

Select Board Meeting

December 17, 2020

Virtual Meeting

Present were James Trimble, David Bemis, Denise Randall, Darlene Wyman, Janet Perry, Hannah Regier, April Lyman, Fact TV, R T Brown, Lynn Morgan, Sherry Maher, and Tina White.

David called the meeting to order at 7:01pm.

Adjustments to the Agenda: There were no adjustments to the agenda.

Minutes of the prior meeting: David made the motion to accept the minutes of the previous meeting. Denise seconded. Put to a vote. The motion carried.

Public comments: Darlene stated she was not recording the meeting due to the snow. Fact TV did record the meeting.

Boards and Officials: Janet stated the LGER grant had been approved. Everything was okay except the it did not pay for the Vermont tax on the computer. Sherry asked whether the Meeting House report and the letter of request for \$2,500.00 was received. Darlene stated she had received it. Sherry reported that 13 people gathered with masks on for the lighting of the Christmas tree at the Meetinghouse. She wished to thank Linda Taylor for supplying a wreath for the door and Jay and Ginger Maciejowski for donating the tree. Sherry reported the truss project was almost completed. Just have to have Jim's help on cutting a couple of the trusses in order to place them. There was also a request for rental of the Meetinghouse, but haven't heard back for confirmation. Denise asked about the cost for rental. Sherry stated the committee has not discussed this as yet. David suggested a policy for rental of the building should be made. Denise asked the committee check with VLCT insurance to see if such events would be covered. Lynn reported the teachers were having meetings online for professional development. This was put to use after the Thanksgiving recess. The teachers were encouraged there was a lot of participation among the students. Denise stated there would be no snow days since the students would have class online. David stated the vote for Westminster to be removed from the union would be held sometime in January. After this vote Athens/Grafton would have to vote to approve this.

Approval if items from the November meeting: David stated it was voted on for the WNESU be approved for rental of the elementary school. David made the motion to ratify this vote. Denise seconded. Put to a vote. The motion carried. David stated it was voted to apply for the grant for LEMP. David made the motion to ratify this vote. Denise seconded. Put to a vote. The motion carried.

Town Meeting options: David stated the state passed the law allowing towns to have an Australian Ballot for the election of officers and the articles. The meeting has to be set by January as to whether an Australian Ballot or traditional meeting will be held. The officers need to sign a consent form for agreement to be placed on the ballot. This needs to be done by January 25. Sherry asked about putting the information in the January Athenian. David said we would try to do that. The possibility of mailing out the ballots was discussed. The polls will be open and will be run the same as elections. There will be an online informational meeting held for discussion. David made the motion the 2021 March Town Meeting be held by Australian Ballot for the election of officers and articles under consideration. Denise seconded. Put to a vote. The motion carried.

2021 Budget: It was stated that Triple T Trucking would be going up to \$130.00 per hour for trucking. Triple T did not have the information about picking up trash every other week. The budget committee will have more discussion on this at their next meeting. The board will discuss this at the next Select board meeting. Janet stated Matt said the price for a welder and safety equipment for the town garage would be approximately \$3,200.00. Hannah stated this would be put under highway general supplies. Janet stated she talked with Greg Allen about the cost of a new dump truck. The cost for a new truck with a 5-7 year extended warranty would be \$160,000.00 and a used truck for \$80,000.00. Tina White suggested it is not guaranteed that a new truck wouldn't have problems. She also suggested waiting for a year or two before purchasing a new truck since the Freightliner had just been repaired. Darlene brought up the subject as to the cost of the Freightliner repairs. After discussion it was decided to send a check for the \$15,000.00 that was voted on with a letter from the select board. Hannah stated there would be a possible \$30,000.00 surplus. She asked whether this should be used to reduce the taxes raised for next year. David and Denise recommended it be used toward the reduction of taxes. Sherry asked if some of the surplus would come out of the Meetinghouse fund. It will be taken from the general fund.

Warrant and Mail: Darlene stated the warrant for this month has not yet been prepared because of the storm. She and Hannah will be working on this Monday and will leave the warrant at the Town office for the board to sign individually. David made the motion to approve the warrant and leave it at the Town office for the board to sign individually. Denise seconded. Put to a vote. The motion carried.

Roads: Matt was not available. Denise commented on the fact that the roads were clear from the storm. Tina stated the trees on Route 35 that needed to be cut down have been done, but there are more trees toward Steve Fine's driveway that needed to be cut. David stated this would have to be done by Green Mountain Power since they are near the power lines. Denise will contact Green Mountain Power to see whether they would be moving more power lines.

R T Brown representing SVEDS stated a letter was sent in July for municipal funding request. He was asked to email this request again.

Executive Session: It was decided to have the executive session held at the end of the meeting after everyone but the board signed off.

Further Business: There was no further business.

At 8:06 pm Denise made the motion to move into executive session for a legal matter where premature general public knowledge would clearly place the town of Athens at a substantial disadvantage. David seconded. Put to a vote. The motion carried.

At 8:24 pm David made the motion to move out of executive session. Denise seconded. Put to a vote. The motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 8:24pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Darlene Wyman, Town Clerk