

**TOWN OF BELCHERTOWN
BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, JANUARY 14, 2019
Selectmen's Meeting Room, Lawrence Memorial Hall**



Present: Nicholas O'Connor, George D. Archible, Gail Gramarossa, Brenda Q. Aldrich, Ed Boscher

Call to Order: Chairman O'Connor called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

2) Sign Documents:

- a) Warrant #1929 was signed for \$668,764.71.
- b) Routine documents
- c) Approval of Minutes: Mr. Archible moved to accept the minutes of December 3, 2018. Motion seconded by Mr. O'Connor. Motion passes 3 – yes, 2 – abstain (Aldrich, Boscher). Ms. Aldrich moved to accept the minutes of December 17, 2018. Motion seconded by Mr. Archible. Motion passes 4 – yes, 1 – abstain (O'Connor).

3) Additions to the Agenda:

4) Appearances Before the Board:

- 7:03 p.m. Pole Hearing #2019-05 – Jackson Street: Ms. Gramarossa read the public hearing notice and opened the hearing.

Diane Clowes from National Grid was present for the hearing. The request is to relocate one jointly owned pole (P24) to the opposite side of the street due to change in road layout. The Town requested this change due to new lighting on the new road known as Carriage Drive. Ms. Clowes stated she heard from Verizon a few days ago and was told that they were not planning on moving wires over to that side of the street so it will be a solely owned pole. Steve Williams, Director of Public Works and Kevin Williams, Water Superintendent are both aware that this will be a solely owned pole.

With no comments from the public, Mr. Archible moved to close the public hearing. Motion seconded by Ms. Aldrich. Motion passes 5 – 0.

Mr. Archible moved to approve petition #2019-05. Motion seconded by Ms. Aldrich. Motion passes 5 – 0.

- 7:10 p.m. Keith Poulin: Keith Poulin and Sam Joyal came before the Board as members of the American Legion Post 239 to present a proposal for the Town to create an annual award to be given at the annual town meeting entitled Home Town Hero. Their initial thought was to recognize contributions by veterans to Belchertown and their military service. Many of these veterans will not have their names on the town monuments so this would be a way to document their

contributions to the military and to Belchertown. He mentioned some of the veterans who have already passed away in Belchertown and had contributed to the town and to the military. They also feel that first responders should have a similar type of award for an act of heroism that wouldn't necessarily qualify for the employee of the year award. He felt specific criteria could be determined by a committee and he would be willing to be on that committee. They would want to include under the veterans' award all active duty, military veterans, National Guard and reserve personnel. The first responders could be the police and fire departments, EMT and all other medical personnel. It feels the award should be on an annual basis but does not have to be awarded if there wasn't anyone who fit the criteria in a given year.

Ms. Aldrich felt was a fabulous idea. Mr. Archible felt it was long overdue. Ms. Aldrich questioned if Mr. Poulin would facilitate it or if the American Legion would facilitate it. Mr. Poulin commented that he would be willing to participate. He also felt the Town's Veterans' Agent would a good central location to organize it. Mr. Archible questioned if it could be the Veterans' Services Advisory Board that facilitates it.

Ms. Gramarossa indicated that with the first responder's award it should be facilitated by someone who is close to them that would facilitate their award.

Mr. Boscher thanked Mr. Poulin for taking the time to come up with the idea. It is long overdue to recognize the men and women who make that decision to serve for the greater good he feels they can't be honored enough.

Mr. Brougham indicated he is willing to work with Mr. Poulin to develop some protocol and who will be eligible, how it will be managed who will receive and review the nominations.

Mr. Poulin also mentioned that one of their ideas for the veterans was that they could have a perpetual board where the name would go on a plaque that might be kept in the veterans' office. The first responders could also do something similar and keep their plaque somewhere of their choosing.

The Board was supportive of the idea and encouraged Mr. Poulin to move forward. There should be enough time to have the award ready for this year's annual town meeting.

