



Town of Paxton
Board of Selectmen
697 Pleasant Street, Paxton, MA 01612
(508) 754-7638 – phone (508) 797-0966 – fax
dparsons@townofpaxton.net

Regular Meeting Minutes

Monday, August 14, 2017

Meeting Location: John Bauer Senior Center 17 West Street, Paxton, MA 01612

Members Present: Julia N. Pingitore, Chairman
John F. Malone, Vice Chairman
Peter Bogren, Jr., Clerk

Carol L. Riches, Town Administrator

Attendees: see Attendee List

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

Chief Conte to discuss false alarm fees and EMS billing

- Chief Conte stated that he would like to bring in a part time EMS billing clerk. There is about \$220,000 outstanding in bill collections since July of 2013. We would like to work towards getting people on a billing plan. We need someone that will work with the insurance companies on collecting deductibles. The position would pay about \$8,000, which would pay for itself but we do have EMS receipt money to pay for this position. Our goal would be to collect half of what is outstanding this year. We would like someone that could work about 8 hours a week and the schedule would be flexible.
- **(JP)** What about using a collection service.
- Chief Conte replied that they take a percentage of what you collect so it would be more cost effective to hire someone.
- **Motion (JM) seconded (PB) to approve the hiring of a part time EMS Billing Clerk. Unanimous, all in favor.**
- Chief Conte moved on to discuss the false alarm fees. In FY17 we estimated that we had about \$36,830 in expenses from responding to emergency calls at the Anna Maria. Currently we charge a \$300.00 fee for false alarms but that is not enough of a deterrent. I would like to see a change in the charge per call but that may need to go to Town Meeting.
- **(JP)** We could look at doing a warrant article for the next Annual Town Meeting to place a charge to a call for commercial buildings.
- Chief Conte stated that he would like to see that cover both commercial and educational buildings.

- (CR) We do have a false alarm bylaw but the amounts do not cover the costs. The bylaw is written so that within reason the Fire Chief and Board of Selectmen can update it.
- (PB) Jay, once you have worked on a proposal with Carol send it over to the college.

Authority of the Select board under MGL ch 164 sec 56 & 57 in regards to the Light Department.

- (JM) The Light Department employees were paid for the day before the July 4th holiday as a company paid day off. This occurred after the Light Department was told the Town employees could only take this day off if they use vacation time. We need to be able to meet with them to discuss personnel policies.
- (JP) We have two opinions on what their status is with the Town.
- (CR) The Light Department is not an enterprise. They are Town employees. The only exception is for contracted employees. They Light Department is only separate in that the money is kept separate from the Town's money.
- (JP) They were voted in as Light Board and that is different from a Light Commission.
- (PB) We have one department that has decided that it wants to remove itself from the rest of the Town.
- (JP) A Board versus a Commission. This makes a difference then on how autonomous they are. We need to clarify this matter.
- (PB) The Light Department's attorney said he was told that they are an enterprise. So given that their own counsel was given bad information we need to clarify this. According to MGL 164 section 56 all the Light Department bill warrants need to be reviewed by the Select board. Section 57 states that in January we would get an overview of their budget. Section 56 we will start doing right away and section 57 we will invite the Light Department to attend one of our meetings to go over their budget.
- (JP) Now that we know the change from Commission versus Board we may be able to go through these questions again.
- (PB) A freedom of information act still allows us to request any information that we want.
- (JP) No motion needed for section 56
- **Motion (JM) seconded (PB) to approve the request of information that is needed from the Light Department be done through the freedom of information act. Unanimous, all in favor.**
- (JP) Jack Crowley has requested an outline of the items that we would like to discuss so that he can provide it to their attorney. We will place this on our next agenda to revisit this item.
- (CR) I would just like to clarify a point that the Light Department employees were given the time off on July 3rd. They did not choose to it themselves.
- (JP) I would like to see both the Board of Selectmen and the Light Department together with both attorneys present to try and settle this.

Appoint Tanya Martin to full time Dispatch

- **Motion (JM) seconded (PB) to appoint Tanya Martin as a full time Dispatcher for the Paxton Police Department. Unanimous, all in favor.**

17 Pine Acres trash abatement

- **Motion (JM) seconded (PB) to approve the trash abatement for 17 Pine Acres.**

Unanimous, all in favor.

Sweetpea site plan

- **(CR)** This is the first we have heard from them in a while. I'm under the impression that this will be a smaller facility on the original footprint.
- **(PB)** I do agree with the 24-hour surveillance suggestion that Chief Desrosiers had made.
- No other questions or concerns to be presented at this time.

Request to hold a 5k road race in Town and place signage in Town for the race.

- **Motion (JM) seconded (PB) to approve the request from John Bryan to hold a 5k road race for Endometriosis awareness. Unanimous, all in favor.**
- **Motion (JM) seconded (PB) to approve placing signs in Town for the 5K road race for Endometriosis. Unanimous, all in favor.**

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- **Motion (JM) seconded (PB) to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes from July 24, 2017. Unanimous, all in favor.**

Town Administrators Update

- **Salt Bid**
Through the Oxford Treated Road Salt Cooperative a bid for Treated Salt for FY18 was awarded to Leed Salt in the amount of \$71.70 per ton. As a comparison, last year's price was \$71.35 per ton.
- **Oil & Diesel**
Through the join procurement with CMRPC Oil and Diesel bids have been accepted:
- **Fuel Oil**
Peterson Oil: \$1.6999
- **Diesel**
Peterson Oil: \$1.72

In comparison FY17 prices were \$1.6750 and 1.9509 respectively.

- **Town Hall Painting**
Bids for the painting of the Town Hall were opened on July 18, 2017, I received four bids and I am currently working to ensure that the lowest bidder can complete the project.

In between time I would like to remove the trees outside the front and back doors. The trees are overgrown, some not healthy and causing extensive discoloring to the town hall siding. I will look to replace with smaller easier to maintain bushes.

- **Motion (JM) seconded (PB) to eliminate the trees outside the front door of the Town Hall and replace them with something more manageable. Unanimous, all in favor.**

- **Paxton Center School WIFI**

Work will begin this week on installing the WIFI at PCS. This was a long drawn out process because we wanted to get the most access coverage in the school with the funding we have available. I gratefully accepted the expertise of Matt Noponen a Paxton resident to guide me through this process along with our IT person Michael Savasta.

- **Water Meters**

The bids for the new advance water infrastructure bids were recently opened and only one complete bid was received. The Water Board met and awarded the bid to Stiles and Co. to provide Badger Meters over the next four years.

- **Taxes**

Yet another reminder that taxes are now quarterly and were due August 1st Payments should no longer be sent to the Reading lock box but instead to the Town Hall for processing.

- **Picnics**

The COA picnic is on August 16th and is always a great time for our seniors to connect and enjoy good food. The Town's employee's picnic is the following day. The Board is invited to join us at noontime.

- **Concerts**

The Recreation Concert season appear to have been well attended so far. We have two more on the next two Thursdays at the bandstand. These are free concerts with great artists:

- August 16th Paul Couchaine - 6:15pm to 8:15pm
- August 24th Michael Slater (Elvis) – 6:00pm to 8:00pm

- **Paxton Police Civilians Academy**

The next program will begin on September 12th.

The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, August 28, 2017 at 7:00pm.

Adjourned Meeting at 8:10pm, Unanimous all in favor.

Documents from the Meeting filed in BOS office:

Meeting minutes

Agenda

Attendance list

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Graf-Parsons
Executive Assistant