

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

Town of Hawley, Massachusetts

Minutes of a Selectboard / Board of Health / Zoning Board of Appeals I Meeting

December 26, 2018

Present: Hussain Hamdan, Bob Root, Sarah (Sally) Rich – Selectboard
Cass Nawrocki – Administrative Assistant
Virginia Gabert, Pam Shrimpton, Chris Tirone, Gary Mitchell, Bob Maclean, Brendan Dekoschak, Mike Schofield, Mike Poirier, Joe Foster, Henry (Hank) Eggert, Jane Grant, Christine Hicks, Shawn Billings.

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm.

- 1. Review and signing of treasury warrant.**
- 2. Review and acceptance of prior meeting minutes.** 10/23/18 & 10/30/18 meeting minutes reviewed and approved.
- 3. Special Town Meeting followup, if necessary.** Virginia presented the results of the Special Town Meeting, which voted in favor of purchasing a new truck using \$80,000 from Highway Stabilization, \$50,000 from General Stabilization, and \$50,000 from Free Cash. Gary has done due diligence and stated that under the circumstances he feels that this particular deal is the best at \$174,800 (which excludes the right front plow airbag). Sally moved to accept this bid as presented, with the revision excluding the airbag; Bob seconded; all in favor.
- 4. Massworks Grant / 8A ‘slump’ area update.** Virginia and Hussain have sent a letter, which Hussain read aloud, to Secretary of Housing and Economic Development Ash, for additional funding for the 8A/West Hawley Rd. MassWorks project. The engineer’s cost estimate (\$600,000) has exceeded the MassWorks grant award of \$466,900. Secretary Ash is in the process of leaving his post, so that may affect response – Cass will follow up shortly. The Board may also contact our legislators.
- 5. Mass Municipal Association (MMA) Legislative package regarding the administration of the Veterans Chapter 115 benefit.** Referred to a future meeting.
- 6. Heath Selectboard letter regarding pursuing a solar array on the Tri-Town Landfill site.** Hussain read a letter received from the landfill site’s prior landowner, Connie Burrington, in answer to a Heath Selectboard query to her regarding the possibility of installing solar panels on

the site to defray costs. She claims her land transfer for the Landfill stipulated keeping the land free from development. Discussion regarding possible deed restrictions – Hussain asked Virginia to look up the deed and her search online discovered that the June 30, 2005 deed states that the land must be kept and preserved “in an open condition”. This would appear to preclude a solar field. Hussain stated that, in light of this information, this is now a discussion between Heath and the landowner; it’s not a Hawley problem.

7. **Emergency Services: Search & Rescue Project update; appointment of specially qualified non-resident(s) to Fire Dept/Emergency Services in a limited role; EMT Training – discussion.** Hussain discussed factors that have led to Hawley launching a Search and Rescue team, among them regular emergencies in the state forest which are likely to increase as recreation there becomes more popular, and an increased trend toward regionalization in the emergency services. In this atmosphere, specialization is what will enable local departments to maintain viability and remain attractive for grant funding. Northfield has a dive team; Colrain has a RIT team; etc. Likewise, a Search and Rescue Unit in Hawley would both respond to local needs and fill an important niche in mutual aid; which in turn would hopefully enhance Hawley’s standing in terms of seeking emergency services related grants. Two more Hawley residents, Shawn Billings (an EMT) and Jeremiah Jones were appointed to the Fire Department; they will serve on the Search and Rescue Unit. (A third individual, Ryan Crochitere was also formally appointed to the Department; he is already on it, but that certificate had not been signed at the last meeting). Hussain also presented a memo to the Board requesting the appointment of two additional non-residents to the Fire Department in a limited capacity as members of the Search and Rescue Unit. These individuals are Joseph Foster of Florida, MA and Brendan Dekoschak, of Readsboro, VT. Both have special skills that will be useful in the Search and Rescue context, including prior experience in the military, and both already have close connections to Hawley. The Board agreed and Bob so moved to appoint these two to the Department; Sally seconded; all in favor. There should be little up front cost to the Town for the S&R Unit in terms of equipment. Hussain hopes to pursue public safety grants to support acquisitions. Various surplus programs can also provide a lot of equipment. Storage should not be much of an issue either, as team members will keep much of their gear with them to allow for more rapid deployment. Hussain will be taking the training to become an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) funding to be provided by the Town. This was approved by the Select Board with Hussain abstaining. Discussion was had about the correct procedure for funding EMT appointments: up front or based on successful completion. Consensus that anybody to be funded by the Town should either be affiliated with the Fire Department, or have been vetted by them and agreed to become affiliated therewith.
8. **Special Permit bylaw study group.** Hussain spoke with Peter Purdy about the group and Peter is willing to be a part of it. This effort will commence in a month or so.
9. **Any other business not reasonably anticipated prior to posting this agenda.**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:35 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Cass Nawrocki, Administrative Assistant

Minutes accepted by Selectboard:

Hussain Hamdan

Robert Root

Sarah Rich

Appendix A - Relevant documents:

- Letter dated 12/18/19 to the state, Secretary of Housing and Economic Development Ash, requesting additional funds to supplement a 2018 MassWorks grant to fix a portion of Route 8A/West Hawley Road.
- Memo dated 12/26/18 from Hussain Hamdan to the Board and Greg Cox regarding Search and Rescue Unit / Special Appointment of Certain Non-Residents to Hawley Fire Department.
- Updated Firefighter Appointment List, 12/26/2018.
- Letter dated 12/13/18 from Connie Burrington regarding a potential solar field on the former Tri-Town Landfill site.