

Town of Athens
Selectboard Meeting
February 17, 2022
Town Office 7:00pm

In attendance: David Bemis, Janet Perry, Denise Randall, Darlene Wyman, Hannah Regier, Sandi Capponcelli, Dennis Mirante, Lynn Morgan, Tonya Noyes, Diane Hitchcock, Donald Capponcelli, Tina White, April Lyman, Danny Taylor, Wichie Artu, Hillary Cook

Called to order at 7:01

No Adjustments to Agenda

Minutes of Prior Meeting

David made a motion to accept, Janet seconded, all in favor

Public Comments

Sandi: Says the farm was supposed to put up two signs, in both directions that say "working dogs." There is just one sign.

Boards and Officials

Don / CCAC: HB Energy had done most recent fire alarm inspections. Inspection expired in Nov. Would like board approval to get someone out to inspect the alarms, and for Sandi to be the contact person for it. David made a motion to have HB inspect the fire alarms and for Sandi to be the contact. And Sandi can be the contact for other building things too. Janet seconded, all in favor. Don is getting bids for the exit sign installation.

Lynn / School Board: The school pre-town meeting in Grafton will be virtual on February 24th at 5:30, and can be accessed through the Grafton Town website. All school voting will be done by Australian ballot in March. Summer school will be just the month of July this year. The SU is working on updating school policies and passing them on to the district boards for approval. Auditors are still working with the finance office and are making progress.

Hillary / Emergency Committee: Talked about the town's participation in the national flood insurance program. He works full time for the NFIP, but is here speaking as a resident. The program is voluntary for communities. If a town joins, they agree to comply with minimum standard which are enforced through ordinance. What is regulated is the flood plain, defined by maps. Currently the maps for Athens are from 2007 and are not accurate as to actual flood plain areas. The town would want to insist that the flood study include all the areas in the town that have flood risk – i.e. along the creek all the way through town. The state has a schedule for updating maps and Athens is in the queue for the next year. There is no cost to the town for the mapping because it is a federal

program. Flood insurance covers all kinds of flooding including rainfall and flash flooding. Hillary suggests the selectboard communicate to the state to show that the town is engaged. David offers to sign a letter to the state stating what the town's expectations are for flood mapping. More detail on ordinances: the standard is restricting building to two feet above "base flood elevation." Preexisting buildings would not be noncompliant. Flood insurance has changed in the last six months to include more variables than previously. Costs have increased as well. Federal banking law states borrowers are required to have flood insurance for at least the amount of the loan balance if a house is in the "special flood hazard area." Wichie says that the town also needs a hazard mitigation plan in order to be taken seriously. He suggests bringing landowners into the NFIP conversation so people know how it will affect them.

Sandi / BCA: Has a letter to the state stating that the BCA does not think our town should be redistricted in the state House of Representatives map.

Darlene on behalf of Sherry and the Meetinghouse Committee: There is a written response provided to the selectboard regarding the housing rehab loan. The committee has hosted 3 prospective contractors for a site visit and is continuing to accept bids for the Facade project until March 15th.

2022 Town Meeting

David: Seeking input on if town meeting should be held on March 1, or opened and adjourned to a later date. Discussion followed. Considering that cases are dropping quickly, the board is recommending to hold the meeting as it is warned on March 1, but if Covid numbers increase again before then, an adjournment can be handled on the floor. People are asked to wear masks.

Warrants and Mail

Mail was reviewed and warrants signed.

Trash bag reorder: Cost has gone up since 2019. David made a motion that the town reorder 12,500 bags from Four Star Plastics at the price on their quote. Denise seconded, all in favor.

Fire protection cost increase: SR Fire Dept. has indicated they want to raise the town's cost, but they didn't get the request to town before the budget was finalized. David has already emailed the fire department to indicate that the town is not prepared to pay the increased cost this year.

David made a motion to sign three requests for weight permits for Valley Crane Services, Barrett Trucking Co, Inc. and Renaud Brothers' Inc. Denise seconded, all in favor.

Janet points out that Dead River is charging too much per gallon of heating oil. It should \$2.38 and they are charging \$3.36. Hannah and Darlene will call them Monday and try to sort it out.

Roads

Janet says that Matt got quotes on gravel:

Clarks at \$22/yd; Palmer at \$21/yd; Bazin at \$17.36/yd

David made a motion to buy 200 yds of gravel from Bazin. Janet seconded, all in favor.

Matt has posted some of the roads.

Sandi: The FEMA saga continues. They keep asking for more documentation. It is moving forward.

Further Business

Darlene and Lynn were interviewed for a TV show about Vermont town names. They will be on Channel 5 on Feb 22nd at 7:30.

Adjourned at 8:23

Respectfully submitted,
Hannah Regier, Town Clerk in training