Selectmen’s Meeting Minutes June 26, 2017 Memorial Hall 7:00 pm

**Call to Order**: Andrew Baker called the meeting to order. Others present: Robert Manners, V. Matthew Marchese and Town Administrator Terry Narkewicz.

**Media Present**: None

**Acceptance of Minutes**: Bob made a motion to accept the June 12, 2017 minutes. Matt seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

**Noteworthy News**:

* Matt encouraged his fellow Board members and the Buckland Selectboard to join him in the Fourth of July Parade.

**Calendar of Events:**

July 13, 2017 5:30 pm, Memorial Hall, FRCOG Executive Meeting RE: Layout of Bardwell’s Ferry Road;

August 12, 2017 8 am, Bridge of Flowers Road Race;

August 20, 2017 5:30 pm, Annual Iron Bridge Dinner.

**Department Liaison Reports**:

**Highway** – Andrew reported that three candidates for the highway laborer position were interviewed. The Highway Superintendent would like the Board to consider one of the two finalists.

**Police**– Matt met with Police Chief Greg Bardwell. They discussed a police station. Cowell Gym is a possibility rather than purchasing or constructing a new building. Matt and Greg will meet again and discuss the FY18 police budget.

**7:15 pm Linda Overing, Breezeway Farm & Megan Rhodes RE: Slum & Blight Study** – The FRCOG was asked to do a study of the downtown area of Shelburne Falls (both Buckland and Shelburne) to determine if the area meets the definition of a “slum & blighted area.” All buildings and parcels were inventoried and it was found that the area does qualify for the designation, due to physical deterioration of properties, abnormally low property values, and deterioration of public improvements throughout the area. The latter includes roadways, parking areas, sidewalks, etc. Andrews asked about including part of the Lillian Davenport land in the study area. That would not help the study, Lind explained, as that area is intentionally vacant and may be used for recreation. Bob asked about funding for a parking garage. Linda thought that in the future funding might be available for planning and design. Matt asked if the CDBG were part of a master plan. It was explained that the town is asked to submit its priorities as part of grant applications. She also mentioned that a lot was going on now involving parking. If the Board could coordinate the various efforts there is a possibility of grant funding. A motion was put forth by Matt, to approve the resolution regarding the certification of the village of Shelburne Falls target area as an area of disrepair and disinvestment. This was seconded by Bob and unanimously approved.

**7:30 pm Eversource Pole Hearings RE: Prolovich and Patten Road** – Eversource proposed to install a new pole on Prolovich Road in order to avoid using poles which now go through a right of way in a wooded area and to create a new line which will connect to the Colrain line. This should greatly increase customer reliability by bringing the line alongside the road rather than off the road. Charles Herzig and his wife, own the hayfield alongside the road and expressed concern that guy wires would extend into their field, making mowing difficult. Tyler, the Eversource spokesperson, said the use of crossover poles would remove the need for guys and anchors in the field. He said there would be no guy wires extending into the field. If the current design does not work for the Herzigs, Tyler said it could be changed. A motion was made by Bob, seconded by Matt, to authorize the placement of poles as presented by the power company, with the assurance that there be no guy wires in the adjacent hayfield. The vote in favor was unanimous.

A second hearing was held regarding the placement of a new pole on Patten Road. The purpose of the new pole would be to shorten the span and thus the sag between poles. This would fix the low hanging wires over the road and make room for cable television to attach. A motion was put forth by Bob to grant the installation of a pole on Patten Road for the purpose of shortening the span between poles. This was seconded by Matt and unanimously approved.

**Old Business**:

**Highway Laborer Position Update** – Terry, Andrew, and Highway Superintendent Mark Shippee had interviewed three candidates for the position. Two of them were then recommended to take the equipment test, which was observed by Terry and Mark. Both candidates proved to be capable but one had more experience and also more licenses. Mark recommended that candidate and Terry did not dispute that recommendation. Bob is ready to act on Mark’s recommendation. Matt preferred to meet with both candidates. Rather than wait two weeks for the next meeting the Board agreed to meet on June 29, if the candidates are available, and ask a new set of questions. The meeting will be posted and a vote on the position could be taken that day.

Bob left the meeting at 8 pm

**Green Communities Designation** – Terry explained the timeline for this process. If the Green Communities application is filed this October, the announcement of Green Community status could be made in December and a grant application could be submitted. The grant application could be reviewed in February and March, with contracts signed in April or May. It would likely be the next fiscal year before any work could be done. After the first year, the town would be eligible to apply for competitive grants in each subsequent year. Part of the application requires the town to adopt a bylaw regarding the stretch code. A town bylaw could be adopted more quickly and requires only a majority vote of the town. Making it a zoning bylaw is perhaps more logical, but that would mean waiting for Annual Town Meeting and a two-thirds majority approval. Andrew and Matt were comfortable with a town bylaw, which could later be changed to a zoning bylaw if necessary. Terry had hoped that the Solar Committee could be restructured into an Energy Committee to assist with the Green Community application process. Andrew said at least one member of the Solar Committee was willing to join a new committee. He also mentioned that technical assistance is available through the FRCOG and also from UMass Extension. Terry said those groups had wanted the town to schedule a Mass Save energy audit. The town has previously had such an audit, but only for lighting. Terry will follow up on this.