5) Discussion/Action Items:

- a. Discuss Granby Bow and Gun Club Special Permit Application: Mr. O'Connor presented details. The Board recently became aware of an application to the Zoning Board of Appeals in Granby for the Granby Bow and Gun Club. The application was incomplete. He drafted a letter that was delivered by the town administrator to the Town of Granby in advance of that meeting. Our letter recommended that the Town of Granby not proceed with this hearing for a variety

of reasons with the biggest being that the application was not complete and that some of the items that were in the application weren't even up for appeal. He explained further concerns that were stated in the letter.

Granby did continue the hearing until March giving the applicants' time to complete their application. Belchertown is trying to advocate for the residents who live nearby. Mr. O'Connor commented that he can hear the shooting at his house as clear as day and he is not close to the range. He reminded the Board of all of the events leading up to this special permit application by the Granby Bow and Gun Club.

Mr. Brougham commented that the Granby meeting was posted as a hearing. The application was incomplete and never should have been accepted or scheduled for a hearing because it was so incomplete and lacking in details. It was only when residents who hoped to have their concerns heard did someone from the Granby ZBA announce that the hearing was postponed. There was no formal opening of the hearing it was postponed after the applicant went to the front of the room and sat between two of the ZBA members holding a quiet discussion with no audio. It was first rescheduled for February 25th and because of some objection from some people in the audience who couldn't make it that night the applicant again went to the front of the room and sat between ZBA members talking amongst themselves agreed to a March 5th date. While he respects the Town of Granby's rights to hold their meetings as they see fit he felt this hearing fell short of being a hearing. He asked the Belchertown Board of Selectmen to continue to monitor the situation as he doesn't have any confidence that the application will be reviewed with any degree of concern.

Ms. Aldrich mentioned how our Town is trying to help the abutters to the gun club but questioned if the residents of Granby had anyone from their town helping them.

Joe Chaloux, a Granby resident from School Street introduced himself. He is not a direct abutter but has been involved in the whole process from the beginning. The original cease and desist appeared to address the expansion of the gun club. That was issued September 5, 2017. After the December Granby Select Board meeting where the Chris Martins had talked about bankrupting the town there appeared to be a shift as to what the gun club would accept as a resolution to this problem.

Mr. O'Connor is concerned that they are going through an appeals process for a permit that was never granted in the first place. Mr. Chaloux feels they are going through the appeals process because it's a pre-existing, non-conforming use and therefore under the Granby by-laws any expansion should have gone through the ZBA first.

Mr. O'Connor also commented that there are some legitimate threats on message boards around this. Residents are feeling threatened. There is talk of bringing in

bigger ammo, taking plywood and directing the sound at the abutters. The Belchertown Board of Selectmen will stay on top of it as much as they can. Someone from the Town of Belchertown will be at the March hearing.

Paula Hodecker and her husband Brendan Stecchini from Jeffrey Lane have lived in Belchertown for the last 20 years. It wasn't until the last couple of years that they have heard the shooting from the gun club; she never heard it before then. If they can now hear the shooting in their neighborhood she can only imagine what it's like for the people who live near the gun club. It is a very unnerving kind of noise.

- b. Discuss Michael Norton's Annual Request RE: Bike Race, April 27, 2019: Ms. Aldrich presented the details to the Board. This is an annual bike race. Fire Chief Bock has submitted a letter indicating he is requesting a two person detail. Chief Pronovost also recommends hiring one officer on a detail to assist with the bike race. Mr. O'Connor reminded the Board that Mr. Norton came before the Board last year and agreed to all these terms with no issues during the bike race.

Ms. Aldrich moved the Board approve Mr. Norton's Annual Bike Race Request with the conditions set by the Chief of Police and the Fire Chief. Motion seconded by Mr. Boscher. Motion passes 4 – yes, 1 – no (Archible).

- c. Discuss 4th Annual SOAAR 5K & Music Festival, September 7, 2019: Mr. Archible presented the details to the Board. This is the 4th Annual SOAAR 5K and Music Festival. They are partnering once again with the Belchertown Police Department.

