

Town of Brimfield
Board of Selectmen
Town Hall, 21 Main Street
Meeting Minutes – November 27, 2017

Present: Chair; Michael Miller, Vice Chair; Harold Leaming, member; Paul McCarthy, member; Paul Vandal, member; Michele-Lee Shea, recording; Carol Camerota

Others: Police Chief Kuss,; Accountant; Marie Arsenault, Clerk & Assessor; Robert Sullivan, Assessor; Cynthia Powers, Health; Richard Costa, Fire Chief; Brendan McCarthy, COA; Eva Pittsinger, Robert Corry, Mark Connors, Pam Engberg, Maria Thomson, Daniel Camerota and attached list of additional supporters for the Friends of the Sr. Center.

Cable recording: Bob Datz

6:15 p.m. Continue Joint hearing with Board of Assessors:

Board of Assessor, Robert Sullivan and Cynthia Powers were in attendance to continue the joint tax classification hearing from November 13th. The Chair, Carolyn Haley was unable to attend. (Miller) thanked R. Sullivan, C. Poirier and M. Arsenault for their assistance this past week with going on Gateway the DOR's website. He spoke with a representative from DOR and was told that now everything is processed within 24 hours after approval on line. (Leaming) mentioned that the former Tax Collector had an approval as late as Dec. 21st. Setting the tax rate and discussing the revenues is the right of the Selectmen. (Miller) questioned why the numbers had increased since the middle of November. Arsenault replied that budget reports were revised at the last annual town meeting. Review of ATM Warrant Articles and funds from other revenue sources totaled \$468,766. After revisions were complete changes made to other revenue sources does not change the tax rate. The Board and Accountant discussed the process. (Leaming) was concerned about the 4% increase to tax payers. (Miller) said the overall budget was up from last year and the taxes have not gone down. Arsenault reminded them that the receipts and revenues are always changing and it's difficult to compare one year to another. She explained that towns can raise 2½% in personal property and real-estate taxes and then add new growth. Every year free cash is needed to balance the budget. (Leaming) felt that was overcharging. (Miller) suggested backing off on stabilization. All boards should start crunching numbers long before the annual town meeting in May.

Motion #18-082: by (Miller) move to raise Motor vehicle receipts from \$425,000 to \$525,000, seconded by (Leaming), all in favor.

This will lower the taxes by .14.

R. Sullivan stated that this had been a productive meeting. The next meeting should be a meeting with Finance, Accountant, Treasurer, BOA and Selectmen.

(Miller) pointed out publically that he was attacked by a letter from the BOA chair. He will pass this onto the Vice Chair to handle.

The tax rate was not available on paper at the meeting. Boards discussed how to proceed. R. Sullivan suggested if numbers aren't available before the BOS meeting is over tonight to post a meeting for Thursday.

Motion #18-083: by (Leaming) move to accept signing of the tax allocation for 2018, noting that \$100,000 was added to final amount, seconded by (McCarthy), all in favor.

M. Arsenault added that you are paying an Assessor to gather new growth and you are not using it. It was just reduced.

R. Sullivan closed Board of Assessor's hearing and Selectmen closed their hearing at 7:13 p.m.

5 min. recess

Payroll & Warrants:
Signed by Board

Minutes:
Review and sign minutes of November 13, 2017. C. Camerota asked to strike the last line on the first page because the Assessors did not vote. Correction was made that Haley abstained.

Motion #18-084: by (Leaming) move to approve minutes of November 13, 2017 as amended, seconded by (Vandal), all in favor.

Review & Action:

Town Clerk – My Town Government:

R. Sullivan and several supporters of "Show up Brimfield" explained that with My Town Government residents would have better access to meetings and agendas. Board would post their own agendas and minutes. Virtual town hall began 8 years ago and most boards are not updating their information or posting meetings on the calendar. Not only would this be used as a primary posting place but would also alert users when agendas, minutes and meetings are posted. This first year there is no charge and a fee of \$99 annually thereafter.

R. Sullivan added that the town does not have a password administrator or computer use policy either.

Camille Collins addressed the board regarding the website and possibly having Tantasqua students work on this and it would help them get involved in town government or a small committee.

