

New Ashford Select Board Meeting  
New Ashford Town Hall  
April 26, 2018

Select Board Present: Jason Jayko (chair), Mark Phelps  
Absent: Ken McInerney  
Others Present: Lori Jayko, Richard George

Meeting opened at 4:00

1. Approve the minutes from the 4/17/2018 Select Board Meeting. On a motion by Mark, seconded by Jason, the minutes from the 4/17/2018 Select Board Meeting were approved.

2. Public Comment: None.

3. Annual Town Meeting Warrant: The Town Warrant is with legal counsel. Once feedback is received, the Select Board will schedule a meeting to review and approve. Jason will call Matt Andre from the Department of Revenue about wording to roll the money from the Chapter 115 account over from year to year. The fourteenth article will cover any overage on the furnace expenses not covered by the Community Compact Grant.

4. Budget: The School Committee met 4-26-2018 and amended their budget to add for two new students, taking the FY 19 school budget from \$592,017 to \$620,972. Jason will ask Assessor, Gus Martin, what this does to the 2 ½ override. The total budget number for FY19 is \$870,054.61. The budget for FY 18 was \$725,221.83, with two special town meetings of \$27,900 and \$5,000 for a total of \$758,121.83. Mark made a motion to submit the budget of \$870,054.61 to town meeting, but not endorse it, seconded by Jason.

The owner of the Springs Hotel is waiting for an abatement for the back building for FY 17 before paying his taxes. Demand notices were sent in December. Jason worked with CollectPro, through remote connection, so they could add information to get the second half of the FY 18 bills printed. The tax errors that were made previously will be handled through accounting.

5. Economic Development District: The Berkshire Regional Planning Commission sent an e-mail to the board requesting a letter of support for establishing Berkshire County as an economic development district. This would increase the amount of economic development resources and grant opportunities, and establish a relationship with the Economic Development Agency staff. BRPC would take care of the administrative work and provide the one to one funding match required. An Economic Development Board will be formed as the BRPC does not fit federal requirements. They sent a letter of support for the board to sign and return to the BRPC. Mark made a motion to send a letter of support for the Economic Development District to BRPC, seconded by Jason. Jason copied the letter onto town letterhead and signed it.

6. Electric: The current six-month pricing agreement with Colonial Power is concluding. They are going to market on May 7 for indicative pricing, with final pricing due by 11:00 a.m. on May 14. Suppliers will hold their price until 4:00 pm. Eversource is going to market on May 1. Hampshire Power will provide indicative pricing for the town. The town can sign with a supplier before Eversource's rates are known, but the recommendation is to wait. There are several options to choose from with different term lengths and suppliers, including green energy. There will be two calls on May 7 and May 14. The board will discuss this at the first meeting in May.

Jason met with Chad from Corgi Electric at the Town Hall to look at the electric service. He recommends getting a 22kw generator. It can be liquid or air cooled, and the difference in price balances out over time in efficiency. It should be placed on the north side, at least ten feet from the building. Propane tanks could be buried on the north side past the mailboxes with jersey barriers or steel posts put up for protection. Putting the propane tanks in the ground eliminates the problems brought on by cold weather with the liquid to gas conversion.

The electric panel in the Town Hall cannot remain near the oil tank. If we switch to propane, this will not be an issue. The panel needs to be mounted on a board. New 200-amp service, with a four wire to the panel upstairs is required. It could go through the ceiling tile or conduit. Jason will find out the BTU's for the furnace from H.A. George, and let Chad know. Jason will ask Joe Altier, electrician, to meet him at the Town Hall for another estimate.

There is a way to separate the electricity for broadband using a device that clamps on and monitors the flow to the panel. This way the electric usage for broad band can be billed to subscribers and not to the town hall. Jason will see if the Community Compact grant money needs to be used by the end of the fiscal year.

The broadband equipment will be housed upstairs, due to the concerns of flooding in the basement. Modifications could be made to the Assessor's office, such as removing the shelves or opening up the wall, if it is not load bearing. Using a portion of the Town Clerk's office may also be a possibility. A lean to could be added to the Town Hall or the Fire Station. Jason will talk to Bill Ennon, from the MBI, about using the broadband grant money to update the electric service.

7. Broadband: Verizon is doing the pole surveys now.

8. Any Other Unforeseen Business: None.

9. Warrant: None.

Next meeting May 7, 2018 at 6:30.

Meeting adjourned at 5:30