FRCOG)
- Selectboard letter to Governor Baker and Lieutenant Governor Polito regarding Proposed State Land Purchase on Middle Road
- Job Description – Highway Superintendent