

Selectboard

Minutes

November 15, 2016

Leverett Town Hall, 7:00 pm

Present: Peter, Julie, Tom, and Margie

Police Chief Candidate Interview (Police Chief, Fire Chief, Fire Deputy Chief and another firefighter also in attendance)

The Board met with Scott Minckler, current Police Sergeant and applicant for the Police Chief position and asked him prepared questions about his qualifications and interest in becoming Leverett's next police chief. Scott responded that he was already involved in the Leverett community and that he would like to continue to be so; that he likes to work with neighbors and residents to resolve issues; that he already works well with other departments in town; that he is strong at communicating; and that he is familiar with the department's computers. He was the Police Chief in Lincoln, Maine for a few years before returning to Mass to be a Sergeant and then Acting Chief in Northfield. He has experience on both sides of union contracting and has some experience with budgeting for a department. He prefers working in a small town rather than a large town and plans to stay with Leverett long term if hired. He complimented Gary on how the department is currently run and would like to keep the department mostly the same while complying with expected new training and computer requirements. He is used to being available to the department 24/7 for emergencies and will continue to be so.

Motion made: to appoint Scott Minckler as Leverett's next Police Chief beginning at Gary Billing's retirement in January. Salary to be negotiated. Voted; 3-0 in favor. Everyone congratulated him on his appointment.

Fire Chief

The board met with John Ingram, who was upset after reading about the last meeting with Capital Planning in the newspaper. He has been trying to get estimates for new fire trucks from vendors, which is time consuming and difficult because the trucks are custom built. He was also upset that he had not been invited to the meeting nor told that there would not be a fall town meeting. Peter apologized for the lack of communication and assured him that the Board appreciated his efforts to stay on top of capital projects.

Business:

The new Personnel Policy allowing promotion from within without advertising was raised. Peter read an excerpt from the November 2016 MMA Beacon magazine citing the benefit of succession planning within departments. The matter can be readdressed with the Personnel Board.

Minutes to 11/1/16 meeting were accepted.

The agreement for Transfer Station sharing with Shutesbury was signed

Agreed to send a letter to support the Mayors for Peace initiative. Margie will draft a letter to Federal legislators supporting the effort.

Several historic items have been found in the 1948 highway garage. Board agreed to pursue the sale of them by auction at the next annual town meeting. Margie will notify Historical

Commission and Society of this decision to give them the opportunity to request a different course.

The DEP small town environmental partnership was read through, no decisions made. Margie will ask them how the program benefits the town.

Margie gave an update on the DOER technical assistance grant, which has been awarded and the FRCOG is posed to do the work for us. Margie would like them to help with the upcoming grant application and annual report. Peter signed a full Mass Energy Insight access permission for the FRCOG employee to review our Green Communities annual report to see if Margie misses something.

A thank you was signed.

Board reviewed the mail and signed warrants.

8:15 pm Tax Classification Hearing

Steve Schmidt from the Assessors Office attended to recommend, on behalf of the Assessors, a single tax rate for FY 2017 real estate taxes. **Motion made to have a single tax rate for FY 2017. Voted 3-0 in favor.**

Steve explained that he is considering putting \$190,000 in the overlay account this year, as the town has the excess levy capacity and it would help buffer any ATB decision in the abatement case. This would create a tax rate of \$20.95, which is a 2.05% increase over last year and leave an excess levy of \$153,752. Board agreed and voted to authorize Margie to sign the LA-5 online for on their behalf. Hard copy also was signed.

8:30 pm Highway Department

Resident Todd Campbell and Highway Superintendent David Finn attended. Todd showed pictures of the roadside trimming that was done at his house this fall, which severely cut back a forsythia bush and some older lilacs. Resident Brian Emond joined the discussion to say he walks the road and has never seen those bushes cut back like that. The Board discussed a policy for roadside mowing, as other shrubs have been cut down in the past. Tom agreed to meet with David, Todd, and Brian onsite on Thursday to measure and look at it together.

Bridges

David also has gotten estimates for the design and repair of Old Coke Kiln Road bridge, ranging from \$144,800 for design only to \$90,800 for both design and construction, which also should be able to serve as a design for Mill Yard Road bridge. The Board supported David's pursuit of the less expensive option urging David to replace the bridge with another similarly sized timber bridge. David reported that the Dudleyville Road bridge has been secured for the winter and he has gotten an \$80,000 estimate to redeck and fix its abutments next year.

Meeting adjourned at 9:15 pm

Minutes by McGinnis