

Select Board Meeting

November 19, 2020

7:00pm

Virtual Meeting

Present were James Trimble, David Bemis, Denise Randall, Darlene Wyman, Matt Perry, Janet Perry, Dan Taylor, Don Capponcelli, Sandi Capponcelli, Lynn Morgan, Tina White, Fact TV, Hannah Regier, Jack Bryar, and April Lyman.

David called the meeting to order at 7:04pm.

Adjustments to the Agenda: David added Board and Officials.

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

Public comments: Don wished to thank Matt and Eugene for helping getting the materials into the Athens Brick Meetinghouse. He also commented it was sad to hear of Eleanor Bemis' passing. She will be greatly missed. Tina stated it was nice to see the trees on Route 35 had been taken care of. She also asked whether the Freightliner was back at the garage and what the cost was. Matt stated the truck was back. David stated he didn't know the cost since they had not seen the invoice yet. Tina asked whether it was determined if Old County Road had been determined whether it was a private road or a class 4 road. David stated it is a private road and the road crew would not be doing any work on it. Sandi agreed with David.

Boards and Officials: David reported Westminster is working on their petition to withdraw from the Windham Northeast Elementary Union School District. They are moving forward with the vote to withdraw. If Westminster votes to withdraw, Athens/Grafton would have to vote to allow this and that would leave a union of Athens and Grafton if the State board of Education approves it. Jack Bryar presented a slide to walk through the outline as to what Athens and Grafton would have to do. Jack urged the Athens Advisory commission convene, because if Westminster wants to withdraw doesn't mean that Athens and Grafton want them to withdraw. Denise asked if the governance board would be planning on having pre-town meeting before town meeting for questions and answers. Jack suggested the advisory commissions chair those. Denise asked if it was feasible for both towns meet at the school to discuss all the questions and answers or if we have to meet separately. Jack stated in the best of all circumstances we would meet at a Town meeting. Because of the Covid situation the State has allowed an Australian ballot to vote. David stated if we can't have the meeting in person, we can try to have it virtually to try to get questions answered. David also stated the it would be 30 days from now before Westminster votes and another 30 days so we have the possibility of a couple of months before a vote takes place. Denise asked if Westminster was

declined could Athens/Grafton petition to withdraw. Jack stated they could. David stated we need to get the Advisory commission together as soon as possible to start working on this and seek legal counsel to make sure everything is done correctly. David asked Jack if the SU be able to provide all the towns with the financials as to what it will cost. Jack stated that the school board is asking for 2 budgets, one for us as a three-town unified district and one for us as with two districts. Denise made the motion to have the Advisory commission working with the other two town's advisory commissions to withdraw from the Windam Northeast Elementary Union School District waiting for the Westminster vote and seek legal counsel where need be. David seconded. Put to a vote. The motion carried. David stated the WNESU special ed director approached him with the possibility of renting the Athens Elementary school. David told him the board would probably do this with the caveat that it would be available for town meetings. Denise recommended renting the building and look into whether the town continues with all the maintenance, the fees and insurance or whether this would be added into the rental figure or put these costs on the renter. Jim asked if any changes would have to be made to the building because it's for special ed. No changes would have to be made. Jim also recommended renting the building. David made the motion to pursue the open option of renting the Elementary school to the WNESU. Denise seconded. Put to a vote. The motion carried. David stated that the Emergency Mitigation Plan is coming up for renewal. There is a 25% matching grant available to fund this. Denise made the motion to pursue the grant with a 25% match. Jim seconded. Put to a vote. The motion carried. Don reported the Cemetery Commission will be meeting December 6 at 6:00pm. Don reported the labor crew has started on the plates and hardware for the trusses. The power is being provided by the next-door neighbor. There followed a discussion on the costs for the project. Don thanked the road crew for installing the new historical sign. Darlene stated the fire extinguishers in the elementary school needed servicing and the door to the boiler room needs repairs. Matt will see about servicing the extinguishers. Matt and Don will work on the boiler room door. Darlene stated there is a credit due to Veronica Brelsford and asked whether she should pursue a refund. The Board agreed she pursue this. Janet asked about the invoices for payment due for the Covid grant. The state needs proof of payment for the grant. David made the motion Darlene and Hannah cut the checks on Monday. Denise seconded. Put to vote. The motion carried. On Tuesday there will be a virtual meeting with the budget committee and select board to discuss the 2021 budget. Hannah will send a draft of the budget to the select board. Janet stated she contacted Apalachee Salt. Their quote was for \$70.30 per ton delivered. Janet will send copies of her emails with them to the select board.

Warrant and Mail: Darlene will leave the warrant at the Town office for the board to sign individually.

Roads: Matt stated the chipper was put back together, but still continued to have a leak in the block. They have set the chipper aside for the winter and are in the process of finding a short block. He stated the big truck is now at the garage and he is negotiating the bill with ATG, because the invoice was for \$17,000.00 plus. He is negotiating the price with the shop manager

since the board voted not to exceed \$15,000.00 and they made repairs without permission. David stated the board would not pay over the \$15,000.00. Matt stated he checked into a backpack leaf blower. He can purchase an Echo for approximately \$605.00 not including the municipal discount. This would bring the price to approximately \$550.00. The board approved the purchase of a leaf blower at the best price and to take the funds out of the small equipment fund.

Executive Session: There was no executive session.

Further Business: Danny asked if the findings of the Taylor Hill hearing were final. He asked about when the decision was signed. David stated it was part of the deliberative session. There being no further business, David made the motion to adjourn. Denise seconded. The motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 8:03pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Darlene Wyman, Town Clerk