

MINUTES

**SELECTMEN'S MEETING
TOWN HALL**

**July 29, 2020
12:00 PM**

ATTENDEES:

Leo Enos, Selectman	Shane Beattie, Selectman	Edward Samson, Town Manager
Alan Savage	Rob Christie	Michael Nadeau
Charity Baker	Benjamin Gaetjens-Oleson	

The meeting was called to order at 12:00 p.m. by Chairman Leo Enos

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Ed reviewed the fuel oil and winter sand requests for bids that will be going out. The board was happy with the requests. They will go out in the mail this week to each of the vendors.

Shane mentioned he spoke with Tim Brown and it looks like the State is going to start work on the railroad on Page Hill Road right off.

Ed mentioned he received an email from Ben Southworth of Garland Mill regarding the Parker J Noyes building project stating the NMTC bank has asked the Northern Forest Center have Garland Mill take the loan from the bank rather than the Letter of Credit as first approved. Ben is going to get complete details from Sarah at the Passumpsic Bank however wanted to get approval from the Board of Selectmen to move forward with the change.

Motion was made by Leon and seconded by Shane to approve change from a letter of credit to a loan to the Garland Mill in the amount of \$50,000 for the 2-year time frame. All in favor. Motion carried.

Leo asked about parking during the project. Ed said, Shane spoke with the neighbors and they realized there is enough parking at this time during the project. The biggest concern Shane has noticed is when the Rymes trucks are parked to do their paperwork at the office during the day. There was more discussion regarding parking on Main Street. The board agrees that something needs to be done with all day parking. Ed said an ordinance would need to be created and the board agreed.

Ed reported, he has received 3 bids for the sidewalk. He reviewed each of the bids. Harold Concrete's bid is \$24,150. C & L Cass Construction is \$21,560 and JCB Colby's bid which does not include wire mesh or rebar at \$42 per square yard.

Shane asked if wire mesh or rebar was used when the sidewalks on Main Street were done. Ed said no, JCB Colby did the last sidewalk and they did not use wire mesh or rebar. Shane's concern is there is nothing in writing with the exact details the town wants so they are getting bids from contractors with different materials. Shane stated he would like to see all the specs in writing including materials the town would like used on a project and put that out to the contractors so all of them bid according to the same specs. Ed is going to put

together written specs and send them out to all the contractors. Leo mentioned the board should put together the specs on projects and not the department head. Leon stated he doesn’t feel the board is in a position to make project decisions without input from the department head, as it is not their expertise and the board should be utilizing the department heads for the projects in their field.

Ed stated, the current bids came in less than expected so he would like to add a section on Bridge Street to the project as there are funds still available. He mentioned there is \$76,000 in Highway Block grant money and whatever isn’t used will be carried over and other sections can be done next year.

Ed brought up the issue with the emergency services dispatching at the State DOT office. He had a meeting at the dispatch office and believes they have come up with some ideas to revive the dispatch office so it can remain solvent. Those changes will be implemented this week. Ed stated we need to fight tooth and nail to keep this together, to have a 24/7 dispatch will cost the town a tremendous amount of money. Phil from the State DOT office has been authorized to replace the person that left a month ago and believes he will be authorized to replace the one leaving at the end of the month. Shane asked if Lancaster owns the dispatch equipment and Ed replied, we do. Ed said staffing would be the biggest expense. We would need at least 5 full-time dispatchers in order to run 24-hour rotating shifts. Ed mentioned Phil has realized the importance of keeping the dispatch center. He is hoping they will be able to increase the pay grade in order to keep personnel. Ed is very confident they are going to make it work. Leon stated, we should start planning for dispatch being eliminated in the future. Ed believes NCIC has grant money to be used to set up a dispatch center. He has reached out to his contact there to see if it is available and what needs to be done to capture some of that money. Ed is waiting to hear from Tom Andross to have him share the fee schedule for Twin State dispatch.

Leo mentioned that Ben Oleson has been offered a job and it is not confirmed if he is going to take it. Ben was asked to join the meeting to discuss why he is unhappy with the work environment. He stated things are never addressed. He is concerned that the employees in some of the departments are fractured. Ben mentioned when the issue with Dennis Patnoe working while he was on workers comp. Ed stated it was handled and he was not under restrictions when he finished those jobs. Ben feels the person responsible for the safety committee should be leading by example and not working while he is on disability. It caused tension among all the town employees. Ed stated he wishes he said something sooner.

Ben said it goes back even further when Bill Colborn was getting done. The report came out and Bill’s allegations were Ed’s behavior should change or the town would be opened up to further liability and in the meeting, Ed stated he was not changing and the board said they didn’t want him to change. Ed said he wishes he made him aware of his concerns and opened up sooner. Ben stated, he feels it would have been a waste of his time.

Leon mentioned that he remembers the meeting after the Colborn investigation that the board did tell Ed they didn’t want to see him change from having the upfront approach. He feels if things were still a concern it should have been mentioned. Ben’s concern is he keeps being put in the middle of things.

Ben mentioned the meeting that was held a few weeks ago was a big secret and he wasn’t invited to it.

Shane stated he takes employees very seriously and he has been approached by several employees regarding Dennis and being asked how many weeks of vacation he has because he is never at the transfer station. He is working on other jobs for the town and at his house.

Shane feels Ed has created an environment that has gotten out of control and things need to change. He stated there is turmoil among the employees. He does not want to see Ben leave the town’s employ because people aren’t doing their job.

Leon mentioned the Dennis issue has come back up since he has started work again at the town office. There have been questions about whether he is working for the town or if he working as an independent contractor. There was a question on whether his position is needed at the transfer station as some feel he is never there. Ed stated he is there more than they realize.

Alan mentioned you need to keep in mind that Dennis is the only one that knows how to run the solar arrays completely. That is something needs to be considered if you are going to change/eliminate that position. The board feels there needs to be some cross training for all positions.

Shane asked Ed what he feels should be done moving forward. Ed said, if Ben has an issue, he needs to come to him and they can come to a solution. Ed is going to talk with him after the meeting and see how we can move forward.

Ed said if there is an issue with an employee, he goes to the department head and they approach the employee. No employee should have a fear of approaching him with any issue.

Leon asked if the sidewalk that was done last is going to be resealed. It is peeling up. Ed said that needs to be done along with other sections around town.

Ed asked when he puts the sidewalk bid/proposals back out do they want him to bid with rebar and the board stated they do. He will get that written up and out to the bidders.

Rob wanted to mention this meeting was one of the most productive meetings he has been to but it was noticed as a work session and several things were discussed that are more for a regular selectmen’s meeting.

Some employees have mentioned they are not sure what their job descriptions are. Ed said there are job descriptions and the board agrees they need to review them and update them as needed. The board would like to see annual employee reviews take place again.

Motion made by Leon and seconded by Shane to adjourn. All in favor. Motion carried.
Meeting adjourned at 1:33 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Charity M. Baker

Board of Selectmen

Date: _____

Leo Enos

Leon Rideout

Shane Beattie

