

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

Town of Hawley, Massachusetts
Minutes of Selectmen's Meeting – August 9, 2016

Present: John Sears, Bob MacLean, Hussain Hamdan– Board
Cass Nawrocki – Administrative Assistant
Virginia Gabert, Pam Shrimpton, Chris Tirone, Courtney Hoyt, Brendan Dekoschak, Bart Bales, Tom Carter, Henry Eggert, Lloyd Crawford.

The meeting was called to order at 7:34 p.m.

- 1. Review and signing of treasury warrant.** There was discussion regarding a \$3000 bill submitted by Brendan for the Highway Department which seemed excessive for what was itemized. Brendan will provide the Board with more details on what was ordered (oil, filters, hydraulic fluid, etc.). The Board assented for the bill to be paid.
- 2. Review and acceptance of prior meeting minutes.** 6/28/16 Executive Session & 7/27/16 - both accepted and signed.
- 3. Letter from Northampton Cycling Club asking for feedback from the recent road race.** Courtney and several others were concerned about how the riders did not move over enough to be safe especially on curves. Cass will draft a letter to the Club about this concern.
- 4. Letter from the Franklin Regional Planning Board,** looking for a representative from Hawley to be designated. Lloyd has attended some meetings and assented to be the representative, with John as the alternate.
- 5. Preferred vocation tech school follow-up.** Revisiting this issue, Hussain moved that Franklin Tech School be designated as Hawley's preferred vocational school, with John seconding, and all passing. Hussain provided clarification to Courtney regarding the history and reasoning behind this designation; that this would give the superintendent the power to save the town transportation money if it were possible, while ensuring that a student can still get the program of study he or she requests.
- 6. Report on Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) Commissioner Roy's visit to Hawley.** John reported on Commissioner Roy's visit to discuss the repair of Middle and Hunt roads in the State Forest and he has drafted a letter in response, which he shared. The town is especially concerned about having a direct route across town and

emergency access to the State Forest in case of accidents. Roy said that Hawley's road repair through the state forest is but one project of many on a deferred maintenance list which totals over a billion dollars. There may be ways to move up on the list, namely by the town agreeing to the sale of the Randall property (the property pending sale to the state), perhaps in exchange for a piece of DCR land that could then be taxed in place of the Randall property; Hawley agreeing to maintain the roads once adequate repairs had been made, perhaps with some form of monetary compensation; and DCR finding a less expensive way to repair the washed out bridge on Middle Road. Brendan stated that the road crew could likely handle maintenance once the roads were initially repaired. A land transfer from the State to the town would need special legislation. Roy also spoke about the creation of a local group to work with DCR on planning, mapping, and marking mountain bike trails in the state forest to minimize environmental damage and intrusion to private property. The Hawley Selectboard supports this proposal.

7. Highway Issues. Hussain stated that the town only has one gas vehicle at this point, yet has two large tanks, one for diesel, one for gas. It might be preferable down the road to switch to one large diesel tank, use the small tank also for diesel, and get another small tank for gas. Possibly also a credit card could be utilized. There have also been additional security concerns at the garage – a week ago someone tried to take the new dump truck. The town shed door was found ajar on the same day. Brendan has purchased the security system and it is partly installed. Hussain suggested that Brendan's brother does mowing, but after discussion, at this point the Board is electing to leave the mowing procedures and people as is.

8. Bart Bales presentation of the Energy Audit Report. Mr. Bales of Bales Energy Associates began by stating that a solar array on town owned land would likely be too expensive. He then outlined the major proposed improvements for the three buildings outlined in the Report which he had emailed to Lloyd.

- a. Town Office – a heat pump system replacing the existing system would be more efficient. A condensing unit heater is another possibility. Building improvements are to add R60 insulation above the ceiling and along the edges of the cement slab outside.
- b. Fire Station – the limit with this building is that the trucks cannot get too cold due to the hoses freezing up if they are called out to a fire in winter. Improvements would be to cap the attic, increasing the insulation with R60 and also insulate the floor of the knee wall. The hatch to the attic needs a better seal with airseal, the hole in the floor

should be sealed, repair weather stripping throughout. Lastly replace the existing propane unit with a condensing propane unit – going from 70% to a 90+% efficiency.

