

Selectmen's Minutes 02/24/2016

Minutes of Meeting – February 24, 2016; meeting called to order at 7:00pm. Present: Ed Lane; Channing Gibson; Dave Roche; Ken Fowler; Warren Archey.

MOTION by CG, seconded by DR to accept the Minutes of February 10. 5/0 vote.

Citizen's Open Forum: Katie McNulty Vaughan stated her concern for any incremental financing proposals, and what the pros and cons are depending upon the specific business situation.

Consent Agenda: MOTION by DR, seconded by KF to deny permission to Edward Jones to go door-to-door soliciting. 5/0 vote. MOTION by DR, seconded by WA to approve the installation of a park bench in Triangle Park by the Lahart family. 5/0 vote. MOTION by CG, seconded by DR to accept monetary donations to the Fire Department. 5/0 vote.

The TM suggested, and the Board agreed, to hold a joint meeting with the School Committee to fill the unexpired term of Michael Moran on Monday, 2/29 at 6:30pm.

FY17 Budget Discussion: The TM stated that there may be some potential savings in health insurance for retirees, possible energy cost savings and an increase in state aid.

Kameron Spaulding from the Chamber came before the Board seeking approval to utilize Lilac Park on Friday afternoons from 1-5pm for the summer Farmer's Market. It would run from Memorial Day to mid-September. In addition, it was suggested that the market close at 4pm on those weekends that craft fairs will be held. The TM suggested that the Board grant permission for a one-year trial, subject to insurance, scheduling and public safety plans satisfactory to the TM and Police Chief. The Board agreed to leave it up to the TM and Police Chief. DR stated that we need to provide accommodations to those individuals attending the various cultural events in the area. While a proposed Special Taxing Agreement may lessen the amount the Town receives in taxes, it will increase our hotel/motel receipts. However, he feels that ten years is too long, and suggested a five year agreement. EL stated that the Town needs to set a policy for the next business seeking an agreement. DR feels that it needs to be tied to job creation. WA stated that he has concerns and is against the idea. KF stated that we won't lose money that we haven't received yet, and that we need to design the agreement that suits the Town. In theory, he agrees with the idea. It was agreed to schedule a working meeting to discuss it further.

Water/Sewer Rate Setting Public Hearing: The Clerk read the ad as it appeared in The Berkshire Eagle. MOTION by CG, seconded by KF to open the public hearing. 5/0 vote. DPW Superintendent Sean Van Deusen was present to discuss the rates and answer any questions. The TM recommended a 0% increase to water rates and a 15% increase to sewer rates. This would amount to an increase of \$35.25 in a semi-annual bill. MOTION by CG, seconded by KF to close the public hearing. 5/0 vote. MOTION by CG, seconded by DR to increase water rates 0% (\$7.44/1000 gals.), and sewer rates by 15% (\$11.50/1000gals.). 5/0 vote.

Tennessee Pipeline: CG attended a NEES meeting on Monday, and much work is being done; Kinder-Morgan has stopped negotiating for utility easements along the route for some reason; we will need to resubmit our comments by March 20. ISO-New England is stating that they have enough capacity so why are people saying we need more? Lastly, he stated that we have received full intervenor status in the Berkshire Gas proceedings.

Rest of River: No public update.

Solar Project: Since the cap for National Grid has not been lifted and SREC II is fully subscribed, the goal now is to move the Town into a position to take advantage of an assumed increase in the cap and authorization of an SREC III program, whenever those two things occur. The Board agreed to authorize the TM, when appropriate, to execute a formal contract with Ameresco once Town Counsel has approved of it.

BOS Reports: KF mentioned the upcoming Presidential primary on March 1. He also asked that residents seeking tax payment information for their taxes to please either e-mail or call after hours, leaving a message, and the Collector will get back to you. Meeting adjourned at 8:20pm.

Minutes Taken By: _____
Mary Ellen Deming
Director of Administrative Services

Minutes Accepted By: _____
Clerk
Board of Selectmen

