

**TOWN OF POMFRET  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN MINUTES  
MONDAY, MAY 18, 2020 AT 8:00 AM  
ON-LINE VIRTUAL MEETING**

In Attendance: First Selectman Maureen Nicholson, Selectmen Patrick McCarthy, Ellsworth Chase. Also present – Registrars Susan Devokaitis, Martha Emilio, Superintendent of Schools Steve Cullinan, Principal Susan Imschweiller, Charlie Weeden

**I. Regular Meeting – Open Meeting** – M. Nicholson opened meeting at 8:00 AM.

- 1. Approve Minutes of May 4, 2020** – P. McCarthy moved to approve as presented on-line. E. Chase seconded. All in favor.
- 2. Items to Add to Agenda** – M. Nicholson moved to add: Appointment of Deputy Tree Warden to New Business, No.7; Budget Discussion as No. 8; Rich Road No. 9. E. Chase seconded. All in favor.
- 3. Citizen's Comments and Correspondence** – Charlie Weeden stated that the Green Team was holding a presentation this evening regarding a reduction in Pomfret's greenhouse gas emissions by 45% by 2030. They were proposing an Ordinance regarding the same. Some discussion followed. The Board's support for this initiative, if granted, could be part of tonight's discussion. A Pomfret Climate Commission would be formed to investigate further. Any Ordinance that was proposed would require Town Meeting approval. The proposal would be formed as a goal, not a mandate, and would promote discussion as to direction town could take. M. Nicholson, P. McCarthy, and E. Chase all supported moving forward with this initiative.

**II. New Business**

- 1. Presidential Primary & November Election/Discussion with Registrars** – A letter was received by the Selectmen regarding concerns with holding the primary election and the November election at PCS. Considering on-going COVID public health concerns the Superintendent and Principal had concerns regarding student and staff health if the school were opened to the general public for elections. Registrars M. Emilio and S. Devokaitis stated the number of precautions that would be taken during and after elections and spoke about the additional space that would be needed for social distancing as well as the general requirements needed for an election. PCS appeared to be the best option to meet all these needs. Discussion followed regarding the pros and cons in using PCS and possible other alternatives. It was agreed that it is still early enough to further investigate the best options and P. McCarthy, E. Chase, S. Cullinan, S. Imschweiller, M. Emilio, and S. Devokaitis will form a Committee to review the options available.
- 2. Cancellation of Memorial Day Parade** – The Town has made the unfortunate decision to cancel the Memorial Day Parade this year due to COVID-19 concerns. The Town of Putnam is holding a virtual ceremony on Memorial Day morning and would like a representative from each town. The flags have been hung along Pomfret streets with thanks to Paul and JoAnn Johnson for the use of their bucket truck.
- 3. Request Sewer Administrative Funds of \$24,090 transfer to Enrichment Fund** – The Board of Finance has reviewed this in the past and agreed to the use of the funds that have currently come to the town as unanticipated revenue. An additional appropriation to the Enrichment Fund requires

approvals to allow movement of these funds. E. Chase moved to approve an additional appropriation of \$24,090 from the general fund to the Community Enrichment Fund. P. McCarthy seconded. All in favor. M. Nicholson will take this same request to the Board of Finance.

4. **Tri-Town Ambulance Contract Discussion/Possible Action** – The proposed contract has been distributed to the Board for review. This would allow for a regional ambulance at Pomfret's EOC, serving the towns of Pomfret, Hampton, and Eastford. This allows for better response times and cost reductions. Some discussion. P. McCarthy moved to approve the Tri-Town Ambulance Contract pending few noted corrections. E. Chase seconded. All in favor.
5. **Usual Approvals at Annual Town Meeting: Expenditure of Highway Funds under Chapter 240 and Expenditure of all Local Capital Improvement Funds under Chapter 7-536 for FY beginning July 1, 2020; Adoption of Five Year Local Capital Improvement Plan for fiscal year 2020-2021; Acceptance of Cemetery Funds for perpetual care** – These standard items are typically approved at the Annual Town Meeting and may be approved by the Board of Selectmen this year. The proposed cemetery funds are for Tina Gaetani, grave number 473, deTallyrand Annex, Abington Cemetery for \$100.00 and Julie A. Myslenski, Yard 3, Lots and 104 and 105, Pomfret Cemetery Corp. for \$200.00. P. McCarthy moved to approve Highway Funds under Chapter 240, expenditure of all Local Capital Improvement Funds under Chapter 7-536, adoption of the 5-year capital plan and acceptance of cemetery funds as described. E. Chase seconded. All in favor.
6. **Town Opening Committee Discussion** – Consideration is being given as to how and when the town will begin to open up. M. Nicholson has been looking into building modifications. She will reach out to Emergency Manager Derek May to participate in Committee with Patrick McCarthy and herself. The Senior Center remains closed, the Public Library is starting curbside service, and the Recreation Park is still closed at this time.
7. **Appointment of Deputy Tree Warden** – M. Nicholson is the current Tree Warden and has often worked with a deputy in the past. She moved to appoint Public Works Director Robert Lohr as Deputy Tree Warden. E. Chase seconded. All in favor. M. Nicholson noted that the highway department has been aggressive in taking down dangerous trees in town rights of way and any identified as dangerous can be reported to the Selectman's office.
8. **Budget Discussion** – The budgets have been approved and final action will likely be taken at tonight's Board of Finance meeting. M. Nicholson is aware that this Board has concerns going forward. State funding has decreased by one million over last decade and it is probable that funding reductions will accelerate. She would like the Board to begin thinking about a plan for spending reductions over next 6 months and for next year.
9. **Rich Road** – Repairs are to begin on this road with a new drainpipe. Once drainage is repaired it was planned to be paved. Residents were notified and some would prefer it remain dirt. A few residents offered suggestions for the road. Dirt roads are more expensive than paved roads to maintain. The paving may be put off in this case to allow the road to settle once repairs are complete.

### **III. Other Business**

#### **1. General Discussion - COVID-19 Impacts to Town**

**Government/Modifications to Town Facilities** – Split doors and plexiglass have been considered at Town Hall. A plexiglass barrier will be added to the circulation desk at the library. Some town staff continue to work from home.

#### **2. Project Updates – Sewer, TAP Grant updates** – The Sewer project is close to complete. A full close-out will not likely be done until the TAP project wraps up and there is some construction over-lap. The TAP grant is working on the culverts with large amounts of material moved from Holmes and Modock Roads. Some residents have expressed concerns over the road closures. These closures and detours were fully considered by the DOT. Both Pomfret and Putnam are aware of the detours and are prepared to quickly access the areas in an emergency. Digging for the abutments will soon start and the bridges should be placed in August.

#### **3. Sewer Ordinance Discussion/Possible Action - Tabled**

#### **4. Tax Refunds/Abatements: None**

### **IV. Current Business**

- 1. Citizen's Comments** – P. McCarthy stated that as a citizen it was nice to see the outdoor activity and the social distancing at some of Pomfret's establishments over the weekend. M. Nicholson responded to some of the submitted comments: Rich Road is not salted in winter as this is not used on dirt roads, speed bumps are not an option as they interfere with snow-plowing. The 'Town Green' is owned by the State of CT and Most Holy Trinity. The Town would not be authorized to place picnic tables in that area. M. Nicholson thanked Blake Wolanin for hosting these meetings.

### **V. Adjournment** – Motion made and seconded to adjourn. All in favor and meeting duly adjourned at 9:29 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Bonnie Ryan, clerk

Date approved\_\_\_\_\_