

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 18, 2018
SHEPARD MUNICIPAL BUILDING GYMNASIUM**

PRESENT: Mr. Marc W. Richard; Chairman, Mr. Dario F. Nardi; Vice-Chairman and Mr. John Nason, Clerk

ATTENDEES: See Attached List

Opened the Meeting at 7:00 PM

Chairman Richard opened the Meeting and led with the Pledge of Allegiance at this time. Colleen Montague is in attendance and acknowledged her taping of this evening's meeting.

MINUTES

Motion to approve and sign the minutes of August 28, 2018 as written made by Mr. Nason; second: Mr. Nardi – unanimous.

Motion to approve and sign the minutes of August 31, 2018 as written made by Mr. Nason; second: Mr. Nardi – 2 Yes, 1

Abstention - Mr. Nason (absent)

Motion to approve and sign the minutes of September 11, 2018 as written made by Mr. Nason; second: Mr. Nardi – 2 Yes, 1

Abstention – Mr. Richard (absent)

CORRESPONDENCE

1. The Fire Chief submitted his monthly report to the office for month ending August 2018. – **Noted**
2. The Selectmen's Office provided a link on the town's website for the Hazardous Mitigation Plan. All residents are encouraged to participate in the survey. - **Noted**

VERNON KEITH – DISCUSSION ON VETERANS BENEFITS (ABATEMENT)

Mr. Keith came before the Board this evening to discuss an issue he has with obtaining his Veteran Benefits. He was recently notified by his mortgage company that his escrow account had been depleted due to them (Mortgage Company) withdrawing to pay his property taxes. Mr. Keith is a Korean War Veteran and is 100% disabled and has been filing for this abatement for the last 17 years without fail. After this discovery, Mr. Keith went to the Board of Assessors and they informed him that no abatement was applied for this year because they have no record on file. It is fair to note that the newly appointed Assistant Assessor was not in the position at the time when Mrs. Keith dropped off the necessary paperwork and the previous person to whom the paperwork was handed to has since retired. The application has also been denied by the Commissioner of Revenue due to what they consider a late filing. The only thing he can do is put it before the voters in May and petition the state for the Home Rule Exemption, however that is a long and tedious task. Mr. Keith is not interested in doing that.

Sadly, a number of additional benefits that he receives are now in jeopardy because his exemption from the Assessors has not been granted. No Assessors were present this evening.

APPOINTMENTS

Motion to appoint Tracey Mazur and Julie Vadnais to three year terms on the Cultural Council made by Mr. Nardi; second: Mr. Nason – unanimous.

Motion to appoint David Kirk to the QRSD Building Subcommittee made by Mr. Nardi; second: Mr. Nason – unanimous.

The Board, along with Mrs. Ramsey and Mr. Johnson, current Park & Rec Commissioners held a discussion regarding filling a vacancy on the Commission. There are two very viable candidates however only one open position. To further complicate

matters, both Mrs. Ramsey and Mr. Johnson have personal and work related ties to the candidates and want to abstain from making a recommendation. In addition, as this is a roll call vote between both Park & Rec and the Selectboard, Mr. Nason has a conflict with one of the candidates and has recused himself from voting. That leaves only two possible voting members, however does not constitute a quorum. Clearly at an impasse and not wanting to violate ethics laws, no action was taken this evening. Hopefully, both candidates will still be interested in the spring and run during the election.

7:15 PM – COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG) PUBLIC HEARING – UPDATE ON FY 17 PROJECTS AND FY 18 ANTICIPATED ACTIVITIES

Christopher Dunphy, Principal Planner for PVPC is in attendance this evening to provide an update on the recent and upcoming activities. The current FY 17 project is well under way (Quaboag Street Improvement Project). The funding, along with funding from a MassWorks grant allowed us to install new water mains, sewer lines as well as road reconstruction, sidewalks and paving. All substantial components are in place and the majority of the project is anticipated to be completed this construction season. The contractors, A. Martins & Sons will be back in the spring to complete any punch list items. Palmer Paving Corporation is contracted to do the paving, which it is hopeful that at the very least the binder course can be put down. Mr. Dunphy expressed his thanks to Adrian from Weston & Sampson, the RE on the project as well as the coordinated effort by Tom Boudreau, Highway Surveyor and Dave Johnson, Warren Water District Superintendent.

The FY 18 Grant was recently awarded and calls for housing assistance for low to moderate income households. Work can include roofing, siding, repairs to failed septic and other projects. The grant also covers the PATCH program, a community based health program and the Ware Adult Learning Center. Warren is the lead community on the grant once again.

PVPC is now looking towards the FY 19 grant round which he is hopeful that we can move forward with the Lombard and Moore Ave project which already has the design plans in place. This too is a qualifying project, however the town would need to apply for construction funds. That application is scheduled to be due late February 2019 to the first week of March.

