

TOWN OF ACTON SELECT BOARD MEETING

February 7, 2024

6:00pm

MINUTES

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Winchell, Jr. called the meeting to order.

2. WARRANTS/BILLS

Signed.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Norwood made a motion to adjust the agenda: under new business move the Executive Session after Department Head/Committee Chair Updates; seconded by McGurty. All in favor. Motion carried.

4. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

Tabled.

5. TOWN ADMINISTRATOR WEEKLY UPDATE

The Chickadee license plate is being retired in 2025 and replaced with a new North Star and Pine Tree license plate. Staff participated in training discussing the timeline and protocol of the license plate changes.

Additional training occurred with Absentee Balloting, regarding open/semi-open enrollment. Absentee Ballots are now available at the Town Hall. Town Meeting and Elections training also occurred this week with upcoming changes. Voters are not allowed to wear a candidate's insignia in the voting hall. This was passed by state legislators.

The Transfer Station will be closed on Monday, February 19, in observance of President's Day.

The Springvale Ice Fishing Derby will be using the Iron Tails parking lot as a weigh-in station on Saturday, February 10.

York County Sheriffs Department completed a four-hour traffic detail on Acton Ridge Road, H Road, Milton Mills Road, and Sanborn Road: 3 Citations issued for speeding. 28 vehicles were observed on H Road, of which, 1 was speeding; 46 were observed on Milton Mills Road, 1 was speeding; 5 on Sanborn Road, none of which were speeding; and 22 on Acton Ridge Road, 1 was speeding.

McGurty would like the details summarized on the town's website for the residents to be able to view.

A public hearing date needs to be set for the Flood Plain Ordinance and Mooring Ordinance.

6. DEPARTMENT HEAD / COMMITTEE CHAIR UPDATES

A. EMA Director

Rick Smith, EMA Director:

Smith reviewed the day to day and job description for the EMA Director: to include planning, training, and preparation for large natural disasters (such as a flood, blizzard, extended power losses, etc.), as well as health issues, and active shooter scenarios. Smith trains with a county unit and works with other local directors. Smith is also part of the Incident Management Team Committee, focusing on operations and medical.

McGurty stated that the last ice storm created questions on the EMA Directors involvement in coordinating a response within the town. Smith stated that each year the EMA holds a training for local government officials to attend, which explains the EMA Director's role, and Town Government roles. Smith continued, advising each year he sends this information to the Town Administrator, who forwards it to the Select Board.

Winchell, Jr. commented on past events, where a group of people/volunteers would go around town to check on elderly residents; asking if this type of support is still in place. Smith advised that with better communication and technology, this method is not used any more. The last storm that the Select Board is referencing, Smith advised he did not receive any calls, texts, or emails, until Roux reached out to Smith directly. Continuing, stating that if warming shelters are needed, there are agreements in place within the town.

McGurty continued that the last storm seemed to be a major storm for the town and questioned how a major storm is defined in the town's policies: as he believes there should have been a coordinated response on behalf of the town. Questioning if/when a coordinated response is required, who is responsible for putting together those efforts. Smith advised that during the last storm he was ready and waiting for requests to come in, confirming assistance was needed. He was in contact with the Fire Chief and Town Administrator: and confirmed when provided the need for assistance, it's his job to coordinate the efforts.

Norwood questioned what resources are available for posting information from EMA. Smith advised of the opt-in system for information as well as the ability to send out PUSH alerts. Norwood questioned if there were physical publications that could be handed out. Smith confirmed. Roux requested master copies to be able to post online and hand out in the Town Office.

7. EXECUTIVE SESSION 405 6 E - LEGAL

Norwood made a motion to go into Executive Session 405 6 E – Legal; seconded by Walsh. All in favor. Motion carried.

Norwood made a motion to come out of Executive Session 405 6 E – Legal at 7:05 pm; seconded by Walsh. All in favor. Motion carried.

8. LIAISON UPDATES

McGurty: Municipal Management / Warrant & Finance, APAT, Cemetery
Walsh: Fire Department, Transfer Station, Lincoln School
Norwood: School Department, Conservation / Forest, Mary Grant
Winchell: Roads & Road Committee, Recreation Committee

9. OLD BUSINESS

A. 24-25 Budget Continuation

1. Rec Director

Joyce Bakshi, Warrant and Finance, requested additional information from Singleton regarding the proposed budget for FY'25: specifically dry cleaning and miscellaneous programs. Winchell, Jr. questioned if phone calls were made to confirm the increase in the cost of cleaning uniforms. Singleton confirmed no calls were made

and the increase was due to an assumption of increase. Bakshi advised that this is a 45 percent increase. Roux reviewed the budget and confirmed the miscellaneous programs went up \$4,500. Bakshi questioned wish list items and funds not spent on last year's budget. Winchell, Jr. questioned what amount was not spent last year. Roux provided the proposed budget for review.

