

## **TOWN OF ACTON SELECT BOARD MEETING**

**May 3, 2023**

**6:00pm**

### **1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Tom McGurty called the meeting to order at 6:01pm.

### **2. WARRANTS/BILLS**

### **3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Selectmen Stacey-Horn made a motion to approve the agenda; seconded by Selectmen Winchell. All in favor.

### **4. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING**

Selectmen Stacey-Horn made a motion to approve the minutes for 426//23; seconded by Selectmen Winchell . All in favor.

### **5. TOWN ADMINISTRATOR WEEKLY UPDATE**

The School's elections were yesterday and the turnout was 139 voters. The school budget did pass.

There will be no Planning Board meeting tomorrow night.

The water softener filtration system has been installed. Water tests have been performed; sodium is still slightly above parameters which is normal. Another test will be done. Discussion ensued on results and standards. The Town Administrator will confirm

If there is anything further that needs to be done for compliance.

The Warrant & Finance Chair requested the Board bring all the department heads to the meeting on Monday. May 8th should there be any questions on the budget. The Board asked the W & F committee to go through the warrant as they are supposed to and make a list of their questions. The W & F has already met with the Department Heads to go through their recommendations and there is enough time built into the meeting schedule to allow for specific questions to be asked without having to bring all the Department Heads together. Dennis Long, W & F Chair indicated they were just trying to be expedient. Once questions are identified, the Board will make sure the departments are there the following meeting to answer them

O'Donnell's sent an email thanking the Board for the meeting they had but are looking to put an estimated tax value on the notices that the Board is going to send out, but to do that, they need to know the school, county tax revenue sharing , other revenues and anticipated revenues. The number would be just as if the Board was committing taxes now and all the warrants are approved then what needs figured out is what the total budget is going to be versus how much is going to come from unassigned so that they can take the new valuation numbers and figure out what the tax rate is going to be. Notices go out by the end of May. O'Donnell's is also looking for the specific notice of the 2023 property tax stabilization as it now looks like it will go forward. This means the data entry of the stabilization amounts need to be in Trio. They are hoping to have that information within the next two weeks so that they can start meeting with property owners. The state has made some progress making a commitment.

O'Donnell's will run three scenarios but can't do it without the budget, revenues and your approval. The completed estimate would be needed within a week's time.

Selectmen McGurty indicated since the Board had not yet worked on the Revenue budget it would need to be put on the agenda for their next meeting and ask the Treasurer to come in and provide some estimates on revenues which the Board could work on with her. It was decided that Selectmen McGurty would work on this next Wednesday and then bring it to the Board meeting.

## **6. DEPARTMENT HEAD / COMMITTEE CHAIR UPDATES**

- Robin Ham, Transfer Station
  - The brush pile has been stacked up.
  - The cement pad has been removed.
  - Selectmen Winchell asked about the meeting with engineering on the parking lot and asked if there was anything regarding the DEP. Email was recapped by the Town Administrator. There is currently no work being done which would involve the DEP.
  - Mr. Ham asked if the 2 - \$5,000 containers were on the warrant.
- Jim Driscoll, Cemetery Committee Chair and a few committee members gave the Board an update on the work being done to the area's cemeteries - repair to stones, tree removal, stump grinding, etc. Cemeteries look desiccated due to the passage of time. There is no desecration going on by people who volunteer their time to take care of these cemeteries. If anyone wants to speak against the work being done Mr. Driscoll will defend this and it was an insult to the workers. The Board appreciated all that has been done and will support the continuing efforts. A warrant article should be written for nothing but trees. Total of cemeteries in the area are between 80 and 100 and the committee works on them as best as they can. The Town Administrator told Mr. Driscoll that \$10,000 was being put into the cemetery reserve account in order to handle rollover.
- Joyce Bakshi, Capital Improvement Committee Chair has received a few telephone calls about getting a copy of the RFP and the proposal to compare that what was received was what was asked for. The Town Administrator will send both if an email request is sent.

## **7. LIAISON UPDATES**

**Tom**

He will be at the Warrant & Finance Committee meeting.

**David**

No update

The Town Administrator told Selectmen Winchell that she had reached out to RMS regarding another bid and received no response; she will try one more time and then the Board will move on.

