**Select Board Meeting Minutes January 18, 2022 Zoom Teleconference 5:30 pm**

**Call to Order**: Bob Manners called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm. Others present: Selectboard members Margaret Payne, Andrew Baker, and Town Administrator Terry Narkewicz.

**Acceptance of Meeting Minutes:** A motion was put forth by Margaret to approve the minutes of January 3. This was seconded by Andrew. Roll call vote: Bob – yes; Andrew – yes; Margaret – yes. Motion passed 3-0-0.

**Department Liaison Reports:**

**Senior Center –** A presentation of Age Friendly Communities was given today. A letter of support for Age Friendly Communities by the Board has been written and sent.

The Center’s FY23 budget has been approved by the Board of Directors. Last year, the Center served 439 individuals with a total of 9,773 service units, many of those for transportation. There has been a large increase in use by Ashfield residents.

The Senior Center Foundation has paid for 200 good quality masks for seniors and guidelines for distribution have been created. The Center is still looking to buy Covid test kits.

**Town Hall** – Terry reported that the compressor that powers the mini splits is no longer working and is not repairable. The damage may have been caused by a freon leak. The compressor is still under warranty. There is no idea how long it might take to get a new compressor. In the meantime, HVAC people have converted the Town Hall back to oil heat.

An issue that is taking up a lot of time is the lights on the tower on Mt Massamet. The tower has been lighted for many, many years. Much of the feedback against the lights has come from the Buckland side of the village, with only four people from Buckland communicating that they enjoy the lights. On the Shelburne side the feedback is the opposite, with all but two people enjoying the lights. Bob said that the lights are generally on from sometime in November until sometime in January. There is a “passive agreement” with DCR to have the lights. The tower itself is owned by the town, while the top of it, where the lights are, belongs to DCR. The Selectboard does not have an official role in this matter but the Board supported having the lights on for a limited time each year.

Miramax Productions has approached the town regarding a film permit. The Christmas-themed movie, “The Holdovers” would require one evening of filming plus time for set up and take down. At present, the area of filming would take place in the vicinity of Water Street (near Good Spirits) and Bridge Street (between Water Street and the Iron Bridge). Terry will supply more details as she gets them.

Terry met with the MIIA to review the town’s insurance policy. It turns out that the two tax title properties (with buildings) need to be insured for liability at a cost of $751 per year. Terry asked how much longer the town planned to hold on to the properties. Andrew said those properties were the best chance of adding affordable housing, which is a low process. For now, the two properties will need to be insured.

**Newsletter** – Andrew said the idea of a community newsletter has continued to generate interest among residents. He hopes to put out a trial issue in February.

**Downtown** – Jessica Atwood is organizing a summit in February for people interested in reviving a business association.

The garage next to the visitor’s center is for sale. Andrew suggested it could become a location for public restrooms if the town were to purchase it.

**Highway Department** – Bob said there had been a mishap between a town truck and a utility pole. The truck and driver were unhurt but the pole had to be replaced. An insurance claim will be filed. This could have an effect on the town’s insurance. Bob said the town was lucky to have a dedicated road crew, as other area towns are losing highway employees to the private sector.

**Emergency Management Committee** – Bob said the committee would be meeting this week. Among items to be discussed is the possibility of rolling power blackouts. The power company has said if there is a significant draw on power across the grid, and if asking for voluntary power reductions is not enough, rolling blackouts could occur, As these would likely happen during cold weather, discussion will be held on how to deal with such events as a community.

**Appointments:**

**5:45 pm Zoning Board of Appeals RE: Mill Falls Easement Request** – The reason for the meeting was: to consider the purchase, exchange, taking, lease, or value of real property if such discussion may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the governmental body.

A motion was made by Andrew, seconded by Margaret to enter into executive session for the reason stated above. Roll call vote: Bob – yes; Andrew – yes; Margaret – yes. Motion passed 3-0-0. The regular meeting resumed at 7:05 pm.

**Old Business:**

**Senior Center Expansion** – Margaret reported that the working group has finished the district document and it has been sent to the Selectboards of the three member towns. It can also be found on the town website. The next update will be on the January 31 agenda, listed as district agreement.

**Proposed Police Regionalization Efforts** (Police Chief Greg Bardwell) – Greg has created a draft budget for regionalization including a schedule. This was discussed by the working group. Greg and Andrew felt the rough outline seemed reasonable. Greg is looking into grant opportunities for regionalization of public safety departments. Andrew said a grant opportunity that is available has a deadline of February 10. He would like the support of the Board for Greg to apply for that grant. The grant funds could be used not just for regionalization but also for some parts of the police budget. If Buckland were also to file for the grant, jointly with Shelburne, the towns could receive up to $200,000. A motion was made by Andrew to support the grant application by the Police Chief for a state regionalization grant to support the exploration of a shared Police Department between Buckland and Shelburne. This was seconded by Margaret. Roll call vote: Bob – yes; Andrew – yes; Margaret – yes. Motion passed 3-0-0.If the Selectboards of both Shelburne and Buckland support the merger of the two police departments the education of the public about the idea should start, as this would be a big decision for both towns.

**New Business:**

**Annual Town Meeting RE: Proposed Outdoor June Venue** – The Board discussed June 11 as a date for ATM and also discussed what time it should be held. A motion was made by Andrew to schedule Annual Town Meeting for Saturday, June 11 at 10 am, with the understanding that the BSE grounds are available. This was seconded by Margaret. Roll call vote: Bob – yes; Margaret – yes; Andrew – yes. Motion passed 3-0-0.

**Community Development Strategy Document Review –** In the past the CDBG required an annual review. While that is no longer a requirement, Linda Overing thought an annual review was a good idea. Boards and committees have been given the chance for input. The draft document will be posted on the website to give the public a chance for input. The Board can vote on it at the next meeting. Margaret asked that Age-Friendly Communities be added to the document. An Environmental Certifying Officer needs to be designated. Bob has done it in the past but he asked if anyone else would like to do it. A motion was put forth by Andrew to reappoint Bob Manners as the Environmental Certifying Officer for CDBG. This was seconded by Margaret. Roll call vote: Bob – yes; Margaret – yes; Andrew – yes. Motion passed 3-0-0.

**Any Other Business:**

**Next Meeting** – The next Board meeting will be held on January 31, at 5:30 pm.

**Correspondence:** None

**Public Comment:** None

**Adjournment**: At 7:45 pm a motion was made by Andrew to adjourn the meeting. This was seconded by Margaret. Roll call vote: Bob – yes; Margaret – yes; Andrew – yes. Motion passed 3-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Faye Whitney, Recording Secretary