

Town of Princeton, Mass. – Sept. 21, 2017 – 3 PM

Board of Selectmen – special meeting

Present: Chair Jon Fudeman, Richard Bisk, Edith Morgan plus TA Nina Nazarian. Adv. Cmte. attendees were Chair Jon Shipman, Wayne Adams & George Handy.

3 PM The chairman opened BOS meeting in Town Hall Annex. Richy reviewed the notice of violation from DEP to the shared water well under Mechanics Hall which supplies TownLine Garage and Kwik Stop. He explained possible history, although no one knew for sure how it originated. Suggestion was to ask Bob Cully, well contractor, who lives across from Mechanics Hall. The DEP notice requests action by well-owner (town) within 30 days.

Selectmen voted all in favor to appoint Richy as BOS liaison to work with the various stakeholders towards a resolution, subject to the Selectboard's approval.

3:20 PM Jon F. had previously distributed a few different documents to the Selectboard (copy of the Advisory Committee By-law, copy of M.G.L. c. 39, §16, excerpts from the DLS Guide to Financial Management for Town Officials, and Excerpts from the Finance Committee handbook), and he noted that a financial plan is more than a budget but less than a master plan. A look at metrics may reveal how Princeton is doing compared to other communities. He's been comparing per capita spending in 24 similar towns. Princeton rated #1 in spending for roads and #2 for spending on the police department, but he offered that the information is not apples to apples given that we budget capital expenditures (road construction) into the Highway operating budget. He reported finding little relation between miles of roadway within a town and the money spent on road construction/maintenance.

Jon F. sees a long-range financial plan for the town as necessary, to be crafted by board members and volunteers, outside the workload of the T.A. Edith and Richy pointed out studies being done by Collins Center, to perhaps include an operational study to improve staff efficiency and merging the current study with an operational study. Collins Ctr. is currently crafting a capital plan along with a Compensation & Classification study. Richy offered to get cost estimates from Collins Center for that. Edith recommended using professionals and paying experts and noted that the Adv. Cmte. Review Cmte. should be tied in—to bring all these elements together. Richy said a financial plan could go forward regardless of the expanded role or changed status of the Adv. Cmte.

John S. wants to be able to explain to his board what the BOS has as a charge to the Adv. Cmte., and insisted that they are willing to serve but don't know the specifics being proposed. Jon is waiting for all parties to weigh in; John S. seeks a focus on what the BOS expects. George H. asked about a single point of contact for the Collins Center and without one specified, someone should be appointed. Wayne A. asked how a financial plan would be instituted.

Jon distributed the state's Financial Committee Handbook. Group discussed possibility of using funding from the three project grants to fund something else like an operational study. The three grants are currently dedicated to a capital plan; IT and the Classification/Compensation study. It may not be easy to switch or merge funds to different projects, the group concluded.

Larry Greene, Sr., described his experience with large corporations doing financial/operational planning, and he stressed the importance of having an ultimate objective—a clear

outcome. Nina suggested finalizing the goals from the selectmen's recent goal-setting meeting on Sept. 14, as they haven't been voted on yet. There include 1) broadband 2) facilities 3) Route 140 upgrade 4) operational review. Edith stated that goals must also define the priorities and that goals need to be determined before a financial plan is created. Bill Holder sees a financial plan as a foundation and on a different track from meeting goals.

4 PM Selectmen voted all in favor to task Jon F. with creating a summary for what a financial plan would entail including objectives and clear outcomes.

Group discussed creating an outline of the steps needed to transfer land takings/easements for the Route 140 project in East Princeton. MassDOT needs Right-Of-Way certificates by July 2018. Nina shared that she has continued communication with Town Counsel and MassDOT regarding the legal aspects necessary to move forward with the Route 140 project. Town Counsel is recommending that the Town complete the steps necessary for the relocation or alteration of a public way, under M.G.L. c. 82, §§21-24. She shared an outline, from Town Counsel of the steps which would be required. Town Counsel is also suggesting that we seek to combine the September 7, 2017 STM article with the relocation/alteration of the public way at the future Town Meeting.

4:15 PM Jon reported on discussions with Peter Larkin from MBI and the mission to get reimbursement for the town's monies already spent on make-ready work for broadband. Jon explained his perspective that covering 100 percent of households that are PMLD customers and exponentially-increasing costs in the installation of final four percent of households—those located farthest out i.e. Grow Lane and mid-Thompson Road.

4:25 PM Selectmen voted all in favor to adjourn.

Respectfully submitted, Marie Auger, admin. assist.

Referenced documents: Violation notice from DEP; copy of the Advisory Committee By-law, copy of M.G.L. c. 39, §16, excerpts from the DLS Guide to Financial Management for Town Officials, and Excerpts from the Finance Committee handbook; Memo by Nina to Selectboard on Route 140 Reconstruction Project, alteration of a public way.

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