GRANT ASSISTANCE ASSOCIATED WITH ADA IMPROVEMENTS TO THE MUNICIPAL BUILDING

Several years ago, Clark & Green did a study to improve the ADA situation at the Municipal Office Building. At the time, the cost exceeded the funds available and the project stalled. The Mass Office of Disability (MOD) recently announced grant funding for physical improvements. In light of the engineering study and plans already complete, Mr. Dunphy suggested that the town look into this opportunity. The plans would need slight updates to adhere to the current code, however PVPC does have recaptured funds in their coffers which belongs to the town and can be used for this type of project. Clark & Green provided a very modest quote of \$1,750.00 in order to bring the plans current. Keeping in mind, if the town is successful with the grant, the state does require a commitment from the town to keep moving forward in order to bring the building into full compliance. This can be done in phases. Bill Scanlan is willing to take the lead on the project, which the Board had no objection. Motion to pay Clark & Green the \$1,750.00 to update the plans from the PVPC residual funds and move forward with filing the grant application with the MOD as outlined this evening made by Mr. Nardi; second: Mr. Nason – unanimous.

HIGHWAY SURVEYOR – CHAPTER 90

Mr. Boudreau has presented the Board with his proposed projects under the Town's Chapter 90 funds. Motion to approve the projects as presented which are Bridge Street overlay in the amount of \$48,000.00 and the mill and fill on Old West Brookfield road from Main Street to the Quaboag River in the amount of \$45,000.00 made by Mr. Nardi; second: Mr. Nason – unanimous.

Mr. Boudreau also made the Board aware of a sinkhole issue with a culvert that runs along Comins Pond Road and under the road at the underpass. He is hoping to get the crew out to address the matter by early October if not sooner.

LIBRARY COMMISSIONER – WAIVER LETTER

Motion to sign the annual waiver letter for the State Aid Minimum Appropriation made by Mr. Nardi; second: Mr. Nason – unanimous.

TREASURY WARRANTS & INVOICES

Motion to approve and sign Warrant numbers 21 & 22 dated September 10, 2018 in the amounts of \$48,459.31 & \$52,584.66 respectively made by Mr. Nason; second: Mr. Richard – unanimous.

Motion to approve and sign Warrant numbers 23 & 24 dated September 17, 2018 in the amounts of \$39,462.01 & \$125,795.90 respectively made by Mr. Nason; second: Mr. Richard – unanimous.

Motion to approve and sign invoice No. 20 for FY 16 CDBG Grant Program #783 to PVPC in the amount of \$3,402.62 made by Mr. Nason; second: Mr. Nardi –unanimous.

Motion to approve and sign invoice No. 8 for FY 17 CDBG Grant Program #813 to PVPC in the amount of \$6,848.64 made by Mr. Nason; second: Mr. Nardi – unanimous.

COMMENTS & CONCERNS

Mr. Mongeon stated that he along with members of the Finance Committee met with the Chief of Police on Monday morning to discuss his budget. According to Mr. Mongeon, he stated that the Chief is on track at this point, however if no STM is held and the OT continues, he could be dangerously low. Mr. Mongeon further stated that his committee doesn't need to be involved at this point as it is a personnel matter, which this board (BOS) will need to address.

The BOS advised all that the Massachusetts State Police has contacted the office and although additional discussion is needed, they are willing to have a presence in town.

Mr. Soltys requested an update on the cell tower – work continues and the foundation is expected to be poured soon. Mrs. Soltys asked if any decisions have been made about the issue of the water in the basement of the town hall. The BOS will be meeting with the Chief to clarify whose responsibility each portion of the building is and will go from there.

David Kirk requested the Board's opinion in possibly sharing the cost with West Brookfield in order to have an independent review of the regional school district. This review would include ways to save on expenditures while improving the curriculum and various other matters. After a discussion, the Board feels that an independent review is long overdue and fully supports his request.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Nason expressed his thanks to Chief Lavoie and the members of the Fire Department that went to the City of Lawrence to aid them in the aftermath of the gas explosions. He further thanked the officers that have been clocking OT hours to provide coverage to the town. And lastly, he thanked all who helped with getting the kids back to school after the mold issue at Quaboag.

Mr. Richard advised all that the Friends of the Town Hall will be holding their Polish Dinner at the Senior Center on Saturday, October 27th. Tickets can be purchased by any member of the FOTTH.

Also, the Warren Water District will be holding an information meeting on Milton O. Fountain Way on Saturday, September 22nd from 9 AM to Noon to discuss the brown water issue.

Next Regular Meeting Date: TBD

Motion to Adjourn made by Mr. Nardi; second: Mr. Nason – unanimous at 8:28 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca Acerra
Administrative Secretary

John Nason, III, Clerk

