

## **Select Board Minutes**

**Date:** July 26, 2022

**Time:** 6:30 PM

**Location:** Multi-Purpose Room

**Next Meeting:** August 9, 2022

**Minutes:** The minutes were accepted unanimously as written.

**Present:** Richard Doughty, Dina Walker, Brian Haynes, Carol Cochran, Budget Committee Members - Linda Healey, Becky Durant-Vining, Russell Banton, Tom Skolfield and Laureen Pratt

### **Department Heads:**

None present.

### **New Business:**

#### **Street Light-Potential relocation from pole 28 to pole 27 which is at the entrance of Cottage Lane:**

Richard said that he did not see any problem if the light is moved from pole 28 to pole 27. Dina and Brian agreed. Carol will contact CMP.

### **Old Business:**

#### **Public Works Funding:**

Richard said that maintaining personnel has been an issue. We have not been able to find someone to fill the heavy equipment operator's position at the hourly rate we are offering and with no health insurance. The position was approved at the Town Meeting 2 years ago.

There is an individual who lives in Town and wants to change jobs but cannot afford to take a cut in pay and no benefits. The Road Commissioner has expressed that he is in need of health insurance and asked an increase in his hourly wage and an increase in the 50% insurance match that was voted on at Town Meeting. He is not eligible for Affordable Care Act insurance until fall and could not afford it with towns match \$6,000. It could become an issue for the winter months.

It was suggested to increase the wages and offer family insurance. Weld is not offering a competitive wage. You are able to work at McDonald's for more than what we are paying.

The Select Board has met and came up with a proposal that is pretty drastic. They did ask other Towns what they are paying their employees. This is a significant contribution for the town.

Brian said they had been approached by the Road Commissioner asking for more money and that they are not suggesting an increased pay wage or benefits because he asked. The Town is not currently paying enough to maintain qualified people going forward.

Dina said that there has been an ongoing struggle and we need the increase. At this time we do not offer a competitive wage. The insurance will be across the board for all full time employees and the package will not be more than what Maine Municipal Association Insurance would cost.

It was asked how many hours was considered full time. According to State Law it is 35 or more hours per week.

Heavy Equipment Operator will include insurance as well.

Richard said that he struggled with what 2 full time employees would do for the summer. The Road Commissioner said it would not be an issue that there would be enough work to give 2 people 40 hours per week.

A Special Town Meeting has been set for August 25th at 6:30 PM with an informational meeting for Broadband with Chris Lynch representing Matrix following the meeting.

The Select Board's proposal is to increase the Road Commissioner to \$25 per hour and \$20 for the Heavy Equipment Operator and insurance for a family including vision and dental at 85% through Maine Municipal Health Trust.

This would also include Carol's insurance which is now be paid at 50%.

Suggestion was to offer insurance for the employee at 100% and a reduced amount for the family.

Brian said that he does not want to go back to the same situation next year that we are in now.

Brian will get the current insurance prices paid by the State for the next meeting.

The Budget Committee expressed support for the proposed approach and urged further consideration of the Town share of the insurance cost.

The consensus was to check on the State and Russell would make contact with other Towns our size and the information will be gone over at the next meeting.

**Cell Tower:**

Word was received today that as soon as the Company gets the fiber optic cable installed the Tower would be on line. Usually it takes 6 weeks to 2 months for the fiber optic cable.

**Agreement between Town of Weld & Matrix:**

- 2.6 - Start date for the \$284,871 to be paid
- Loan will be applied for after we vote on it - up to \$284,871 for the loan
- Documentation of actual make ready cost –
- Loan and subscribers
- Operations date if not 100 subscribers – Is Weld 100 subscribers?
- ARPA additional funding – was it approved?
- Make ready cost paid from Town of Weld to CMP or TDS?
- Pay utility not Matrix for make ready
- Miscellaneous owned by the utility
- Article 11 - Town pass on to the subscribers
- It was agreed on comments that will be sent on to Matrix

Respectfully submitted,



Carol J. Cochran