Mr. Archible moved the Board approve the SOAAR 5K & Music Festival. Motion seconded by Ms. Aldrich. Motion passes 5 – 0.

- d. Accept Resignation of High School Council Member on Scholarship Committee: Mr. Boscher presented the details to the Board. Donna Robbins has submitted her resignation from the Scholarship Committee, effective December 17, 2018. The Board accepted the resignation. A letter will be sent to Ms. Robbins thanking her for her service to the Town. If anyone is interested in participating with this committee a letter of interest should be sent in.
- e. Appoint Part-Time Social Services Outreach Assistant / SHINE Counselor: Mr. Boscher presented the details to the Board. Per the recommendation of Ms. Langlois, Executive Director of the Belchertown Council on Aging, Mr. Boscher moved to appoint Laurene Kendall to the position of Social Services Outreach Assistant/SHINE Counselor. Starting date to be determined by the Executive Director of the Council on Aging pending a CORI check. Motion seconded by Ms. Aldrich. Motion passes 5 – 0.
- f. Appoint Aquatic Coordinator: Ms. Aldrich presented the details to the Board. Per the recommendation of Kyle Thibeault, Director of Parks and Recreation, Ms. Aldrich moved to appoint Maryjean Furnia to the position of Aquatics Coordinator, effective January 22, 2019. Motion seconded by Mr. Archible. Mr. O'Connor commented that there were some minor adjustments to the job description. This position will now oversee and have involvement with the

Stingray program such as scheduling practices and attending meetings as well as involvement with the Town Beach. Motion passes 5 – 0.

- g. Appoint Assistant IT Director: Mr. O'Connor presented the details to the Board. Kevin Hannon, IT Director is recommending the appointment of Justin Byrne to the position of Assistant IT Director. Mr. Byrne was previously employed by the Town in the IT Department but left when his position as a network administrator was eliminated. Mr. O'Connor moved the Board appoint Justin Byrne to the position of Assistant IT Director, effective immediately. Motion seconded by Ms. Gramarossa. Mr. Boscher questioned the reason Mr. Byrne left the department. Mr. O'Connor explained how the network administrator position came to be eliminated. Vote taken – motion passes 5 – 0.
- h. Set Deadlines for Warrant Articles – Special Town Meeting and Annual Town Meeting: Mr. O'Connor presented the details to the Board. The Board needs to set the deadlines for the Special Town Meeting on May 13th at 7:00 p.m. at the Belchertown High School. Mr. O'Connor moved the Board set the deadline as February 27th at 4:00 p.m. to submit properly prepared warrant articles for the Special Town Meeting. Motion seconded by Ms. Aldrich. Mr. Boscher questioned why the deadline wouldn't be the same as that for the annual town meeting. Mr. Brougham explained it has to do with when the warrant articles have to be posted. The Special Town meeting warrant is posted 14 days prior to the meeting while the Annual Town meeting warrant is posted seven days prior. The vote was taken for set the deadline for the special town meeting warrant. Motion passes 5 – 0.

Mr. O'Connor moved the Board set the deadline as February 20th at 4:00 p.m. to submit warrant articles for the Annual Town meeting. Motion seconded by Ms. Aldrich. Motion passes 5 – 0.

Ms. Gramarossa questioned if the deadline for the warrant articles for the annual town meeting was the same for citizen petitions. She was told the deadline was not the same. Citizen petitions are accepted up until the time that the warrant is posted.

- i. Review Special Permit and Site Plan – ZPT Energy Solutions II, LLC, 260 Ware Road: Mr. O'Connor commented that there is nothing for the Board to do except to remand it to the Planning Board in order to go through the correct process.

Mr. Boscher commented that he has had residents question why the Board doesn't stop some of these projects. He has told them that the Board of Selectmen can't do that. They can offer their view and/or feedback but these plans/permits need to go before the correct Boards for their review as they are the experts on what is allowed.

Mr. O'Connor is a little concerned as there are about 13 of these solar arrays planned in town. He wants to make sure the Planning Board and Conservation are doing a thorough job reviewing these plans and he trusts that they are.

