

TOWN OF MONSON

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

August 10, 2023 – Select Board Meeting

Present –Tyler Adkins, JD Walker, Sue Chase, Bill MacDonald, Marti Gagnon, Ryan Laplante, Chuck Beane, Gunnar Ranta, Giovanni Lauro, Gabrielle Huettner, Bryan Alchorn, Tim Bueschen, James Pullen, Jonathan Pullen, Devenee Thomas, Kim LaBlanc, Gloria Sears, Sandra Hardy, Brian Turner, Terry Gaudet, Aaron Suomi

Zoom: Sheila Grant, Heather

- 1) Meeting opened at 6:00 PM
- 2) Selectboard approves prior meeting minutes and signs warrants

The selectboard VOTED 3 – 0 to add the Quarry liquor license renewal to the agenda.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Kim Lablanc expressed concern about the speed of traffic on the North Guilford Road and noted she has been waiting for 2 years for something to be done. Tyler explained that Gorrill Palmer is conducting an assessment of the downtown area, which includes solutions to speed issues on the North Guilford Road. They have suggested some initial improvements, such as seasonal speed bumps or markings. There are long- term solutions being considered as well. They will review the matter further and provide feedback. Sue stated that DOT mentioned temporary measures as well. Bill will follow up with DOT and try to get something in place right away. Tyler will report back at the next meeting.

Kim expressed further concern about the fence by the stream at the playground. She would like a stronger fence installed as she feels the existing snow fence does not provide enough safety.

TOWN MANGER REPORT

Bill provided updates on the following:

Roadside mowing will be done next week.

Gravel work on the Elliotsville Road and Pleasant Street has been completed. The repair work on Elliotsville Road will need to be paved. Bill will put the project out to bid.

The AED for the gym has been shipped.

Bill and Alaina are working on the GIS mapping updates.

The EV chargers will cost about \$300 more than budgeted. Bill will be coordinating with vendors and contractors to get the chargers installed.
Animal Control has been dealing with sheep issues on Elliotsville Road.

SELECTBOARD REPORTS

Sue Inquired about the next steps in the Community Resilience Grant and the status of cell phone service in Monson. Bill is waiting for notification on the grants and expects it to possibly be later in the fall. He is working on possibilities for cell phone service. Sue requested that the Selectboard not lose sight of the ATV road policies.

Tyler asked if there are any updates on the WiFi pole license. Bill is still waiting to hear back from Axiom about which poles would work best.

TOWN COMMITTEE REPORTS

BEAUTIFICATION COMMITTEE: No Report

RECREATION COMMITTEE: The beach has been repaired and the new float is in the water. The committee is still working on a changing room. The committee will start meeting again soon and finish organizing the gym basement.

OLD BUSINESS

- A. Consider certifying language for the September 14, 2023, Special Town Meeting warrant, to be described as “Shall the Town vote to approve an Amendment to the Town of Monson Land Use Ordinance, Section 5, Rural Residential District (RRD) Dimensional Requirement.:** The Selectboard reviewed the language. Tyler Adkins motioned to accept the language, seconded by Sue Chase. Vote: 3 – 0.

- B. Consider Fire Department grant and planning opportunities:** Ryan Laplante presented the capital plan for the Fire Department and explained the needs of the department. Tyler thanked Ryan and stated the Selectboard will review the plan and further discussion will be had at the next meeting. Bill explained there are grant opportunities and requested authorization to pursue them. Weyerhauser is a potential opportunity, as well as Nestle, Poland Springs and Blue Triton. There is also the FEMA Assistance to Firefighters grant which has a possible deadline of October 10. Bill would like authorization to pursue these opportunities, so he is ready when applications open up. Bill also requested authorization to accept an ATV from Weyerhauser on behalf of the Fire Department.

- C. **Consider advancing the Comprehensive Plan.** Bill noted that the Comprehensive Plan is a guiding document and is required for qualifying for grants. The plan needs to be finished as soon as possible. Jonathan Pullen stated that Dean Bennett provided a copy, including maps, to the town. Bill will try to locate the copy and send it to the state. If the copy is not located, he will reach out to Dean and see if he can provide another copy.

- D. **Consider a review and updates for the Rules of Order for Monson Select Board Meetings.** The Selectboard will review the document and determine if any changes need to be made.

NEW BUSINESS

- A. **Consider setting the tax commitment.** Bill presented the two options for the mill rate. One option was 18.45, the other was 18.5 which would add more money to overlay and potentially leave a little extra to return to surplus, rather than take the chance of having to take additional money from surplus. The Selectboard voted 3 – 0 to set the mill rate at 18.5, leaving a balance of \$32,851.13 in overlay.

- B. **Consider an expenditure of \$10,000 from the Road Improvement Reserve for the Elliottsville Road and Pleasant Street repairs previously authorized.** Tyler Adkins motioned to approve the expenditure, seconded by Sue Chase. Vote: 3 – 0

- C. **Consider authorizing auction sales for the old town beach float and the old town truck.** Bill would like to put signs on the float and truck to auction them off. Brian Turner suggested having them appraised first. Tyler Adkins motioned to authorize the auction sales of the equipment, seconded by JD Walker. Vote 3 – 0. Deadline for bids will be August 31, 2023.

- D. **Consider a welcome to Monson letter of support as a general invitation to veteran Jeff Lewis develop a business in Monson as he develops a business plan and funding.** Bill explained that Jeff Lewis is interested in purchasing a Pleasant Street property and opening a Hiker Hostel. He requested a letter of support from the town to submit with his business plan and funding requests. Bill will draft a letter and the Selectboard will review it at the next meeting.

- E. **Authorize possible applications for various grants.** Tyler stated he would like to be very specific about what the Selectboard is authorizing. Authorization was granted for researching opportunities, but the Selectboard would like to review the applications before they are submitted. Bill explained that Nestle and Poland Springs have water donation grants and the Fire Department has been requesting that an application be submitted. The Selectboard voted 3 – 0 to authorize Bill to pursue the water donation.

The Selectboard voted 3 – 0 to add the ATV donation to the agenda. Tyler Adkins motioned to accept the donation of an ATV from Weyerhaeuser for the Fire Department, seconded by JD Walker. Vote: 3 – 0. All future grants will be added to the meeting agendas.

The Selectboard signed the Quarry liquor license renewal.

Bill presented a draft moratorium on junk yards for consideration at the upcoming Special Town Meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 8:20 pm.