

TOWN OF MONSON

"A town where friendliness is more than just a word"

February 8, 2024 – Select Board Meeting

Present – Jonanathan Pullen, Sue Chase, JD Walker, Marti Gagnon, Aaron Suomi, Bill Macdonald, Marti Gagnon, Brian Turner, Sandra Hardy, John Wentworth, Morgan Mareglia, Gabrielle Huettner

ZOOM: Kent Rich

- 1) Meeting opened at 6:15 PM
- 2) Selectboard signs warrants and approves previous meeting minutes

PUBLIC COMMENT

Aaron Suomi asked about the status of the Comprehensive Plan. Bill said he has not heard anything from the state yet, but he will follow up with them.

TOWN MANAGER REPORT

Sue asked about the status of the fire department budget. Bill stated the payroll is at 100% but the rest of the budget is on track.

The EV charger has been installed and activated. There have been 2 customers so far and charges are taking 1.5 – 2 hours. A link to the chargers will be posted.

The Appeals Board met and ruled on the Monson Pond light issue. The board upheld the CEOs decision.

There have been several plowing issues and complaints, but they have mostly been resolved. MMA strongly discourages the Fire Department from pumping basements unless it is a toned out human health and safety matter. JD and Sue agree there should be a policy in place. Bill has submitted the reimbursement form for the December storm.

Morgan asked if flooded basements are a health and safety matter for the residents if there is electricity involved. JD stated there should be no risk unless someone is standing in the water. Sue asked if some of the Resiliency money can be used to recoup some of the costs from the storm and to help residents set up pumps, drainage, etc. Bill feels that some of the money could be used for those purposes.

Brian stated that years ago the Fire Department was not allowed to go near a flooded basement with power. CMP used to offer safety training.

The Fire Truck Committee has met twice, and people are beginning to sign up for the Budget Committee. The auditors will be on site on 2/22 to work on the 21/22 audit and the 22/23 audit should be done by the end of budget season.

SELECTBOARD REPORTS

Sue inquired about the following:

207 Overland - Marti stated they are not going to hold their annual meet this year and they may reach out again in the future. Sue also noted that she has put together a Fire Department call spreadsheet and only needs December 2023 information to have a complete picture. Marti will get the info from Giovanni.

96 Tenney Hill Rd – No deed information was found that would indicate that the property has been foreclosed. The Selectboard would like to know what the next steps will be to move forward with the dangerous building procedure.

April 8 solar eclipse – Bill stated the Collaborative group is brainstorming ideas to promote local businesses during the event. They are considering having t-shirts and glasses made and Bill has ordered 4 porta-potties. Jonathan expressed concern that the school busses will be coming through town just as the eclipse is happening which might create safety and traffic issues. Jonathan will speak to James about it since he is a member of the School Board.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Beautification Committee: No report.

Recreation Committee: Morgan stated the Rec. Committee will be hosting an Open Gym for teens and adults next Wednesday and a movie night for kids on February 24. They will also have an Open Gym for kids on Mondays from 12:30 – 2. The committee will be meeting on the third Tuesdays of the month.

OLD BUSINESS

CEO Report: Bill submitted the CEO report. JD stated the report does not provide any of the information the Board is looking for and is therefore unacceptable. The reports are supposed to track specific cases and provide information on actions taken, timelines, etc. He would like to see something better for the next meeting. Sue forwarded Bill some templates for CEO reports that are used by other towns.

NEW BUSINESS

Sign Selectboard Documents: Sue Chase motioned to approve the Spring Creek BBQ liquor license renewal, seconded by JD Walker. Vote 3 – 0.

Sue Chase motioned to appoint Daina Markella as Alternate Planning Board member, seconded by JD Walker. Vote 3 – 0

The Selectboard also signed appointments for Ballot Clerks/Election Warden, 2 Tree Growth Penalties, and the Assessors Return from the county.

Consider Authorizing Administrative Renewals, by the Town Manager and/or Town Clerk for On-Premise Liquor Licenses Without Issues: Bill stated that the State Liquor Agent recommends this authorization to expedite liquor license renewals. Part of the renewal process will be to contact Liquor Control and the Sheriff's Department to make sure there are no issues. New licenses and renewals with issues will still be brought to the Selectboard for approval. JD Walker motioned to authorize the Town Manager and/or Town Clerk to authorize the renewal of liquor licenses with no issues, seconded by Sue Chase. Vote 3 – 0.

Consider Setting a Special Selectboard Meeting on February 22 for the Purpose of Appointing Budget Committee Members: JD Walker motioned to set a Special Selectboard Meeting on February 22, seconded by Sue Chase. Vote 3 – 0.

Consider a Warrant for a Special Town Meeting to Consider Authorizing Funding for the Purchase of a Used Fire Truck: JD noted that the Fire Truck Committee has met several times. The group has established a need for a truck and the Fire Department has been tasked with submitting criteria for the truck and there have been 3 finance options submitted by the bank. JD then read aloud the proposed warrant. Aaron Suomi asked if a new fire truck will fit in the station. JD stated the market will not have a truck that will fit in the station and there will have to be some juggling things around in order to store the truck. That subject will be a separate matter for the town to resolve. The Selectboard and the Town Manager will have to determine a solution and all town employees will be part of the discussion. Brian Turner noted that, in the past, Public Works had to park their equipment outside to accommodate the Fire Department. Bill stated that Public Works needs and will have 2 bays in the garage. JD said that Bill will need to present short term and long-term strategies to address the issue. The committee is working hard to try to be prepared for the Town Meeting and has forecasted some of the questions that may be asked. The time for the meeting was changed from 5:30 to 6:00 and the venue was changed from the meeting room to the gym to accommodate a larger turn-out. Sue Chase motioned to accept the Special Town Meeting Warrant, seconded by JD Walker. Vote: 3 – 0.

Gabrielle asked who will go to look at a truck if one becomes available. Bill said that probably only the Fire Department will go. Gabrielle then asked if they will be able to negotiate. JD stated that all financials must pass through the Town Manager. He also noted that the Fire

Department will not be flying anywhere to look at a truck unless they are pretty certain they will be leaving with the truck. The process will need to have a deliberate approach. Ryan, Chuck and Giovanni have been part of all the discussions surrounding the process. JD and Bill will be the only purchasing agents/negotiators. Further discussion was put off until after the Town Meeting.

Meeting moved to Executive Session for 1 MRSA § 405 (6) (A)- Personnel Matters at 7:50 pm.