Town of Rutland

Office of the Select Board

Minutes: January 13, 2020

Meeting Opened: 6:44 P.M.

Attendance:
Board Members Present: Sheila Dibb, Leah Whiteman, Mitch Ruscitti, Jeff Stillings, Wayne Walker
Board Members Absent: None
Staff Members Present: Mike Nicholson (Town Administrator), Tomeca Murphy (Secretary)

**Please note this meeting was recorded for transmission on Rutland Public Access TV & YouTube**

Pledge of Allegiance

Minutes, Treasury Warrant & Payroll

- Motion to approve Treasury Warrant #15 and Payroll—Motion made by Mitch Ruscitti, seconded by Wayne Walker; vote unanimous at 6:45 P.M.
- Motion to approve the December 31, 2019 minutes—Motion made by Mitch Ruscitti, seconded by Leah Whiteman; vote unanimous at 6:45 P.M. (Jeff Stillings & Wayne Walker abstained)

Town Administrator Update

General Updates & Annual Town Report:
--The annual town report is now accepting nominations for “in honor of” or “in memory” of to be included in the report. The deadline is the end of February.

Portions of Brintnal Dr. and Emerald Rd. were closed on Sunday and Monday due to extreme mud conditions. The DPW has been keeping everyone updated and Brintnal Dr. was passable as of Monday. Mitch said that he's received feedback from residents of Brintnal Dr. that they are unclear as to why the road cannot be paved. There are rumors that it is due to historic reasons, but that is untrue, so Mitch would like to see the residents notified of their options. Leah asked Chief Buckley when the district was notified of the road closures for bus purposes and he said WRSD was told at 11:00 A.M. on Sunday morning. He also said that DPW calls the bus company directly.

Chapter 90 funding has increased 10% from the Commonwealth. Mr. Nicholson will keep the board updated.

Kelleher & Sadowsky have been secured as commercial real estate agents to market the Rutland Heights property. The town was also selected through MA E-Con to have the property advertised with them both inside and outside of Massachusetts.

The Police Department has received a $5,000 grant, so all cruisers will be equipped with printers—allowing them to print tickets right from their vehicles. In addition, the PD participated in a “no shave November” event and they raised just over $600 to be donated to the Home Base Program for vets with PTSD.

The cannabis RFI deadline is this week. There are 5 available licenses and only 1 has been taken so far. Once this RFI has been closed, a new one can be re-opened. Mike may request to close this RFI and re-open it for non-
adult use retail sales.

The board welcomed Jacob Nichols, who was recently hired as the new cable employee.

The town has been notified of a foreclosure of a 61A property. Since it's a foreclosure, the town does not have first right of refusal. However, the 61A and the APR status will follow the deed. Sheila would also like to see some additional legal information regarding the 61A status.

Mr. Nicholson extended congratulations to Rutland residents Alexis & Osiris Vallejos and Cindy Purcell. All were featured in local newspapers highlighting their achievements.

Mike is coming up on his one year anniversary as the Town Administrator and thanked the board for their support during his first year.

**Goals & Objectives Update**
The various departments have been discussing what will happen when the town reaches the 10,000 population mark. Right now the town has 9,200 residents and it's not expected to hit 10,000 until 2024-2026. Mike asked the department heads to create their budgets as if the town had already hit 10,000 residents and then asked them to revise to the actual numbers. The goal is for long term planning, which will be seen during the budget process.

**Public Comment**
*Shawn Moore, 3 Edson Ave.*—Shawn asked for confirmation that the marijuana RFI is closing on January 16th, which it is. He also confirmed that the RFI will be closed and applications already received will be evaluated before a new RFI is re-opened. Mitch also stated that if only one application is received, it doesn't necessarily guarantee approval.

*Michael Baril, Warren*—Mr. Baril approached the board stating that he had requested an executive session regarding a citizen complaint in an e-mail sent on October 31, 2019, but he did not receive a response. Sheila explained that the board does not have the right to hold an executive session based on the situation as presented. Mr. Baril alleged that he had a negative experience with the Rutland Regional Dispatch Center when trying to obtain a police report regarding an incident that occurred in Warren. Jeff Stillings stated it's best for Mr. Baril to provide the discovery and to speak directly to Mr. Nicholson if his complaints are against town employees. Mr. Nicholson clarified that in his conversation with Mr. Baril, he received a complaint but not a request for an investigation. Jeff suggested that Mr. Baril and his counsel meet with Mr. Nicholson to further discuss the complaint and Mr. Baril was amenable to that.

**Old Business**

**078—Town Administrator Evaluation**
Sheila has compiled the 5 criteria based on the input of all the board members. They are on track for the public portion of the evaluation to take place at the January 27th meeting.

**082—Annual License Renewals (Rutland House of Pizza)**
Since the last meeting on December 31, 2019, Rutland Pizza has set up a payment plan with Becky Tuttle and are now in good standing. However, prior to this, they were notified that their food permit had expired and they were not allowed to open. Despite this information, they remained open for business. The town spoke with KP Law and were told that the board has the authority to issue a cease and desist. However, since they paid their taxes and obtained the food permit, the board agreed to approve their common victualler license.
• Motion to approve & sign a common victualler license for Rutland House of Pizza—Motion made by Jeff Stillings, seconded by Mitch Ruscitti; vote unanimous at 7:40 P.M.

New Business

084—Wachusett Solar PILOT Agreement (Amendment)
This will be on the agenda for January 27, 2020 following the solar committee meeting regarding the solar panels for Glenwood & Naquag schools.

085—Glenwood Field Lease Signing
Rutland Youth Soccer executed the document and the board signed the lease agreement.
Motion to sign the lease agreement as proposed for Glenwood Field—Motion made by Mitch Ruscitti, seconded by Wayne Walker; vote unanimous at 7:42 P.M.

086—Route 68 Discussion
On December 26, 2019, a Rutland family was involved in a serious auto accident on Rt. 68 in Hubbardston. In light of this, Sheila would like to broaden the Wachusett St. study to include more of the road as a whole. Mitch felt that not much can be done until the initial study comes back and the info can be taken to MA DOT. Mike Nicholson also clarified that the town was only quoted for a study of the Wachusett St. intersection and it would have to go back to town vote to change the scope of the study. Sheila suggested collaborating with Hubbardston, but Mitch feels its unnecessary. Chief Buckley (DPW) added that public meetings will be held regarding the study and questions can be asked then as well. The board voted to send an official letter to the Town Traffic Committee.

Motion to send an official letter to the Town Traffic Committee asking advice and recommendations on Route 68—Motion made by Jeff Stillings, seconded by Leah Whiteman; vote unanimous at 7:52 P.M.

087—MMA Annual Meeting
The meeting is being held next Friday, January 24, 2020. Sheila asked anyone attending to please read the booklet.

Executive Session
Motion to adjourn to executive session to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with non-union personnel or to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with non-union personnel only to return for adjournment—Motion made by Leah Whiteman, seconded by Jeff Stillings; vote unanimous at 7:56 P.M.
Roll call of all board members present

Adjournment
Motion to close the meeting—Motion made by Leah Whiteman, seconded by Jeff Stillings; vote unanimous at 8:07 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tomeca Murphy
Secretary