Norwood advised per prior Rec budget discussions; he suggests flatlining the Recreation Budget. Cutting wish list and miscellaneous items; existing programs need to be the focus verses adding new programs. Norwood also suggests starting conversations regarding new programs with the Rec Committee and then the Select Board.

Norwood made a motion to flatline the budget at \$23,650; seconded by Winchell, Jr. All in favor. Motion carried.

2. Road Commissioner

Will Langley and Leslie Berlan reviewed the Roads budget. Roux confirmed that budget items didn't hit the correct line items.

Additional discussion of proposed budget changes occurred.

McGurty expressed thanks to the department heads and finance committee for coming together to complete the budget process. Walsh expressed appreciation for the transparency of the process.

10. NEW BUSINESS

A. Finance Director Job Description

An advertisement was put together for the posting of the job description for the Finance Director.

Roux read the posting.

McGurty made a motion to authorize the posting of this position; seconded by Walsh. All in favor. Motion carried.

B. Mooring Ordinance Draft

McGurty advised that the town has asked legal counsel to draft an ordinance for moorings for the town, due to feedback received from the DEP to one of our lake associations. This clarifies who can place moorings and where in a lake. A draft of an ordinance has been provided for consideration. The ordinance will be released, and a public hearing will be held. Roux confirmed the hearing will be in coordination with the Flood Plain Ordinance, which has specific requirements for postings. March 6 or February 28 works as public hearing date options to meet the requirements for both ordinances.

March 6 at 6pm will be the public hearing date for those two items.

11. PUBLIC COMMENT

Jean Theurkauf sent a letter last week regarding the mining situation and wanted to read the letter for public record. Focusing specifically on property owners' rights: Property owners who do not reach out to schedule a pre-blast inspection and/or are unable to offer inspection due to seasonal ownership automatically opt out of the pre-inspection opportunities and will not have thoroughly documented inspections. The company is also not testing water, property owners must do this themselves.

Theurkauf requested the blasting be postponed. Winchell, Jr. advised that the town can not postpone the blasting. If water testing is requested, the company will complete a water test.

The area is also zoned as an aquifer protection zone. McGurty has indicated that this has been brought to counsel for review and the town has no rights to interfere in this activity, what the company is doing is within the state regulations, and this is a civil issue. Winchell Jr. continued, that DEP was on site today. The CEO is reviewing this as well. Theurkauf also indicated the company is in violation of the conditional use permit of 1989. Roux advised pointing these specific items out to the CEO for review.

Judy Shain wanted the Select Board to reconsider the vote for the Special Town Meeting request for the school per last week's discussion. Winchell Jr and Norwood have spoken regarding the Special Town Meeting, Winchell, Jr. would like to see the school budget prior to considering a Special Town Meeting.

Mary Stanton expressed frustration with the Select Boards decision not to hold a Special Town Meeting to transfer funds. Winchell, Jr. confirmed the timeline of the Annual Town Meeting and the request for a Special Town Meeting are too close to consider holding the additional meeting. The Warrants can be added to the Annual Town Meeting to allocate the funds.

Norwood made a motion to reconsider the Special Town Meeting for the School to reallocate funds from the undesignated funds for the proposed special projects; no second. Motion fails.

Charlie Hydek addressed some concerns with the website when viewing the hearing tab. Roux will review.

Shain questioned if a budget breakdown will be provided at the Annual Town Meeting. Roux confirmed it will be posted on the website and available at the Town Meeting as well.

12. PENDING

- A. Sealed Bid – Old Fire Station Items
- B. Bid Selection – Old Fire Station Demo
- C. Rec. Cancellation Policy

Norwood made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:51pm; seconded by McGurty. All in favor. Motion carried.

13. ANNOUNCEMENTS

On Website

14. MEMBERS PRESENT: David Winchell, Jr., Tom McGurty, Ed Walsh, Daniel Norwood, Jennifer Roux

15. ATTENDANCE: Rick Smith, Joyce Bakshi, Ray Lopez, Leslie Berlin, Charlie Hydek, Jon Denekamp, Dennis Long, Lee Robator, Judy Shain, Mary Stanton, Robin Ham, Will Langley, Sam Singleton, Jean Theurkauf