

SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES
AUGUST 22, 2019 at 6:30pm
TOWN HALL, SELECT BOARD CONFERENCE ROOM

CALL TO ORDER/OPENING

Vice Chair Harry Brooks called the meeting to order at 6:30pm. Vice-Chair Harry Brooks, 2nd Vice-Chair Rick Antanavica, Selectman John Shocik, Town Administrator David Genereux and Assistant to the Town Administrator Kristen Forsberg were in attendance. Selectwoman Sandra Wilson and Selectwoman Provencher were absent.

1. SCHEDULED ITEMS

a. Meeting with residents regarding drainage issues in the Warren Avenue area

Town Administrator David Genereux noted the Town has been evaluating options for addressing the malfunctioning retention ponds at the new Fire & EMS Headquarters. The Town obtained approval from DEP to drain the ponds with a submersible pump on Tuesday. This method of draining the ponds is less labor intensive and is automatic.

Highway Superintendent Dennis Griffin discussed the neighborhood site walk. During the visit, no overflow or leeching from the ponds traversing open ground was observed. The swale is now at ground level and full of vegetation from small weeds to 8-20" trees. Mr. Griffin noted that lack of maintenance of the swale by the residents is contributing to the issue and he found grass clippings, trees, flowerpots etc. built up over the years in the swale. When the ponds were initially drained, the first pond remained empty for a few days and the pond behind the station filled minimally. The middle pond slowly filled up. Mr. Griffin stated that the pump now in place should keep the main pond at base level which should keep the other ponds empty as well.

Mr. Genereux discussed the potential design/construction issue with the ponds themselves. The ponds were supposed to drain by themselves but are staying full unless the town pumps them out. The Town can't make any changes to the ponds or any claim of design or construction flaws would be voided. The system now in place will drain automatically and will be watched to see the impact on the neighborhood through the spring.

Mr. Griffin noted that if the ponds were found to be designed or installed incorrectly, there could be the possibility of redesigning a system that would be pumped into the Town's existing stormwater system. Mr. Griffin stressed that the Town can't touch the retaining ponds until the lawsuit is complete or any warranty claims would be voided. Mr. Griffin stated the swale must be maintained by the neighbors as this is also a contributing factor. If there are no design or construction flaws, the Town will have to research the next steps. By maintaining the ponds at their most minimal the problems with excess water in the neighborhood should be resolved. Putting in a perimeter drainage system with an underground tank would be very expensive and the Town needs to understand the root of the problem in order to permanently address it. Mr. Genereux noted the Town will continue to work with the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and explore options with a third-party engineer after seeing the effects of the new pump. As the backyards in this area have always been yet, it is important to fully understand the issue before implementing a solution that may be the wrong one.

Residents expressed concerns including the swale no longer working, water coming off the Fire station property, the inability of the old drainage system to maintain the additional water coming off of the site, the inability of neighbors to use their backyards, concerns about EEE and potential mold in their basements and concerns about how well the sump pump will work in the winter.

The Board discussed the possibility of using remaining project funds coupled with a warrant article at Town meeting to fund the engineering study. Residents requested a borrowing authorization be put on Fall Town Meeting to fund the permanent solution once determined and that the Town check with Town Counsel to see if there is a way to work on the ponds now without voiding the warranty or eliminating the possibility of assigning liability. Mr. Genereux noted that a debt exclusion can't be passed without an election, and a borrowing amount is needed for the election. The residents requested that they be involved in the site walk for the engineering study.

A motion was made by Mr. Antanavica and seconded by Mr. Shocik to authorize the Town Administrator and the Highway Superintendent to obtain quotes for an engineering study for the affected area and to ask the Fire Station Building Committee to attend the next Select Board meeting. The motion carried 3:0:0.

b. Set Date, Time and Location of Fall Special Town Meeting – October 22, 2019 at 7pm, Town Hall Gym

A motion was made by Mr. Antanavica and seconded by Mr. Shocik to set the date, time and location for Fall Special Town Meeting as October 22, 2019 at 7pm in the Town Hall Gym. The motion carried 3:0:0.

c. Open the Fall Special Town Meeting Warrant and Set Warrant Close Date of September 5, 2019

A motion was made by Mr. Antanavica and seconded by Mr. Shocik to open the Fall Special Town Meeting warrant and set the warrant close date of September 5, 2019. The motion carried 3:0:0.

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Antanavica and seconded by Mr. Shocik at 8:16pm. The motion carried 3:0:0.