

TOWN OF PEACHAM
MINUTES OF THE SELECTBOARD MEETING
Wednesday, January 22, 2020
APPROVED

Selectboard Members Present: Mike Heath, Beatrice Ring, Peter Craig
Public: Selectboard Clerk Rebecca Washington, Mary Daly, Cheryl Stevenson, Laura Johnson, Mark Clough

1. The meeting was called to order by Chair of the Selectboard Mike Heath at 6:30pm.
2. Additions to the agenda
 - a. No additions.
3. Peacham School budget update- Mark Clough
 - a. School Director Mark Clough explained that there will be a 28.7% increase in the school tax rate which will result in a tax rate of about \$2.00 (a 44 cent increase).
 - b. The bulk of the change is due to uncontrollable factors such as the change in the CLA.
 - c. What is controllable is staffing and the principal's recommendation was to reduce the staff by one teacher. The Pre-K teacher, Sarah Parker, has decided to retire.
 - d. The 28.7% increase includes the staff reduction of one teacher and no new programs.
 - e. Closing the school would save \$130,000 but there are costs involved in ~~keeping the building in place and there would be the loss to the social fabric.~~ *Mary said* *Maintain*
 - f. The budget would have to be cut by \$139,000 to avoid the tax penalty.
 - g. Ring suggested that, at Town Meeting, the School Board explain what has changed in education over the years that has caused the costs to go up so much.
 - h. Discussion ensued on the school census being up and the positive effect that having more students has on the tax rate.
 - i. The next School Board meeting is on January 28th.
4. Wedding request-Wendy Mackenzie
 - a. Ring read a letter from Katelyn Langham who requested the use of the town gym for her wedding reception on January 2, 2021. It would be set up on January 1st and torn down on January 3rd.
 - b. The Selectboard wants to make sure they know that lights out is at 10:00pm and that cleaning is their responsibility.
 - c. **Ring moved to permit Katelyn Langham and her partner to use the town gym for their wedding reception from January 1st-3rd, 2021. Craig seconded. All in favor. So moved.**
5. Outdoor Club update
 - a. Ring said that the Outdoor Club is not an official committee.
 - b. The club is working on defining all the available outdoor Peacham sites, including information on who owns them and any rules associated with them.
6. SB appointment updates
 - a. Cemetery Committee
 - i. Stevenson presented ideas from the committee.
 - a) They would like the Cemetery Committee to remain a committee and to have the Selectboard remain in charge.
 - 1) Heath said that there is no provision in state statute for a committee.
 - 2) Craig pointed out that it's a preservation committee that doesn't make final decisions and Stevenson said that it was formed when there was a discussion about making the cemetery more like a park.
 - b) The committee recommends having one sexton instead of two.
 - c) The committee would like to start talking about a location for green burials and to finish setting up a new cremation area.
 - d) There is road work that needs to be done in the cemetery.
 - ii. There were 10 burials in 2019 and 8 or 9 deeds sold.
 - iii. Ring would like the committee to prioritize its list of projects.
 - b. Keeper of the Pound
 - i. Keeper of the Pound not present.
 - ii. Discussion ensued on the duties of the Keeper of the Pound and the possibility of the 2nd Constable getting the basic necessary equipment.
 - a) Craig will look into how much the equipment would cost.
7. Old business
 - a. Town Hall renovation
 - i. No update.
 - b. Town Hall ADA improvements
 - i. No update.
 - c. Town solar project

- i. Heath explained that there are substation improvements that need to be made in West Barnet before anyone can bring solar arrays online.
 - ii. The Selectboard would need to sign something before the end of the year due to the change in tax credits in 2021.
 - iii. The Selectboard would like to get the input of the Energy Committee on where the panels should be located.
 - d. Cemetery administration
 - i. Ring explained that, in the interest of reconciling the cemetery paperwork, she asked Becky Jensen to review the cemetery records. In addition, Jim Minichiello is working on a project for PHA to map out the physical location of where people are buried in the cemetery.
 - ii. Heath learned from VLCT that there is no provision in state statute regarding the way Peacham currently runs its cemetery. VLCT recommended either eliminating the committee or elevating the committee to a commission. If a commission was formed, the Selectboard would set the total budget and the elected commissioners would decide how to spend the money. The sextons would report to the commission and the commissioners would be bound by law to perform their duties.
 - iii. Discussion ensued on what problem the formation of a commission would solve and how the commission would function.
 - iv. The Selectboard will keep discussing at future meetings.
 - e. Certificate of Highway Mileage
 - i. The Selectboard signed the Certificate of Highway Mileage.
- 8. Highway Department update
 - a. Craig read an update sent by Road Foreman Jeremy Withers.
 - i. The equipment is running well and the road crew members seem to be happy.
 - ii. Without much weather this week, the road crew is pushing back snow with the grader and doing maintenance on equipment and the garage.
- 9. Town Clerk update
 - a. Craig read an update sent by Town Clerk Thomas Galinat.
 - i. The Town Clerk's office is working on end-of-year reports, town report editing, and federal and state reporting.
 - ii. Galinat encouraged the Selectboard to consider a view easement on the land on Mack's Mountain Road currently owned by the Fire District. Galinat stated that the view from the land is Peacham's single largest asset and that access is invaluable to the community and its guests.
 - a) Discussion ensued. Ring will reach out to the residents who are planning on buying the land from the Fire District.
- 10. Approve minutes
 - a. The Selectboard approved the January 8, 2020 minutes as written.
 - b. The Selectboard approved the January 15, 2020 Special Meeting minutes with a spelling correction.
- 11. Review and approve bills
 - a. The Selectboard reviewed and approved bills.
- 12. Review correspondence
 - a. The Selectboard reviewed correspondence.
- 13. Executive session for personnel
 - a. **Heath moved to enter executive session for personnel at 8:20pm. Ring seconded. All in favor. So moved.**
 - b. The Selectboard came out of executive session at 8:44pm.
 - c. No action taken.
- 14. Adjourn
 - a. **Craig moved to adjourn. Ring seconded. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 8:45pm.**

Peacham Selectboard:
