

Minutes for Town of Pawlet Select Board
Pawlet Town Hall
December 8th, 2015

Members in Attendance:

Mike Beecher
Sarah Ludlam
Bob Jones
Charles Weeden
Ed Cleveland

Others in Attendance:

James Holtzman
Sue LaPorte
Nancy Morlino
Keith Mason
Elizabeth Gibson
Chip Gibson
Daniel Maloney
Eric Mach
Timothy Hughes-Muse

Meeting Called to order at 6:59 pm

Item 1: Review Past Meeting Minutes of the November 24th, 2015 meeting of the Select Board. Ms. Ludlam made motion to accept the minutes as edited, seconded by Mr. Cleveland motion carried, voted and approved.

Item 2: Clean Energy Design Group, Inc.; James Holtzman & Dan Maloney

CEDG presented the board with a letter of intent for the solar project at the town's landfill. The town's attorney has not reviewed this document, and the Selectboard will proceed with whatever action they choose once they have the attorney's feedback. Since the last meeting, the details of the proposal have changed. Green Mountain Power is no longer accepting net-metering projects and therefore the contract would be a feed-in tariff, where all power is sold to utility. There is a possibility that if another project could be eligible for net-metering, if that project were less than 150kw.

The Selectboard and the audience asked questions to Mr. Holtzman about the project and the following information is a result of those questions being addressed:

- After 30 years, the project could be renewed and when the equipment is to be removed, the investor would be obligated to remove the equipment.
- CEDG is working with Pawlet, Starksboro(approved), Pownal(preliminary), and Newfane.
- Ms. Morlino asked why they chose Pawlet: because it had three-phase power and a landfill.
- Mr. Mach stated that he thinks that landfill is an ideal site.

- If visibility is a concern, CEDG would address those concerns in the contract between CEDG and the Town.
- The racking design would not penetrate the landfill, but in surrounding areas posts may be driven into the ground.

Nancy Morlino suggests that we should get other quotes or proposals from competitors. There was discussion about concerns about dealing with an out-of-state operators. The Energy Group will pursue other solar installers to get a better understanding of the quality of thoroughness of this proposal.

Item 3: Audience Members: Elizabeth Gibson(Public Information Officer) and Chip Gibson

To discuss the website and newsletter:

If the town reduces the newsletter publication down to 2 print newsletters(spring and fall) would result in a savings of \$1,000. Ms. Gibson wants to think about ways to make the website more informative. Chip Gibson was invited to talk about how we can make a website better. The town's website started as a repository for information. Mr. Gibson spoke about how the website can be used for emergency management and communications. Online form submittal would be a easy way to add functionality and efficiency, plus an online payment option to cover those fees associated with forms. The online payment systems could be electronic funds transfer that have lower transaction fees.

Mr. Gibson offered to evaluate the feasibility of website improvement.

Ms. Gibson requested that the communications budget remain the same this year, using the \$1,000 from the reduction in newsletter publication costs to investigate and invest in website development.

Item 4: Road Foreman's Report

1. Mr. Mason showed the select board a map from the ANR that shows the road erosion risk ranking of Pawlet's roads.
2. Joe Clark is interested in the i-beams from the town's scrap heap. The select board agrees by consensus of the board to let Mr. Clark have the i-beams as Mr. Clark has been generous with the town in the past.
3. The board discussed the crew's hours and schedules. The 6 AM start time reduces call-ins and overtime pay.
4. A citizen is concerned because the new culvert on Bullfrog Hollow does not have guardrails. The road does not meet the requirements for a guardrail and the road is wider than it was previously. There was not an existing guardrail before the culvert was replaced. Without vegetation on the banks of road, the drop-off is stark when compared to vegetatively covered banks, and therefore can lead people to think that the elevation of the road is higher in the unvegetated roadsides than in vegetated roadsides. Mr. Mason suggested adding delineator at either end.

Item 5: Zoning Administrator's Report

Application has been submitted to Sheldon's Market for an addition. Because it is an accessory to an approved use, the zoning administrator can approve it, without the approval of the board.

Mr. Mach is working on the unified bylaws. He is eliminating the “Organized Camps” part of the Ag and Rural Residential Zoning. The result will be that future camps will have to have wastewater permits and meet setback requirements.

Other changes to the unified by-laws are in the “Village commercial” section. Mr Mach proposed adding an ag processing plant, micro-brewery and micro-distillery to the “Village Commercial” section, with the goal being to be able to increase commercial activity without the detriment of the zoning regulations. Part of this would include sole-proprietorships and business with less than 2 employees to be allowed without a permit.

Ms. Ludlam asked if the unified by-laws would be changed to address the density aspects of the zoning. Mr. Mach plans to leave the the density part of the zoning regulations alone.

Unified by-laws need to be voted on by the select board, at a warned meeting.

Item 6: Town Treasurer’s Memo

Reviewed Town Treasurer’s Memo.

Mr. Weeden made motion to approve the warrants, seconded by Ms. Ludlam, motion carried, voted and approved.

Item 7: Town Clerk’s Report

Reviewed Town Clerk’s Memo

Reviewed Town Health Officer’s Memo

Reviewed Town Safety Officer’s Memo

Item 8: Old Business

Painting Town Hall- Mr. Hughes-Muse will solicit more bids for the painting.

WWTF in West Pawlet- Mr. Beecher is pursuing a resolution to the faulty install of the bearing.

Kee has agreed to provide the bearings. Green Mountain Engineering will develop a cost estimate of the repair. The board discussed the strategy for resolving the issue.

Item 9: Town Budget

The Board discussed the Town of Pawlet General Fund.

Ms. Ludlam made a motion to adjourn at 9:50 pm, Mr. Cleveland seconded, motion carried, voted and approved.

Respectfully submitted by Timothy Hughes-Muse, Select Board Administrative Assistant.