



**Office of Board of Selectmen
Town of Mason**

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Selectmen Meeting 10/22/2019
Approved Minutes

Present: Selectmen Louise Lavoie, Pete McGinnity, Charles Moser; Kathy Wile, Brenda Wiley; members of the public.

Called to Order: The meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM by Chair Louise Lavoie.

Approvals:

- Noted that the payroll manifests and accounts payable manifests had been signed.
- Minutes of the October 8, 2019 staff meeting were reviewed. Motion from Pete, second from Charlie to accept as written. Three votes to accept minutes of 10/8/19 meeting as written.
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- Minutes from the 10/18 2019 work meeting were reviewed. Motion from Pete, second from Charlie to accept as written. Three votes to accept minutes of 10/18/19 work meeting as written.
- Representation letter for auditors required signature of the Chair. Charlie motioned, second from Pete, to authorize Louise to sign on behalf of the Board, three votes to authorize her signature. Louise signed off, and it was passed to Treasurer Dee Mitchell for her signature.
- Microtime proposal for equipment replacement has been modified and up for approval, to be done electronically. Pete motioned, second from Louise, to authorize AA Kathy Wile to approve the 1 year plus \$1 lease option for IT equipment with Microtime. Three votes to authorize approval of the contract.

New Business:

- Barbara Devore was on hand to discuss the program proposed by Freedom's Way to honor Twig Jones. Their focus is on women in their 2020 programing, and have proposed a program on Saturday July 18, 2020 to begin at the Mason Library with the collection they had assembled for the 250th celebration, include a walk/talk about the Bode sculpture, include the music and art teachers and their programming at the elementary school, and perhaps finishing at Pickity Place for viewing of the Little Red Riding Hood illustrations inspiration. Barbara asked to use Town Hall, which was approved unless the drainage/foundation work is in progress, in which case they will ask to have the school as a backup plan.
- Louise mentioned that she had attended the Governor's 2019 Arts Awards, and on behalf of the Town accepted the Creative Communities Award, which she brought to the meeting. She explained the award was received due to the application submitted by the school's art teacher

Michelle Jimeno, and referenced the long history of artists in this town and the recent support of many genres of art and craft represented at the Mason 250th celebration.

It was decided the trophy would be displayed at the school until the end of the school year, and then it will permanently move to the Mann House.

- Health Trust has sent its notification for rates for next year for Health and Dental coverage. Overall increase of 7.4% for both medical and dental; dental costs are 100% employee paid.
- Pete motioned to authorize Louise to sign the transmittal agreement on behalf of the Board. Second from Charlie, three votes to agree with the authorization. Louise signed for the town.
- Meeting/manifest dates was the topic. Brenda is away for the next two meetings (Nov 12 and Nov 26). It was agreed she could do a manifest for both Nov 1 and Nov 18 instead.
- Harry Spear spoke on behalf of the Forestry Committee, who was interested in putting a warrant article or two on the warrant for town meeting. First purpose was to release funds to reimburse Conservation Commission for legal fees and appraisal costs for the gift of the Town Forest Property. Second purpose was to release funds for trail development and maintenance. Selectmen agreed there would need to be 2 warrant articles.

Old Business:

- A resident of Jed's Lane, was attending along with the town clerk Deb Morrison, to update to the deed waiver on the property. The property is under agreement, and scheduled to close before Nov 18. The agreement was reviewed, accepted by selectmen, with the provision that it will be reviewed at the 12/10/19 BOS meeting. If the it hasn't sold by then, it will go back to the TC/TX for deeding.
- Tax rate setting update – Brenda reported the state, with their recent budget approval, was releasing extra monies to schools and municipalities. Mason's town share is \$10,576.01, and is recommended to be used to offset the tax rate for next year. Brenda had prepared 8 potential tax rate scenarios using money from the fund balance to both offset the rate and save for abatements. All scenarios show an increase in the tax rate. There was discussion about the impact of using the newly added \$10,576 to change the tax rate vs using it for another purpose this budget year – where would it make the biggest difference? Minimal effect on individual tax bills. If used for something other than to offset tax rate, there would need to be a public hearing. Brenda did not know for sure if it had to be used this year or if the amount could be encumbered; she will check with DRA in the morning. Agreement to use the unanticipated money to go toward highway equipment (truck) purchase.
Final discussion led to a motion by Charlie, seconded by Pete, to use \$150,000 from the fund balance to offset the tax rate for 2020, and \$50,000 from the fund balance to reserve for abatements and overlay. Three votes in affirmative to use those numbers. Brenda will find out about using money now or later, as well as confirm whether or not the \$10,576 was included in the fund balance number provided by DRA.
- Quarry access update – no one representing CC was attending the meeting, but there had been several emails with updates about bridge project design updates and rail trail improvements. It was questioned whether a DES wetlands permit was going to be required, and decided that CC was familiar with those procedures and it was their decision.
- Broadband Committee was the next item on the agenda – Louise will bring the charter to the next meeting. It had been discovered that Steve Hoffman, who long ago had been appointed to a previous Broadband committee, was still listed on the town web page as the contact for people

with internet/broadband access questions. It was agreed his appointment had long ago expired, and he should be relieved of the duty as the contact person. He should be invited to participate with the current group, and web contact should be changed to selectmen's office. Kathy will share all the information with him.

Informational Items/Communication:

- Cyclical Monitoring Report had been received from DRA, showing a few disagreements with the town's assessor's reports. Differences appeared to be minimal, noted that Todd had received a copy prior to the town getting noticed. Todd had not shared any concerns about the report.
- Primex insurance numbers for 2020 were also in – unemployment compensation was flat, liability up reflecting the addition of the new HD building, and worker's compensation was up slightly as well.

Public Forum:

Lorna Ledbetter had attended to share concerns about speeding, garbage and beer cans on Walker Brook Rd. She walks her dog twice each day and is concerned for her safety, as well as that of the neighbors' young children. Selectmen suggested the best approach is call the PD at the time of the incidents, and even if the speeders are not caught there will be a documentation of time and vehicles involved. Selectmen will share her concerns with the chief, and ask for extra patrols on the weekends when the problem seems to be at its worst.

Ms. Ledbetter also shared concern about the 3 culverts which converge at her end of the road, near the Greenville line, and seem to cause flooding in her yard when there are heavy rains. Selectmen will ask the road agent what his investigation into the culvert system had shown, and see which culvert seems to be the cause of the problem.

Non-Public:

Adjournment:

There being no further business, Louise motioned to adjourn, second from Charlie. Three votes to adjourn at 9:04 PM.

Next regularly scheduled meeting will be Tuesday November 12, 2019 at the Mann House at 7:30 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Kathy Wile
Administrative Assistant