Maria Thomson – Friends of the Sr. Center:

Friends of the Sr. Center Maria Thomson has been working on locating property for a new senior center since the Building Committee has taken it off the project list for now. The good news is that 23 acres on Holland Road is being donated to the Friends of the Sr. Center. There are over 1,000 seniors in town which is approximately half of all adults. Brimfield is the only town in the area that does not have a center of their own. However funds will still need to be raised for the building. The objective would be to build the building and then donate the building and the land to the town. The Friends are a 501C3 nonprofit. She asked about standalone architect plans for a sr. center that were done years back and wanted permission to use them. (Leaming) reminded her that because of the new building codes they would need to be revised.

Motion #18-085: by (Vandal) move to grant permission to the Friends of the Sr. Center to use standalone architect plans and revise to the new building codes, seconded by (Leaming), all in favor.

There may be grant funds available to the town. (McCarthy) mentioned that prevailing wage may come into play. Town Counsel could speak to that but not at this time. Also a Warrant article might be needed. No liaison is needed from the BOS.

Mark Avis – Veteran's Agent: Purple Heart Community:

The town's veteran's agent, Mark Avis would like to apply to have Brimfield become a Purple Heart community. He will request signs to be posted on the roads coming into town.

Motion #18-086: by (Vandal) move to approve making Brimfield a Purple Heart community, seconded by (Leaming), all in favor.

Website Committee:

Motion #18-087: by (Vandal) move to appoint Camille Collins, Lynn Field, Pam Engberg, Frank Delarosa, Maria Thomson, Elizabeth Sutton and Robert Sullivan to an adhoc website committee, seconded by (McCarthy), all in favor.

Mark Connors & Robert Corry: Gazebo on common:

Mark Connors and Robert Corry came to the board with a presentation of pictures from other town commons and a proposal to have a gazebo purchased at Klotter Farms. Most towns around have gazebos that are used for concerts, Memorial Day, scouting events, etc. They spoke to the abutters who also wanted to contribute funds. Along with raising corporate funds and private donations, Cumberland Farms would like to donate \$10,000 to the town hoping some would go back to the gazebo. D. Moriarty will be a flea market advocate. Brick pavers will also be sold to raise funds. The total project would cost approximately \$30,000. Placement of the gazebo would also help mitigate lighting from Cumberlands. M. Connors is requesting the BOS approve the gazebo on the common and when the project is complete it would be turned over to the town.

(Miller) clarified that no town meeting vote is needed. (McCarthy) would like them to see various other boards such as Planning and Conservation. (Leaming) also suggested looking into the impact to the common when placing the gazebo and handicap accessibility. Table until Dec. 11th. This is not a Historical project but Historical does support it. Accountant will set up a donation account for the gazebo in the Town of Brimfield. This will be a prefab building, built off site.

Department Heads: Flea Market hours:

(Miller) began the discussion by saying 5 years ago revenue from the flea market was \$88,000 and has continually gone down since then. Since 2015 Police and Fire have increased their hours.

Chief Kuss stated that the detail rate has gone up from \$34 to \$38 per hour and an increase in hours from 650 to 760. The days prior to the show is paid by the flea market account. 110 hours was added to the flea market account and increase in hours which was being paid previously by police payroll. Several fields are getting deliveries weeks prior to opening. He also stated there never was a limit on hours but capped at 650 hours because of the days prior. The BOS approved the increase in hours to 760 per show.

Chief McCarthy has never had limits. He contacted Xfinity in Manchester, CT and Foxboro. Two Firefighters per 1,000 people are required for events. Previously we had no coverage for Thursday and Friday nights, so needed to cover. An additional 84 hours was added. This also includes inspections for food vendors. (Miller) said he was not targeting anyone. (Leaming) stressed when things happen we want you there. The town has 2 outstanding Chiefs.

Chief Kuss added that it would be more and more difficult to decrease hours with the number of people attending. The revenue needs to increase and it's hard to count the number of vendors on each field since they may move from field to field during the week.