Mr. Boscher questioned the Town Administrator about the zoning by-laws. He has been asked why the town doesn't just change the zoning by-laws. We know that the Town can't just go and change them while in the middle of reviewing these plans. Ms. Gramarossa commented that the Planning Board is working on revising by-laws. Residents need to go to the annual town meeting to vote on these changes and not wait to do something when they feel the changes affect them.

Mr. Brougham reminded the Board that a citizen petition is advisory. It is a show of hand but does not have any jurisdiction on changing zoning. It is remanded back to the Planning Board or the respective board. A zoning amendment requires a two-thirds vote at town meeting.

With no action to take, Mr. O'Connor remanded the special permit back to the Planning Board for their review.

- j. Review Special Permit and Site Plan – ZPT Energy Solutions II, LLC, Off Railroad Street: With no action to take, Mr. O'Connor remanded the special permit back to the Planning Board for their review.
- k. Review Site Plan – Belchertown Day School, Front Street: Mr. O'Connor presented the details to the Board. He has no particular concerns. Ms. Aldrich commented there will be a public hearing for this on January 22, 2019. With no action to be taken, Mr. O'Connor remanded the plan back to the Planning Board for their review.
- l. Review Draft Social Media Policy: Mr. O'Connor presented the details to the Board. He and Ms. Gramarossa put the draft policy together. He wants comments from the Board and once those comments are received then he will ask department heads for their comments.

The intent is that all new employees would have to sign the policy when they are hired. There would be some type of annual or bi-annual recertification as is done with other policies. This policy gives best practice when the employee is representing the town along with a few suggestions for personal use of social media.

Mr. O'Connor asked the Board if there were any comments now or if the Board wanted to take the time to review the policy on and send comments to him. He will incorporate any comments as well as those that come back from the department heads. The Board will review the final draft once it is completed.

- a. Executive Session – MGL Chapter 30A, Section 21, Subsections 2 and 3: Ms. Gramarossa moved the Board enter executive session at the conclusion of their regular session pursuant to MGL Chapter 30A, Section 21, Subsections 2, and 3 and not to reconvene in open meeting. Motion seconded by Mr. O'Connor. Roll call vote: O'Connor – yes, Archible – yes, Gramarossa – yes, Aldrich – yes, Boscher - yes.
- m. Miscellaneous Matters:

6) Town Administrator's Report: Town Administrator Brougham gave his report.

- He held a department heads meeting last week going over preliminary budget packet distribution. Reviewed some recent labor law amendments. Recognized a few new employees. He got an update on Belchertown Police Departments' effort to receive full accreditation. Chief Pronovost was happy to report that Belchertown Police Department is fully accredited. The review Board commented to the Chief that the Belchertown Police Department application was one of the best applications they have ever seen. We are one of only five departments in the area that is accredited.
- Tomorrow night the Finance Committee is meeting along with some of the Board of Selectmen. This will be a very preliminary talk regarding the budget.
- This Thursday evening the Patrick Center Re-Use Committee will be meeting. There is an expanded committee with varying interests. Hopefully the committee can steer that site into reuse that is in the best interest of the town.
- There was some discussion a couple of weeks ago about the school's strategic planning announcement regarding a new middle school. He spent a considerable amount of time with the superintendent, the maintenance coordinator and the school business manager last week. They are interested in coming to the Finance Committee meeting on February 14, 2019. After speaking with Chairman O'Connor following that meeting it was decided to try and have the Finance Committee and the School Committee to attend the Board of Selectmen meeting on February 11th. He has asked the superintendent to clarify student enrollment with past, current and future predictions. This is a very preliminary meeting.
- It is looking like at the February 25th Board of Selectmen meeting there will be a presentation with our Storm Water Committee, our consultant from the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, a technical consultant and a consultant that has been working with us on how we can develop a user fee system for the stormwater utility. The committee is thinking that the Town will have to present a warrant article at the Annual Town Meeting to seek approval to create this utility. The first informational meeting will be in February which will be followed up with peer group and public hearings to try and explain why we are doing this.