- c. Town Garage – The garage has radiant floor heating which is good, but it is slow to react. The existing boiler should be replaced with an air sourced condensing boiler which is more efficient and would last 30 years. A concern is the dripping from the I beams in the ceiling which would get insulation wet, if it were installed. More thought is needed on this. Lighting has already been taken care of by the electric company. The rear side of the building has been exposed due to the water damage from years ago and the dirt needs to be replaced with some insulation factor.

Lloyd had found several errors in the report, which he will address with Bart at another time. Lloyd stated that he needs to know that the 20% energy improvements will be met. The highest priority is replacement of the heaters and Lloyd would like the costs in the report to be separated into different projects. Lloyd stated that window replacement is desirable, but Bart explained that the program has not paid for that in other towns and thus the payback would be very long for the town. Lloyd is concerned that Hawley won't be able to use all the money; Bart stated that the money could be used for a solar array, but it would not count toward the 20% energy reduction. While Lloyd voiced concern about meeting the October 31 deadline for Green Communities, Bart stated that the plan, once submitted, can be reworked as time goes on and that the time frame seems doable to him. Bart will aim to have the report finalized by the second week in September.

- 9. Police Chief position.** Tom Carter, Ashfield Select board chair, explained that he is exploring with neighboring towns the plausibility and interest in a regional policing program. He has already reached out to Plainfield. The Police Chief in Ashfield is leaving and it is a good time to reassess needs. The towns are all very different in their needs and a workgroup with a member from each Selectboard might develop a workable structure and a fair and doable cost apportionment. Hussain is willing to be the Hawley representative to this workgroup, but it was agreed to continue looking into other options. The police budget in Hawley is small and needs to be reexamined – the police line item has not been looked at for a while.

- 10. Report on the Commercial Scale Wood Heat & Air Quality Impacts program in July.** John attended this program at which Peggy Sloan from Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG) arranged for experts to present information. It is a known that wood pellet combustion does

produce more particulates, but not significantly more. Additional studies are needed. It is a complex issue which depends on the location of the wood heat, other sources of pollution, etc. The pellet boiler is being installed in the Hawlemont School this summer. Bart Bales of Bales Energy Associates spoke to the issue, stating that pellet combustion does produce more particulates than oil does. He recommended that the whole community develop a comprehensive policy if there is strong concern about air quality issues.

11. Any other business not reasonably anticipated prior to posting this agenda.

- a. Crack sealant for roads.** Brendan has learned about crack sealant, from Art Baker from Seal Coating, which could be done for \$5-7 thousand/per mile (or by the day) and would extend the life of the roads. Discussion suggested that the cost is prohibitive without knowing the benefits – John suggested that perhaps one stretch of road could be done and then tracked. A presentation to the Board would be good and Brendan will follow up with Art to come to a future Selectboard meeting to discuss. Discussion regarding the Highway budget status – Virginia will provide the Board with a more specific historical breakdown. Hussain stated that FRCOG has been in touch with Brendan regarding the traffic counter, so that is in the works.
- b. Scam alert.** Hussain stated that an IRS scam has been frequenting residents (including himself) and that he reported this. Cass has included the warning of the scam in the e-newsletter and it is also on the website. The supposed IRS calls and asks for information – Hussain clarified that the IRS never calls on the telephone.
- c. Community Compact Information Technology grant & picnic table.** Cass stated that expending funds is now fine for this grant, so Brendan can proceed to purchase a computer and satellite system. Cass explained that a picnic table for people to sit at outside has been offered to the Town Office by Jody Coffey. It needs a little wire brushing, but is solid. Hussain offered to do the work, perhaps even paint or stain it. The Board approved this acquisition and the Highway Department will pick it up.
- d. Garage Bank Stabilization project.** Lloyd will post the Conservation Commission meeting for Friday to continue the hearing on this project. There have been so many delays and it is a complex and fussy project – he wants it to be successful.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Cass Nawrocki, Administrative Assistant

Minutes accepted by Board of Selectmen:

John Sears

Hussain Hamdan

Robert MacLean

Appendix A - Relevant documents: