

Town of Colrain
Select Board Meeting
Remote Conference Call-in
6:00 P.M.
MINUTES OF OCTOBER 13, 2020

Present Mark Thibodeau, Joe Kurland, Mike Slowinski

Others Present Kate Barrett and Toby Bassett, School Reps; Melissa Dunnet, MTRSD Business Manager; Michael Shuipis, MLP Co-manager; Alice Wozniak, Director of Assessing; Eileen Savaugeau, Town Clerk; Paula Harrison, Treasurer; Scott Sullivan, Highway Superintendent; Betsy Shuipis, Administrative Asst.; Kevin Fox, Town Administrator

The meeting, held remotely through conference call-in, was called to order by Mark Thibodeau at 6 p.m.

Appointments Paula Harrison – Treasurer/Collector – Broadband Roll-over Note

The Broadband roll-over note of \$2.4 million the Town bought last year will roll-over on November 6, 2020. There was a good turnout of 5 bids. Oppenheimer bid 1.25 with a premium of \$9,935, which brings the interest rate down to .585, and they became the lowest bidder. The Town can use premium for a capital expense this year or apply part of it to the fire truck loan. The Town will likely spend most of the \$2.4 million by June 30.

Paula asks that the Board members come in on Thursday to sign the note in the presence of the Town Clerk.

Mellissa Dunnet – MTRSD Business Manager – RE: CARES ACT funding request

Melissa is asking the Town if we'd share some of our CARES Act money with the school district. There is a need for technology for students to learn remotely. There are 33 Colrain elementary school students the district is buying chrome books for (33 @ \$189 is \$6,237) and also a ventilation upgrade to get 2-way airflow is quoted at \$4,345. Colrain was awarded \$147,000 CARES Act money, with approximately \$75,000 pending of requests.

MOVED: Joe Kurland moved to approve the application of CARE funds for the chrome books and the HVAC ventilation at the Colrain Elementary School. Mike Slowinski seconded. Roll call: **all ayes.**

Question: Joe Kurland asked about the status of the Library ventilation and air filtration work? Mike Slowinski responded that Chelsea got a preliminary quote from Sandri, but the price was doubled when Chelsea received the official quote. Mike agreed to contact a 2nd contractor who will do a site visit before submitting their quote.

Michael Shuipis, MLP Co-Manager – Broadband Project Update

Michael's updates:

- The Whip City Fiber Colrain sign up page went live and as of today, there are 300 people who have signed up for Broadband.
- Broadband sign-up signage is up around town.
- There are 1-3 crews putting up strand throughout the town - almost 60,000 ft. - and some fiber, too.
- Starting 10/26 there will be a full work force. The crews are anticipating winter weather approaching with frozen ground and harsh weather causing dangerous conditions for their crews. Consequently, their priorities are getting those areas of town done first.
- Communication with the contract company has been going well - access to daily reports that track where the crews are working and the status of that work.
- Michael has started analysis of the data to get a profile of those who have signed up vis-à-vis what it will cost the Town to hook them up. It's early yet, but we're getting more drops that are relatively inexpensive.

Kevin will start forwarding the daily updates to the Select Board members.

Question: Mike Slowinski had a call from a resident who asked if all the terms and conditions a customer must accept before you sign up with Whip City Fiber had been vetted through our Town Council? Kevin believes these terms and conditions are standard for the Hilltowns, but also for the City of Westfield, too. **Michael will talk with Westfield about how this agreement evolved and what other towns are using it.**

New Business Appointment to Fill Vacancy – Town Representative to the Upper Pioneer Valley Veteran's District

The duties include meetings to approve the budget. The group is run by professional staff. Mike Slowinski volunteered.

MOVED: Joe Kurland moved to appoint Mike Slowinski town representative to the Upper Pioneer Valley Veteran's District. Mark Thibodeau seconded. Roll call: **Mark: aye; Joe: aye. Mike Slowinski abstained.**

Request to Place Fundraising Sign on Town Property (Town Common) by the Colrain Veteran's Memorial Committee

The committee would like to put a fund raising thermometer at the flag pole on the town common to raise awareness of a fundraiser for a future memorial. They are aware that once the intersection project begins next spring, they will have to remove it.

MOVED: Joe Kurland moved to allow the Veteran's Memorial Committee to put a fundraising sign on Town Property (Town Common). Mike Slowinski seconded. Roll call - **all ayes.**

Question: Mark Thibodeau asked how one could contribute to the memorial. Kevin said one could either donate to the Town of Colrain to be deposited in that specific fund or to the Veteran's Memorial Committee who would turn it over to the town.

Report on OPEB Valuation Report

The Town of Colrain is fully funded. The Select Board applauded all who made this happen. Kevin will send a press release to the Recorder.

Old Business Proposed Surplus Fill Policy

MOVED: Mike Slowinski moved to adopt the Surplus Fill Policy with the clarifying sentence that was added Kevin Fox. Joe seconded. Roll call: **all ayes.**

Unanticipated Business

Annual Election Warrant ready to sign

Joe Kurland moved to approve the warrant for the 2020 State Election with the revision for Question 2. Mike Slowinski seconded. Roll call: **all ayes.**

Letter from town employees re: Energy Committee

The Energy Committee is meeting October 15th. Kevin will invite the members to the next meeting on Oct 27.

Email from the Deerfield Watershed re: designate

This item will be put on next meeting's agenda. Kevin will ask Mr. Curtis to attend.

Select Board Meeting Minutes of 9/22/20.

MOVED: Joe Kurland moved to approve the minutes of 9/22/20. Mike Slowinski seconded. Roll call: **all ayes.**

MOVED: Mike Slowinski moved to close the meeting at 7:20 p.m. Joe Kurland seconded. Roll call: **all ayes.**

Respectfully submitted,

Betsy Shuipis
Administrative Assistant

Accepted by the Select Board

Mark Thibodeau, Chair

Joe Kurland

Mike Slowinski

Select Board Minutes 10-13-2020

Documents

Select Board Meeting Notes

Surplus Fill Policy

Letter to the Select Board from town employees re Energy Committee dated September 21, 2020