Selectmen’s Meeting Minutes March 13, 2020 Memorial Hall 8:00 am

**Call to Order**: Vice Chairman, Andrew Baker called the meeting to order at 8:20 am, (once a quorum of the Board was present). Those in attendance were Vice-Chair, Andrew Baker, Robert Manners, Town Administrator, Terry Narkewicz, and Highway Superintendent, Mark Shippee. Chair, Matthew Marchese was absent.

**Order of Business**:

**Meeting with Highway Superintendent to Discuss on Boarding/Training for New Employees** – Andrew presented a multi-faceted tool that included a means of self-evaluation for the new employee and an evaluation form for the Superintendent. Andrew explained that members of the Highway Department also vetted the evaluation tool. The intent is to require the Superintendent and the new employee to evaluate his/her performance periodically throughout his/her one-year probationary period. Scheduled reviews would occur after the first week, first month, third month, 6-month, 9 month, and 12 month. The Superintendent will not use the tool as a scoring mechanism rather, as a means of bringing forward conversations between the new employee, members of the crew, and himself. Andrew would like to change the reputation of our Highway Department by helping new employees integrate as a team player. Andrew emphasized that the process will take a full year. He wants to end the cycle of frequent resignations resulting from new employees frustrated by the lack of support. He further stated that the Highway Superintendent must step up as a leader and a professional with crewmembers. Bob presented a motion to adopt the new evaluation tool for the Highway Department for probationary employees as presented by Andrew. Andrew seconded the motion. Motion passed 2 to 0.

**Revision to Highway Laborer & Equipment Operator Position Description** – Andrew presented language for the Board to consider adding to the position descriptions of the Highway Laborer & Equipment Operator position description. The proposed language is as follows:

***Teamwork and Team Building:*** *Highway department tasks are accomplished both by individuals and in teams. Teamwork requires patience, professional courtesy and mutual respect by all parties when developing an agreed upon approach to a task. Clear communication is essential for coordination, efficiency and safety. Mentoring is expected of all crewmembers, particularly to help new crewmembers acquire skills and knowledge, and to understand established departmental practices. All crewmembers are expected to take part in welcoming and mentoring new crewmembers during the entire probationary period under the direction of the Highway Superintendent. Work performance, both positive and negative, should be regularly shared with the Superintendent. Any disagreements that cannot be resolved between crewmembers should be brought to the Superintendent. Team building is an ongoing and continuous practice within the department.*

Before presenting a motion, Bob suggested that the Board should offer “Interpersonal & Communication” training as a learning opportunity for the Superintendent and his employees. Andrew also recommended Supervisory training for Mark. Mark stated that his crew is always willing to train and mentor new employees however, when new employee fails to receive what is being put forth, members of the crew become frustrated especially when the new employee’s hourly wage is comparable or close to their own. Andrew stressed that Mark and his crew must follow the new on-boarding/evaluation process all the way thru; it is not the crew’s decision to decide failure. Bob presented a motion to incorporate the proposed “teamwork and team building” language into the Highway laborer & equipment Operator’s position description providing that the Town offer training opportunities. Andrew seconded the motion. The motion passed 2 to 0.

**Highway Laborer Position RE: Vote to Hire Joseph Finck of Sunderland, MA** – Everyone present participated in Mr. Finck’s interview. The applicant holds the proper licensure and; answered each of the interview questions with confidence. Mark, Bob, and Andrew were present for Mr. Finck’s road-test portion of the hiring process. Although Mr. Finck’s operating ability was not perfect, everyone present felt that that he was a suitable candidate. Mark recommended that the Board consider an incremental wage increase following successful evaluations so to inspire the employee to advance. Mark recommended $18.00 per hour to start. Providing the employee’s quarterly performance reviews are favorable, he will receive the following incremental wage increases:

3 Month Review $0.50 $18.50

6 Month Review $0.50 $19.00

9 Month Review $0.50 $19.50

1 Year Review $0.50 $20.00

Bob presented a motion to hire Joseph Finck at $18.00 per hour with the understanding that if the employee’s quarterly performance reviews are favorable, he will receive incremental increase as illustrated above. Andrew seconded the motion. The motion passed 2 to 0.

**Mark Cadran RE: Layout of Tower Road** – Mr. Cadran appears to be at odds with his abutting neighbor. For the last eight months, Mr. Cadran has made several complaints against his neighbor seeking remediation from several of the town’s departments, officials, boards and committees. Recently, he asked the Town to identify and claim a strip of land that abuts both his and his neighbor’s property bounds. Town officials spent several days researching the claim without success. Town Counsel advised that in the absence of the original road layout, an in-depth title search, and a possibly a survey (all very costly and time-consuming), the Town should not claim the unidentified property as town-owned. She reviewed and approved a letter to Mr. Cadran stating such and asked that he refrain from involving the town’s resources unless emergency services are required, and set aside his differences with his neighbor. Bob presented a motion to sign the letter and send it to Mr. Cadran. Andrew seconded the motion. Motion passed 2 to 0.

**Other Business**:

**Senior Center RE: Portable Bathrooms** – Senior Center Director, Cathy Buntin sent an email to the Select Board reporting that 48 Senior Center participants were polled to obtain a sense if they would feel comfortable using a portable bathroom. Of the 48 polled, 13 indicated that they would utilize this type of a facility, and 35 said no. Some respondents felt insulted by the option. Andrew thanked Bob for his research efforts. No further action needed.

Adjournment: Bob presented a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:30 am. Andrew seconded the motion. Motion passed 2 to 0.

Respectfully submitted,

Terry Narkewicz

Town Administrator