

Meeting Minutes

**Minutes Accepted and filed with the Town Clerk on 11/1/2016 by a vote of 5-0**

7:00 p.m. – October 18, 2016

Sutton Town Hall, Selectmen's Meeting Room

Members in Attendance:

Chairman John L. Hebert, Vice Chair Paul Maynard, Clerk Jesse Limanek and Selectmen David Hall & Michael Kenney

Town Administrator James Smith & Deb Jacques, secretary

Chairman Hebert calls the meeting to order at 7:00pm followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Forum: no comments

Selectman Hall motions to accept as presented minutes from October 4, 2016 Selectmen's meeting, Vice-Chair Maynard seconds passes 4-0-1 (Selectman Kenney absent from the 10/04/2016 meeting)

**\*\*PUBLIC HEARING\*\*** Tax Classification hearing as posted in the Sept. 26, 2016 T&G and read by Selectman Limanek. Present is Robert (Knick) Nunnemacher and Joyce Sardagnola from the Assessor's office. Knick states this is a yearly procedure held before the Selectmen as the BOS have the choice of keeping a single tax rate or a split rate. Historically it has been a single tax rate. The tax rate is based on debt exclusions and new growth. The overall value of the town from last year has increased by 3%. The tax rate for FY17 is \$16.50 per thousand, down from the FY16 rate of \$16.68. The average tax bill will show a \$162.00 increase due to increase in property values. The new growth, in the amount of \$1,062,543.00 has been approved by DOR. The total new value of the town is \$1,335,465,499.00 with a levy limit of \$22,035,180.73. If the Selectmen choose to go to a split tax rate it will shift a larger burden to the commercial properties in town. Selectman Hall says we have had a single tax rate for ever and does not see the need to change. The single tax rate attracts business, if we go to a split rate it will impact the commercial businesses in town. Vice Chair Maynard thanks the Assessor's office for the presentation and agrees there should not be any changes, we should keep a single tax rate. Selectman Limanek states he had the benefit of sitting down recently with the Assessor's office to learn the process of valuation and how it is determined. Jesse states it is not the Assessors that set the values, it is a formula using the sales in the area. Selectman Limanek agrees it should stay a single rate. Selectman Kenney agrees with the other board members but does say the day may come when we will go to a split rate. Joyce states if we do decide to split at some point it will affect all of the chapter land. Chairman Hebert says it is nice to see the tax rate go down and concurs with the other members, keep it a single tax rate. Selectman Limanek motions to approve a single tax factor for Fiscal Year 2017, Selectman Kenney seconds passes 5-0

Peregrine Energy Group: Bidders under the Aggregation Plan- present is Paul Grommer from Peregrine, John Shortsleeve from Baystate Consultants and Doreen Defazio, Energy Manager. This is for procurement of electricity supply which was approved at the May 2015 Town Meeting. This is for the electricity supply only, NGrid will still be present in town. TA Smith states we have already been approved by the DOER and the DPU. Paul Grommer says we are looking to lock in next Wednesday (10/25/16) with a launch date of January 2017. Between the dates we lock in and the launch date will be a period of public education programs. Selectman Hall is happy this is moving forward. Dave asks about the optional choices residents will have. Mr. Grommer replies there will be one supplier but two options, a standard option and a greener option. Selectman Maynard says the Sr. Center will be listening and just as a reminder Sutton has 2 zip codes and some have PO Boxes. Mr. Shortsleeve states the advantage for residents is that the company chosen is well vetted and endorsed by the town. Selectman Limanek asks if the billing will be different, they reply it will look almost exact to now but there will be a name under the supplier. Jesse asks if the more communities that collaborate means a cheaper rate, they reply no. Selectman Kenney asks if the post cards that go out will have Doreen's contact information, Paul Grommer replies it can but there will be a number for any questions. Chairman Hebert says that Doreen is part time so her contact info should not be on the postcard, we do not want the residents to get frustrated. Selectman Limanek motions to authorize the Chairman to sign the contract to purchase electricity supply as long as it is below NGrid prices Selectman Hall second's passes 5-0