**Kim**

Tentative Recreational Committee will be via Zoom

## **8. OLD BUSINESS**

A. Roy, Talbot Engagement Letter

Legal Council reviewed the engagement letter received and recommended a few changes. Selectmen McGurty will reach out and work with Mark Roy around the issues with limitation of liability. Hope to come back to next week's meeting with a final agreement to be signed.

B. Draft Warrant

- Pages 1 - 10 are all zoning.

- Numbers Nine and Ten there were no changes.
- Number 11 this is a combination of a few articles. The Board can read through it.
- Number 12: No changes
- Number 13: Another article which was a few articles that were combined.
- Number 14: This was changed to remove the road accounts.
- Account numbers can't change; titles will be confirmed to match the auditor's and account numbers will be removed.
- Number 15 is fine
- Number 16: Health and Welfare was combined.
- Number 17: This is not fixed yet and needs proper verbiage.
- The Fire Department is fine. The telephone system was moved up per the Board's request.
- All special projects have been moved up into the department and are coming from unassigned fund balances not raised and appropriated. Will need to confirm the total of unassigned to make sure that is what the Board wants to spend.
- Number 20: No changes
- Page 15 - Operations section was reviewed. All good.
- Number 22: Rewritten. Board reviewed and changes were made - Flat Ground went to \$3,000. Discussion ensued about wording.
- Number 24 is raising and appropriating four thousand nine dollars seventy four seven for winter maintenance and the sand and salt. This is where 15 comes from. This is one of the changes so that District 1 and 2 and then the next line added \$30,000 to that account; to each one of those ones with the \$30,000.
- Next is a lone article - Public Works Building and grounds
- Number 26 is a new article to see if the town will vote to establish a reserve account called Peck Road Reserve account and appropriate \$130,500 to reconstruct and pave a portion of Peck Road from and returning to the unassigned fund balance.
- Number 27: Transfer Station - fine and includes the storage containers. Selectmen McGurty asked Mr. Ham to firm the number up.
- Discussion ensued on unassigned fund balances, raise and appropriate, total of special projects and tax rate. To come back and discuss after next week. There is a need to look at the numbers.
- Number 31: Fine
- Number 32: combines social services
- Number 33: Balch Dam
- Number 34: APAT
- Number 35: Recreation
- Number 36: Spectrum
- Number 37: Reimbursement Snowmobile
- Number 38: Cemetery
- Number 39: \$10,000 unassigned for roads assessment
- Number 40: \$75,00 on School's Capital Reserves account - on hold Supt. has a plan to spread out.
- Number 41: To move money from the American Rescue plan fund account and put into the West Shore Drive Bridge in Culvert Capital Improvement.

### C. Surveys

- Surveys were received from Sebago Technics for Hawk Road and Town Hall; Board wanted to review. Price is \$8,000 for one of these projects and since this is the first

time using this firm, the survey provided a great opportunity to perform a price check with another vendor and if it is, to just go with Sebago.

#### D. Purchasing Policy

- This item was to revise the purchasing policy with regards to town agents working on town property. The Town Administrator presented a proposed document with changes for the Board to review. Changes stipulated the following:

"emergency expenditures are exempt from this requirement after approval from the Select Board." it then further goes on to say, "the department heads are authorized to use general service providers as defined below or Road Commissioners on the appropriate side of Town without soliciting three bids. An estimate must be received in writing by the Town Administrator and Liaison prior to any work starting. All work provided by the Road Commissioners must be billed at approved Road rates."

**Selectmen Stacey-Horn made a motion to accept the new Town of Acton's Purchasing policy. approve the agenda; seconded by Selectmen Winchell. All in favor. Motion carries.**

#### E. Pepin Land Gift

- The Selectmen are not in the position nor have the authority to accept a gift of land. It would need to go before the townspeople for a vote and that will not make it for the June meeting. It will need to be put on the next public meeting or ballot vote. The Board decided to defer for a short period of time to consider fully and decide whether it should go on a warrant or not.