**New Business**:

**End of Year Budgetary Transfers –** Town Administrator, Terry Narkewicz has prepared a list of budget transfers that eliminate deficits in various town accounts. The largest transfer of $5,975.39 is to make up for an overage in winter roads expense. A motion was made by Matt, to approved the end of year budget transfers as presented. This was seconded by Andrew and unanimously approved.

**Annual Appointments** – Town Counsel has discouraged the town from making across the board appointments for at-will positions, unless those positions are required by statute. Payroll employees should not be appointed, with the exceptions being, the Police Chief, Fire Chief, librarian, and Town Administrator. Terry said she had contacted the chairs of the various committees concerning committee members whose terms are due for reappointment. Once the appointments are made she sends letters to all appointees, who can then withdraw if they do not wish to be reappointed. A motion was made by Matt to appoint Michael Duffy, Hugh Knox, Hawley Wadman, Craig Miller, and Larry Flaccus to one year terms on the Technology & Cable Advisory Board. This was seconded by Andrew and unanimously approved. A motion was made by Matt to appoint John Taylor as E911 Coordinator for a one year term. This was seconded by Andrew and unanimously approved. A motion was made by Matt to appoint Andrew Baker, Bob Manners, and Matt Marchese to one year terms on the Sewer Commission. This was seconded by Andrew and unanimously approved. A motion was made by Matt to appoint Andrew Baker and Jeff Boettner to one year terms on the Energy Committee. This was seconded by Andrew and unanimously approved. A motion was made by Matt to appoint Ernie Kelley, Beth Manning, and Christine Johnston to three year terms on the Agricultural Commission. This was seconded by Andrew and unanimously approved. A motion was made by Matt to appoint Judy Tedesco to a three-year term on the Cemetery Commission. This was seconded by Andrew and unanimously approved. A motion was made by Matt to appoint John Richardson to three-year term on the Conservation Commission. This was seconded by Andrew and unanimously approved. A motion was made by Matt to appoint Sylvia Smith to a one year term on the Council on Aging. This was seconded by Andrew and unanimously approved. A motion was made by Matt to appoint Joel Dwight and Jim Perry to three year terms on the Open Space Committee. This was seconded by Andrew and unanimously approved. A motion was made by Matt to appoint Don Upton to a three-year term as a Registrar of Voters. This was seconded by Andrew and unanimously approved. A five-year term on the Zoning Board of Appeals for Noah Grunberg was the next appointment. Saying that that board has enormous influence on town affairs, Matt said he would like to meet with Noah prior to his appointment.

**Senior Center Director Cathy Buntin RE: Proposed Pay Scale for FRTA Paid Employees** – The Senior Center has proposed a new pay scale for FRTA employees who drive the Senior Center vans. The current pay scale is very low compared with other, comparable local positions, which makes it hard to attract qualified drivers. The Senior Center Board of Directors has approved the pay increase, which would be paid by the FRTA, which has had an increase in its budget. Even with the proposed increase, the rate of pay would still be lower than other local rates. A motion was put forth by Matt to approve the pay scale proposed by the Senior Center. This was seconded by Andrew and unanimously approved.

**Correspondence:**

Elayne Ryba RE: Senior Employment Program – Elayne runs the Senior Employment Program out of the Greenfield Career Center. The program employs low income seniors, and assigns them to not-for-profit organizations, such as towns. The seniors work for 20 hours per week at no cost to the not-for- profits. Terry felt there might be some areas in town where such an individual could be utilized. She will follow up with Elayne.

**Any Other Business:**

**Recognizing Businesses –** Matt would like the town to recognize, by sending letters, local businesses that make an investment in the community. As an example, he cited Davenport’s Service Station that recently installed new gas tanks. Such an investment is good for both the business and the community. Matt would also like to recognize new businesses as they are established.

**Public Comment**:

**Josh Simpson** – Josh came before the Board to provide an update on Ancient Glacier LLC’s progress regarding the Singley building. He said the ZBA had waived all parking requirements, thus allowing the building to be reconstructed as planned. Ancient Glacier has applied for a state loan which could fund 40% of the cost of construction. He expects to hear about the loan in mid-July. Josh said that the state would like to see that the town has a financial interest in the project and perhaps a TIF would demonstrate that. Andrew said that the state portion of a TIF needs to be applied for before the town considers it. He also felt that the ZBA’s waiver of the parking requirement was a substantial contribution to the project from the town. Josh said Ancient Glacier would be coming to the town for a TIF well ahead of the deadline for getting it on Annual Town Meeting warrant. He felt the building would eventually be a taxable town asset.

It was noted that appointments should be made to the TIF Committee. It has been learned that it is permissible to ask about a TIF applicant’s finances, though Andrew felt that asking about finances could open a can of worms. Matt said there would need to be clear benchmarks that would trigger a financial review. Terry will find out if there is a template to follow regarding financial reviews for TIFs. All agreed that asking for a TIF applicant’s business plan is a sound request.

**Adjournment**: Matt, presented a motion at 8:55 pm, to adjourn the meeting. This was seconded by Andrew and unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Faye Whitney

Recording Secretary