

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

RICHARD H. SMITH TOWN HALL

Regular Meeting October 23, 2018

Attendance: Selectmen Angus McDonald, Duane Gates, and Bill Burdick, Jane Samuels, Margo Hilfinger and John Greene (*videography*), John Morrison.

Call to Order:

This regular meeting was called to order at 6:32 pm by McDonald.

Approve Minutes From Regular Meeting Held September 25, 2018:

Burdick moved, Gates 2nd, to accept the meeting minutes of September 25, 2018.

APPROVED 3 – 0

John Morrison/Connecticut Sign:

Mr. Morrison presented his case to the Board of Selectmen, summarizing that he had assumed that discussions with Dick Smith that land being leased would not be 1.4 acres (total land area of lot) to .7 acres (land under building), but contract does not state that and he is being taxed on 1.4 acres. McDonald stated that while that may have been part of the conversation with Dick, Mr. Morrison had time to review contract, and did so evidenced by increase in time on lease from 40 years to 100 years, but had not revised the taxable area. Mr. Morrison explained that he simply did not recognize the 1.4 acres until after contract had been signed.

McDonald explained that contract could not be revised without a town meeting, that whatever the Board decided would be moved forward, but that he felt the contract was signed in good faith and should be left as is.

Discussion amongst Board members and Mr. Morrison took place, Gates suggested his concern about precedent, but also his discomfort of having to make a decision about a contract that he did not participate in the preparation of, and that he felt the Town's people should decide, not the Board alone. Burdick expressed concern that a misunderstanding is always possible and agreed that the Town should decide not the Board.

Burdick moved, Gates second 2nd, to move the issue of renegotiating the existing contract between CT Sign and the Town of Deep River to Town Meeting.

APPROVED 2 - 1

Report on budget ramifications of dead oaks and ash trees:

McDonald explained that the Town, not unlike most of the region, is faced with a rash of dead and dying Ash and Oak trees as the result of the Ash borer infestation and two consecutive years of drought and gypsy moth infestation. McDonald has reviewed the situation with the tree warden, and while the COG is reviewing how this might be handled on a regional basis, the trees are dangerous and unlikely to stay standing through the winter season and need to be removed as soon as possible. McDonald is making arrangements to have the most dangerous trees removed first, but the cost of this work will probably double what is budgeted and usually spent on tree removal, \$20,000. McDonald explained that there is money in the highway budget to cover the cost, but that it will impact the Town's highway spending.

Discuss Municipal Building Audit Report and Proposal:

McDonald presented information resulting from an energy audit of the three largest municipal buildings, the Library, the Town Hall, and Deep River Elementary School. McDonald explained that there is an opportunity to increase energy efficiency in all three buildings in a program with a 0% interest loan that is paid through the energy bills and results in a net zero cost, or very close to that. McDonald explained that he would send audit to energy companies to get real cost estimates for projects and would report when he heard back.

Audience of Citizens – Any other business to come before the board:

Jane Samuels explained that she had read minutes of WPCA meetings and that there was discussion of Sewer expansion up Hemlock or up to the Esico-Triton building. She noted that the POCD, that she worked on the preparation of, had language that prohibited sewer expansion. McDonald explained that he knew of no existing efforts to expand the sewer other than on Essex Street, which was part of the most recent sewer expansion and was removed due to budget constraints.

Burdick provided the Board with a report on Estuary.

Adjournment:

Burdick moved, McDonald 2nd, to adjourn the Board of Selectman's meeting at 7:27 pm.

APPROVED 3 - 0