### 9. NEW BUSINESS

#### A. Town Meeting Expenses / Mary Grant

- Mary Grant has agreed to do a breakfast/brunch and it would be nice to know if the Town is going to pay for it. They have a small budget and it really shouldn't come out of theirs. Asking them to do it is good, but they'd like to know if the Town's going to pay for it. They have a small budget and shouldn't be expected to cover these expenses. Expect no more than \$500; the committee will be volunteering their time, they will split the bill and the revenue will go to Mary Grant. When asked if the committee will need people to bake items, the Town Administrator indicated the Chair would be the one to ask. An email will be sent inquiring.
- PTG spoke to the Town Administrator who then updated the Board regarding daycare; there is still time to bring in people and solicit for help.
- There will be a cost depending on what the Board wants to do about advertising, mailings and signage. Discussion ensued. Board agreed to send out a flyer and put a few signs out. Signs will be made to be reused.

#### B. Auditing RFP

- Last year's RFP was revised to clarify that the Board is looking for an auditing firm, not someone to prepare financial statements.
- RFP was shared with Mr. Roy as new accounting services partner and he provided some comments which were fine to incorporate.

- One more pass will be made through the RFP and it will be discussed at the next meeting once the remainder of the Board finishes reviewing.
- The Board was in agreement about sending out an RFP.

#### C. TD Bank - Account Opening

- An email received from TD Bank regarding new brokerage accounts and the users and signers was forwarded to the Board.
- There has been no discussion about what direction the Board was going in and what bank would be used, so more clarification was needed before the form was completed and returned.
- TD Bank was asked to clarify what their cost to manage the account was and that was shared with the Board. The transactional costs for the account were very small; less than \$1,000 per year to manage the portfolio.
- Schwab was also contacted and their fees were significant and TD Bank was far more superior.
- This bank will be just for investments.
- There was a discussion regarding other banking services, such as lockbox, handling the receipt of tax bills and the work associated with that, but that is a service offered to many towns and an inquiry to Partners will be done next Wednesday regarding their services. Then the Board can decide whether they want to go any further and generate an RFP or leave it as is.
- As this paperwork is just to set up the brokerage accounts at TD, the Board would need to decide who takes what roles and fill out the six pages attached. The second part to this will then be to deal with the checking account.
- Discussion ensued; the Board decided to get 3 proposals regarding services from different institutions to have in hand. Selectman McGurty will take the next week to see what can be done and bring it back to the next meeting.

#### D. Executive Session 405 6 - A - 1 Personnel

**Selectmen Stacey-Horn made a motion to go into Executive Session 405 6 A.1 - Personnel; seconded by Selectmen Winchell.**

**All in favor.**

**Selectmen Stacey-Horn made a motion to come out of Executive Session 405 6 A.1 - Personnel matter; seconded by Selectmen Winchell. All in favor.**

### 10. PUBLIC COMMENT

- Dennis Long, W & F Chair asked whether or not 100% value on an assessment was going to be used. The Town Administrator indicated it was going to be a 100% because the Town gets more of a homestead exemption back as well as other benefits. However, O'Donnell'd did indicate they will be offering up 3 proposals. And, the Board will let everyone know along with information to explain whatever is chosen.
- Joyce Bakshi asked Selectmen McGurty to explain the bank fees again and why if less than \$1,000 per year would we need an RFP. Selectmen McGurty explained that there are public hearings where others can ask questions and anything over a thousand dollars there would be the need for 3 written proposals and the Board didn't want to be capped to the \$1,000 limit restrictions if other banks were over \$1,00 and rates were increasing. BY at least doing three proposals, if you can't get three we've done our due diligence and it is transparent.

**11. PENDING**

**12. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**05/08/2023 CIC 5pm**  
**05/08/2023 W/F 6pm**  
**05/10/2023 Select Board 6pm**  
**05/15/2023 W/F 6pm**  
**05/17/2023 Select Board 6pm**  
**05/18/2023 Planning Board 6pm**  
**05/24/2023 Select Board 6pm**  
**05/31/2023 Select Board 6pm**

**13. MEMBERS PRESENT**

Selectmen Tom McGurty, Selectmen David Winchell, Selectmen Kimberly Stacey-Horn and Town Administrator Jennifer Roux.

**14. ATTENDANCE:** Richard Neal, Joyce Bakshi, Dennis Long II, Lee Robator, Mary Ellen Robator, Ken Allen, Robin Ham, Nancy Ruma, Jim Driscoll, Tracy Levasseur.