M. Arsenault mentioned that there are other costs not looked at such as the time spent on the flea market by the BOS Admin, BOH Admin, Treasurer and Accountant. This expense is not included. (Leaming) said this work was being done during regular working hours.

R. Costa said fees for the town were being generated by the Board of Health. The inspector gets 85% for inspections and the rest goes to the flea market account which pays for Fire, Police and Ambulance services. The last thing the town needs is for someone to get sick. The Plumbing Inspector oversees the water supply. The BOH will continue to be diligent. (Miller) asked how many hours the food inspector worked. R. Costa wasn't sure but said he inspects vendors who set up the Monday before the market opens and conducts 3 inspections pre week, per vendor plus spot inspections.

The Ambulance increased hours to full time on a regular basis.

Phone system update:

Table until Dec. 11th meeting

Liquor License application approval: M.K. Fuel, Sturbridge Road:

Motion #18-088: by (Leaming) move to approve 2018 Liquor License for M.K. Fuel, Inc. at 341 Sturbridge Road, seconded by (McCarthy), all in favor.

Appointment: Joseph Venezia to Agricultural Commission until 6/30/2020:

Motion #18-089: by (McCarthy) move to approve Joseph Venezia to Agricultural Commission until 6/30/2020, seconded by (Leaming), all in favor.

Common Victualler: Athens Pizza, 26 Sturbridge Road:

Motion #18-090: by (McCarthy) move to approve annual common victualler for Athens Pizza, 26 Sturbridge Road, seconded by (Leaming), all in favor.

Sign certificates for Thomas Brown and Jayson Findlay:

Board signed acknowledgement certificates for Thomas Brown and Jayson Findlay who are retiring from the Fire Department.

Old Business:

None

New Business:

Subordination Agreement:

Board reviewed a PVPC subordination agreement for 34 Dix Hill Road through the FY05 Tri Town Community Assistance Program.

Motion #18-091: by (Leaming) move to approve signing the Subordination Agreement for 34 Dix Hill Road, seconded by (Shea), all in favor.

Lighting for Highway:

Highway has requested having Tantasqua install new LED lighting. The cost would be \$8,157.85. The savings would be approximately \$3,100 a year and pay for itself in under 3 years and the new lights would save \$66,000 over 20 years. The cost without rebates would be \$18,777.13 and the town will save \$10,619.28.

Motion #18-092: by (Leaming) move to approve \$8,157.85 for new LED lighting at the Highway Department, seconded by (McCarthy), all in favor.

(Miller) mentioned the RAZE account money might be able cover the cost of removing the barn and connector.

C. Camerota read a letter received by (Leaming) from Anwar Afrede of M.K. Fuel dba County Line Hardware. (Leaming) addressed the board with the request for an extension and support from the board. M.K. Fuel is in violation of a new regulation with DEP for removal of his underground fuel storage tanks. Due to a hardship he is requesting a 5 year deferral. The Fire Chief supports small business and said he was told of this 7 years prior but agreed to support the request.

Motion #18-093: by (McCarthy) move to support M.K. Fuel's request for a 5 year extension and a letter will be mailed to DEP, Anne Gobi and Gov. Polito, seconded by (Vandal), all in favor.

Fire Chief reported that the new tanker should be arriving soon and who should sign for it. The board was in agreement that as a department head he should sign.

Public Access:

None.

Motion #18-094: by (Miller) move to adjourn at 9:11 p.m., seconded by (Leaming), all in favor.

Upcoming Meetings:

Board of Selectmen

December 11, 2017 @ 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Carol Camerota

Recording: Carol Camerota

ACCEPTED: Michael Meli DATE: 12-11-17

Documents Utilized for this meeting

MATERIALS FOR BACKGROUND AND REFERENCE

1. Documents for tax classification hearing
2. Meeting minutes of November 13, 2017
3. 2018 Liquor License for M.K. Fuel, Inc.
4. Common Victualler License for Athens Pizza
5. Appointment for Joseph Venezia to Agricultural
6. Adhoc website committee list of appointments
7. PVPC subordination agreement for 34 Dix Hill Road
8. Highway lighting request
9. Request letter from M.K. Fuel, Inc.