COA Director Update: Michelle Edelstein COA Director is present. She begins by inviting all to the Sr. Center every Tuesday for coffee and cards. The cards are Christmas cards that will be sent to soldiers. She offers thanks for the recent projects just completed (Insulation and new boiler), what a blessing. Michelle goes on to update the BOS on the recent putting green and horse shoe pit which is attracting the older senior males to visit the center. Michelle stressed, when you make a donation to the Senior Center please make out to the Friends of Sutton Seniors, donations to the Food Pantry please make out to the Town of Sutton. The Food Pantry is currently in need of hearty beef soup/stew, oatmeal and laundry detergent. Michelle thanks Jim Smith and Laura Caruso for the recent Golf Tournament for the Sutton Food Pantry. Also at the Sr. Center is a new youth program called Community Cares. Sutton High School students volunteer by shoveling, shopping and other ways to lighten the burden on the seniors. It is good for the kids and good for the seniors. The Selectmen all thank Michelle for her update and all she does at the senior center.

MRA Sport: Alex Rogozinski is present to present a check to Michelle for the Food Pantry in the amount of \$1000.00 and a

check to the town for \$1650.00. Alex is hoping to increase the participation of the events for the next season. When asked if there is anything the BOS can do to help raise the participation Alex replies, get the word out. Next year Alex is looking at Friday, June 16<sup>th</sup> for the summer solstice and July 30<sup>th</sup> for the Blackstone Valley Olympic Triathlon. The Board thanks Alex for all he has put into these events. They all commend him on leaving the area clean after the events.

Presidential Election Warrant: Selectman Limanek reminds residents the last day to register to vote is October 19<sup>th</sup>. Early voting will be Oct 24<sup>th</sup> thru Nov. 8<sup>th</sup>. Selectman Limanek motions to approve as presented the Presidential Election Warrant, Selectman Kenney seconds passes 5-0.

Final Recommendations approved by Senate Counsel for Charter: TA Smith states that the changes are some capitalization changes and striking the word "incapacity other than temporary illness". TA Smith states employees are under union contract or the personnel bylaw, this is more for board and committee members that are volunteers. All agree to allow the changes. Selectman Limanek motions to approve the changes made by the Senate Counsel during the Charter review process, Vice Chair Maynard seconds passes 5-0

#### TA Update:

Constellation New Energy- we entered into a 3 year contract at a rate of 8.66 cents per kilowatt effective June 2017.

Cell tower at Town Farm Road- held on October 6<sup>th</sup> before the ZBA. It was approved the 1<sup>st</sup> night.

Paperless agenda- in keeping with our Green Community beliefs, this would save on paper as well as eliminate the need to have the binders delivered.

Selectman Hall thinks this is terrific, it is an opportunity to adopt an Electronic Device policy- they should be turned off during Executive Sessions.

Vice Chair Maynard says if we go electronic we definitely need an SOP

Selectman Limanek says there must be a policy in place stating this is town property. We should have the IT dept do annual audits on the devices.

Selectman Kenney states there should be restrictions put on the devices to limit usage

Land Water Conservation Fund Grant- the town has received the National Park matching grant of \$150,000. To renovate Goddard Lodge. We have also received \$100,000. From the State and \$150,000. from an anonymous donor.

State Grant for early voting was awarded to Laura Caruso. The Town Clerks office will be open Oct. 29<sup>th</sup> for early voting



#### Announcements/Round Table/ Correspondence/Business Topics:

Selectman Hall thanks Jen Hager for the event at Marion's camp (cookout). Dave also thanks Laura for organizing the annual golf tournament especially as it goes to the Food Pantry.

Vice Chair Maynard says kudos on the news of the cell tower

Selectman Limanek says what a great event at Marion's Camp, he would also like to thank Jen Callahan for the original grant of \$250,000. Jesse also thanks Freddie for his recent contributions to the food pantry instead of receiving birthday gifts.

Selectman Kenney announces the Haunted Hollow event at Marion's Camp put on by the Lions Club. This will be held on Oct 22, 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>. Also please be mindful of driving on Halloween night with trick or treaters.

Chairman Hebert thanks TA Smith for always pulling the town meetings together.

Selectman Hall motions to adjourn, Vice Chair Maynard seconds passes 5-0 9:00pm