

HARDWICK SELECTBOARD MEETING

**307 Main Street
Gilbertville, MA 01031
February 12, 2024**

Attendees: Eric Vollheim (EV), Chair; Kelly Kemp (KK), Vice Chair; Nicole Parker (NP), Town Administrator; Lt. Kevin Levine (KL), Hardwick Police; Chief James Ayotte (JA), Hardwick Police; Officer Patrick Alstrom (PA), Hardwick Police; H. Robert Ruggles, Clerk, absent.

Public Hearing – Pole Hearing

EV called the hearing to order at 6:30 p.m. and read the following:

“In accordance with the provisions of Section 22, Chapter 166 of the Massachusetts General Laws, you are hereby notified that a public hearing will be held at the Hardwick Municipal Office Building, 307 Main Street, Gilbertville, MA on the 12th of February, 2024 at 6:30 p.m. on the petition of National Grid/Verizon New England request permission to locate, poles, wires and fixtures including the necessary sustaining and protecting fixtures along and across a public way: North Road and Taylor Hill Road.”

A representative of National Grid explained the project entails 2 old poles that need to be upgraded – pole number 33 and pole number 34 – and need to be removed out of existing wetlands and into the public way along the roadway for easy access and maintenance in the future. Poles 95 and 92, in close proximity of the poles being moved, are also getting replaced (not moved) just upgraded.

Henry Hauptmann, 1050 North Road, asked how long the power would be out during the process. It was stated power would be out approximately one-half hour. A notification system is in place notifying people of an outage.

Motion

KK made a motion to grant the replacement and addition of poles as noted in the Public Hearing.

EV seconded.

Motion passed (2:0)

The hearing closed at 6:35 P.M.

OPEN SESSION OF THE SELECTBOARD RESUMED AT 6:36 P.M.

NEW BUSINESS

Proclamation: Officer Patrick Alstrom

EV read a proclamation from the Hardwick Selectboard which was presented to Officer Alstrom for his successful lifesaving efforts.

KL read a commendation, on behalf of the Hardwick Chief of Police, who also presented the Life Saving Award to Officer Alstrom.

The West Brookfield Ambulance team also acknowledged Officer Alstrom as well as members of their own crew for their successful efforts.

Photos were taken and congratulations all around!

Discussion: Increase Pole Fees

Discussion ensued regarding details justifying increase from \$100 to \$200.

Motion

KK made a motion to increase the pole fee from \$100 to \$200 effective immediately.

EV seconded.

Motion passed (2:0)

STAM

NP explained she is on sub-committees, and she mentioned the imbalance in funding for small towns. STAM members would like to have their list of priorities voted on and adopted by the Selectboards, because it is believed that would hold more weight with Beacon Hill especially when seeking funding.

Motion

KK made a motion to support the 2024 Legislative Priorities put forth by STAM.

EV seconded.

Motion passed (2:0).

Discussion: Appointment of Deputy Fire Chief Nicholas Gaumond

EV spoke highly of him and made note of his training.

Motion

KK made a motion to appoint Nicholas Gaumond to Deputy Chief.

EV seconded.

Motion passed (2:0).

OTHER NEW BUSINESS

Meeting Minutes Approval

- January 22, 2024 Meeting Minutes

Motion

KK made a motion to accept the meeting minutes from January 22, 2024.

EV seconded.

Motion passed (2:0).

- November 29, 2022 Meeting Minutes

Selectboard unable to approve November 29, 2022 meeting minutes, therefore minutes were tabled until there is a forum. Note: H. Rob Ruggles, Clerk was absent.

Reconsideration – Whistle Stop to All Alcohol License

NP stated errors have been resolved and is now complete for reconsideration.

Motion

KK made a motion to reconsider an approval for reconsideration for the Whistle Stop, 248 Main Street, Gilbertville.

EV seconded.

Motion passed (2:0)

Matrix

NP spoke with the new representative who will be our contact, and he talked about implementation and bringing fiber in as well as doing a survey first to see who would be interested in high speed internet. He will be sending NP links which should offer additional explanations.

Committee Reports

- Capital Planning Committee:
 - EV stated he and Mark Korzek paid a visit to the USDA and talked about the project. USDA is hopeful and sympathetic. KK stated it has been good working with them.

EV reiterated there are tripping hazards near the Townhouse which need to be resolved.
- NP noted there will be:
 - A Hazard Mitigation Public Hearing at 5:30 on February 26th;
 - Followed by the CDBG Public Hearing at 6:30;
 - Followed by the Selectboard Meeting.
- EV read one of the thank you letters going to the towns that responded to a structure fire in Hardwick on February 9, 2024.

Motion

KK made a motion for the meeting to adjourn.

EV seconded.

Motion passed (2:0).

The meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m.