

Members Present: John F. Fairbanks, Wayne R. Walker, Heather M. Billings

CALL TO ORDER

J. Fairbanks called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. in room 205 of the Town Hall. He announced that the meeting was being recorded by Ashburnham/Westminster Community Access TV.

CABLE CONTRACT UPDATE

Comcast representative Ben Pearlman and Special Counsel Bill Solomon were present to discuss the status of cable contract negotiations with the Board. The Town’s Cable Advisory Committee has been meeting with the two regularly to try and get a new contract in place between the Town and Comcast.

At this evenings’ meeting, residents of Bragg Hill, West Princeton and Bolton Road were present to convey to Comcast the importance of bringing their service to the underserved areas of Westminster. The Cable Advisory Committee, along with B. Solomon have been negotiating a new town contract with Comcast; one of the goals associated with the new, ten year contract would be to bring service to residents that don’t currently have it. B. Pearlman indicated that the reason for not installing service to these residential areas is due to the fact that it does not fit Comcast’s criteria for buildout. The requirement for Westminster is 15 homes per mile, for Comcast to fund the installation of service to an area.

Multiple residents in attendance made it clear that lack of internet/cable service in their area was detrimental to their work and their children’s academics. Other residents were concerned about their home’s value dropping due to lack of cable/internet accessibility. B. Pearlman indicated that he would bring these concerns back to Comcast.

J. Fairbanks asked Mr. Pearlman to speak with decision makers at Comcast and ask to lower the homes per mile standards in order to buildout to the 39 homes currently under consideration. J. Fairbanks indicated that he would like a Comcast representative to return at the August 3rd meeting to discuss the options further.

APPROVALS

MINUTES

W. Walker made a motion to approve the minutes of July 6, 2015. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

WARRANTS

W. Walker made a motion to approve the following warrants.

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|---------------|-------------------------|--------------|
| July 20, 2015 | Payroll 15-56B | \$40,633.59 |
| | Deduction 16-02C | \$159,759.59 |
| | Accounts Payable 16-03A | \$375,874.71 |

The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

APPOINTMENTS – CROCKER POND AREA RECREATION COMMITTEE

W. Walker made a motion to appoint Karen Farrell and Patricia Hatzis to the Crocker Ponder Area Recreation Committee. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

CONTRACT – HAGER PARK TIMBER REMOVAL

W. Walker made a motion to sign a contract with Timber Harvesting, Inc. of Westminster to harvest and sell the timber marked for removal at Hager Park. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

REQUEST TO EXTEND ARTICLE

W. Walker made a motion, acting on request of the Fire Chief, for a one year extension to Article 7, which was voted at the November 29, 2012 Special Town Meeting for Patient Care Reporting software for the Ambulance Department. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

CONTRACT – VILLAGE ZONING BYLAW CONSULTANT

W. Walker made a motion to approve the signing of a contract with Community Opportunities Inc. in the amount of \$7,250, with the understanding that the Planning Board will pay for the additional \$250 contracted above the initial \$7,000 appropriation. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

HEARINGS/OTHER SCHEDULED MATTERS

DPW COMMISSION UPDATES

Josh Hall discussed the Pavement Management Plan with the Board. He indicated that it is most cost effective to take preventative measures on the roadways such as using crack sealing or stone sealer, as opposed to letting roadways deteriorate and having to fully rebuild them.

J. Hall indicated that the DPW is going to start grating the gravel on Bathrick Road to improve the drainage situation in late summer. Several Bathrick Road residents asked what would be done as a follow up to their request at Town Meeting on May 2nd. J. Hall indicated that the DPW is in the process of hiring an engineering consultant to cost out the potential improvements that could be made to Bathrick Road to improve the situation there.

Lorraine Emerson indicated that the DPW Commission would like to hold the Special Town Meeting in late September to bring the Sewer Improvement Project to residents.

J. Hall indicated that the DPW is planning to begin negotiations with Fitchburg regarding the Intermunicipal Agreement. It was decided that the DPW Commission would draft a letter for signature by the DPW Commission and Board of Selectmen, to Fitchburg to reach out to them and begin the process.

ONGOING BUSINESS

ENERGY ADVISORY COMMITTEE – NET METERING AGREEMENT

Doug Hurley from the Energy Advisory Committee indicated that he received references from the two solar developers that have been trying to contract net metering credits with the town. He stated that the references he received were good, however none of the projects had been up and running as of yet.

D. Hurley also discussed the rates being offered by the developers, one offered \$0.11/kWh for a 20 year term and the other offered \$0.11/kWh with a 2% escalator per year for a 20 year term.

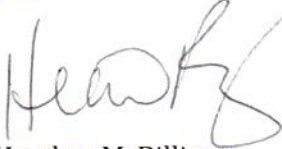
The Board asked D. Hurley to return at an upcoming Selectmen’s meeting with a recommendation on how many kilowatt hours the town should be looking to offset with this net metering agreement.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

W. Walker moved that the board enter Executive Session at 7:45 p.m. to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining. H. Billings seconded the motion. Mr. Walker indicated that the meeting would adjourn directly following Executive Session. The motion was passed unanimously on a roll call vote.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned directly from executive session at 8:30 p.m.



Heather M. Billings

Clerk

(Prepared by S. Lahtinen)