Mr. O'Connor questioned if there was any feedback of the action the Town is engaged in with other towns with the stormwater mandate. Mr. Brougham commented that there has been some temporary consideration from the court in terms of delaying the implementation and some of the prescriptive type maintenance has been removed. The Town Administrator feels it is not right that the Town is being forced to do this for the reasons that we were given while other more developed communities that don't have impaired water that feeds into a standby reservoir don't have to comply. He's concerned with all the salt that the State puts down on the State Highway. He doesn't know if the State is going to have to comply with the mandate. They have all those tributary streams that they are responsible for the maintenance for that run into the greater Boston reservoir. Mr. O'Connor commented that the prescriptive nature of putting similar rules on dissimilar towns. That they aren't contributing in the same way is unfortunate.

7) **Review of Weekly Mail:** Reviewed, no discussion held.

8) **Individual Board Members' Reports:**

Mr. Archible: He has a meeting on next Tuesday for the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission for the Metropolitan Planning Board. He will get updates on the town projects. They did coring samples on Rt. 202 across from Checkers and at the intersection of Rt. 202 and Rt. 21. There will be traffic signals in these areas.

Ms. Gramarossa: She recognized the Police Department for their accreditation as well as their new open door policy for anyone who is struggling with substance abuse or addiction. The Police Department is taking the lead in our area. Other communities are looking at what our Police Department is doing.

She mentioned in the past the efforts of the Historical Commission and the Historic District By-Law Commission to look into the certified local government application process so that should be on one of the upcoming Board of Selectmen agendas. It will up the chance of the Town receiving some grants.

Mr. O'Connor: Mentioned the toys for tots where the Belchertown Police Department played Santa Claus to a lot of kids in town. It seems to be getting bigger and better every year and he appreciates what the police department is doing.

He is very excited to be getting back to work with the Patrick Center and the monies that were allocated with the splash park. It is all starting to come together.

Ms. Aldrich: The Citizen's Police Academy will be accepting applications. There is space for twenty people and they take Belchertown residents first. She highly recommends that residents take the time to do this class.

She congratulated Belchertown's newest Eagle Scout, Morgan Kimball Jr. He received his Eagle Scout yesterday.

The Girl Scout Cookie sale has begun. Friday is the delivery day for cookies. The Girl Scouts will be at Stop and Shop from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. This is their biggest fund raiser so help support them.

Mr. Boscher: He doesn't know if people realize how busy the Senior Center is. They are always doing the best things with our seniors. They are totally engaged with our senior population. He thinks they do phenomenal work. Senator Lesser visits our Senior Center every first Thursday of the month from 10:30 to 11:30 it's a good way to get to meet him if you have any issues and need to talk to him.

9) **Questions from the Press:** Mr. Russell from *The Republican* questioned the sections for the executive session. The information was provided to him. He also questioned the comments that Mr. O'Connor spoke about regarding the Granby Bow and Gun Club and if they were submitted to the Board of Selectmen. He was told they were so he asked for a copy of them. The information was provided. He asked for

confirmation on various upcoming meeting all information was provided to him. He also questioned the social media policy. Mr. O'Connor explained the intent of the policy.

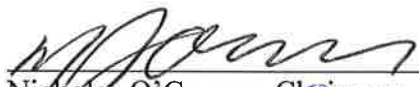
10) Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 8:42 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Gary L. Brougham, Town Administrator


Board approved/endorsed: February 11, 2019

Board of Selectmen - Town of Belchertown

Endorsed by a majority:



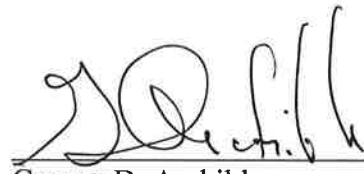
Nicholas O'Connor, Chairman




Gail Gramarossa



Ed Boscher



George D. Archible



Brenda Q. Aldrich