



Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Selectmen

Date: Monday, August 19, 2013
Time: 6:05 p.m.
Place: McCourt Social Hall Memorial Town Hall, Spencer, MA
Present: Chair Woodbury, Vice Chair Berthiaume, Clerk Stevens, Members Fritze and Pepe and Administrator Gaudette.

At 6:05 p.m. Chairman Woodbury called the meeting to order and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Vice Chair Berthiaume announced that he needed leave the meeting to attend a High School Building Committee meeting. He informed the Board of his intention to propose the project be placed on hold at this time.

Discussion: Town Fee Schedule

Administrator Gaudette reported that fees have not changed since 2008. He provided information on different fee structures from various departments.

Mr. Stevens asked about the purpose of the fees. Mr. Gaudette explained some items covered by fees include labor, review of plans and documents, inspections, and other Town services. All revenue goes to the general fund to provide additional services. The fees do not cover the entire cost, only a portion.

Town Clerk – No Recommended Changes

Board of Selectmen – No Recommended Changes

Police Department – No Recommended Changes

Fire Department – No Recommended Changes

Miscellaneous Inspectors - (*Gas, Plumbing, Wiring, and Sealer*) – No Recommended Changes

A motion for fees for the Town Clerk, Board of Selectmen, Police Department, Fire Department, and Miscellaneous Inspectors (Gas, Plumbing, Wiring, and Sealer) remain as they are currently, with no increase at this time (Berthiaume/Pepe) passed 5/0.

Mr. Berthiaume left the meeting to attend the High School Building Committee meeting.

Conservation

Administrator Gaudette reported that a Bylaw was adopted at Town Meeting for a new stormwater permit requirement mandated by the EPA. Margaret Washburn, Conservation Agent proposed an incremental fee structure dependent upon the scope of the project.

A motion to set fees for Stormwater EPA permits as presented by the Conservation Agent (Pepe/Fritze) passed 4/0.

Board of Health

Lee Jarvis, BOH agent recommends a 50% discount for ½ year permits.

A motion to allow for a 50% fee after July 1st as presented (Pepe/Fritze) passed 5/0.

Mr. Jarvis recommends adding a new a Kitchen Fee and Animal Permit Fee for non domestic animals only.

Mr. Berthiaume said he is not in favor of the new fees. Chairman Woodbury mentioned that he does not want to see people being charged a fee for baking goods to be sold at a fundraiser.

Mr. Stevens noted that the Town wants to maintain the rural character and is a “Right to Farm” community. He doesn’t want to discourage people from having animals by imposing a fee. Mr. Gaudette pointed out that complaints are received from residents impacted by neighbors having too many animals or not properly cleaning and/or caring for them. This fee helps ensure people are in compliance with the Town Bylaws and thus reduces the number of issues. Mr. Pepe said he is not favor of an Animal fee at this time. Mr. Gaudette asked the Board to be mindful that these inspections must take place according to the new Bylaw. Without the fee they will essentially be paid by the tax base.

The Board agreed to place the request on hold and have the BOH agent attend the September 9th meeting to discuss Kitchen and Animal fees further.

Planning Board/Zoning Board of Appeals

Town Planner Michelle Buck recommends changing the Planning Board fee schedule to a flat ANR Fee, modify language to add explanatory notes, allow Conservation Commission to set fees for Stormwater, and restructure the ZBA fee schedule to allow reduced fees on smaller projects.

A motion to approve the change to a flat ANR fee as presented by the Town Planner (Pepe/Fritze) passed 4/0.

A motion to insert Special Permit fees into Planning Board fee schedule, make language changes, and allow the Conservation Commission to set Stormwater fees as presented by the Town Planner (Pepe/Fritze) passed 4/0.

A motion to replace existing ZBA fee schedule in its entirety (currently flat fee of \$540), to allow for reduced fees on smaller projects as presented by the Town Planner (Pepe/Fritze) passed 4/0.

Treasurer/Collector

Mary Barrell recommends increasing the Certificate of Municipal Lien from \$25 to \$50, which requires a Town Meeting Vote. If approved, the increase will help offset the cost of additional software that will expedite the processing of various municipal documents.

A motion to place request of the Treasurer/Collector on the next Town Meeting agenda (Pepe/Fritze) passed 4/0.

Street Opening & Driveway Permits

Steve Tyler, Utilities and Facilities Superintendent recommends changes on a variety of permits. Administrator Gaudette advised to Board to table the request until the September 9th meeting when Mr. Tyler can be present.

Building Inspector

Bill Klasek recommends an increase in fees to bring in line with comparison communities.

Mr. Stevens and Mr. Pepe said they want to keep fees low to encourage new construction.

A motion to maintain the current fee schedule for the Building Department (Pepe/Stevens) passed 4/0.

Parking Clerk

Kurt Nordquist recommends raising the fees by \$5.00 for each ticket, except for handicap parking violations. He will be invited to the September 9th meeting to explain the request.

Discussion: Electricity Agreement

Administrator Gaudette reported that the existing agreement expires in December and was a five year agreement at .14 per kilowatt hour. He is currently working with Constellation Energy on a new agreement with a rate of .08 per kilowatt hour. He advised the Board to move forward, pointing out it will result in a \$139,485 savings. The option is available for a one year contract, or for a longer term. Mr. Fritze recommends going with a one year contract since electricity is trending down; though there is a chance it could go up.

A motion to allow the Town Administrator to enter into relationship with Constellation for purpose of providing energy services energy for at least one year (Pepe/ Fritze) passed 4/0.

Discussion: Southbridge Petition Regarding Registry of Motor Vehicles

Mr. Gaudette reviewed correspondence from the Town of Southbridge relative to a proposal to close the Southbridge Registry of Motor Vehicles.

Mr. Woodbury suggests the Town send a letter to the State Representatives informing them Spencer is in favor of keeping the facility open.

A motion to authorize the Administrator to send a letter the State Representatives in support of efforts to allow the Southbridge Registry of Motor Vehicles to remain open in its current location (Pepe/ Fritze) passed 4/0.

Meeting adjourned at 8:04 pm. All were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Savoie
Administrative Assistant

Referenced Materials:

Town Fee Schedules
Town of Southbridge Letter