

**Town of Warwick
Selectboard
January 16, 2018
Minutes**

Members present: Dawn Magi, Lawrence Pruyne, James Erviti (arrived at 6:12 p.m.)

Others present: Town Coordinator David Young, Town Secretary Rosa Fratangelo, Highway Superintendent Larry Delaney, Finance Committee member Steve Ruggiero, HEART and School Committee member Sue O'Reilly McRae, Citizens Committee on Road Salt members Ted Cady, Olivier Flagollet and Bob Croke, Police Chief David Shoemaker, Elizabeth Lochhead, Gary Lochhead, John Gagliani, Amy Killay, Colin Killay, Gail Beauregard, Carol Foote, Nadia Marti, Kaila Woodson, Shelby Ashline (*Greenfield Recorder* and *Athol Daily News*)

I. Call to Order

Chair Pruyne called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. in the Town Hall.

II. Minutes

<p>Magi MOVED to approve the minutes of January 2, 2018 as printed. Pruyne SECONDED. Motion CARRIED 2-0-0.</p>
--

III. Presentations and Discussions

1. Update on Bike Race in April —Young explained that the organizers of the race are concerned about sand on the roads. The race is slated for a Saturday in late April; Young believed the date to be the 21st .

2. Committee Proposed Salt Ban in Village Center—Citizens Committee on Road Salt Chair Ted Cady said that the committee was unanimous in its opinion that the fastest way to reduce the salt in wells is to enact a salt ban and voted unanimously to request the Selectboard declare the village center as a no salt area. He said that while he was aware that this would make more work for the Highway crew, every well from Carol Foote property to the State Park has well contamination. Cady said that

the EPA considers anything under 20 milliliters per liter to be safe, and that the DEP guidelines are the same as for bottled water.

Olivier Flagollet said that he went to visit a few houses and tested 15 wells. He used the EPA guideline of 200 parts per million (ppm) and noted that the fountain in front of the Library, which is not affected by road salt has 18 ppm. Flagollet listed off the readings from the wells tested, in parts per million, as follows: 78,80,81,91,175,190,271,190, 360, 390, 408, 426, 490,567,960, and 195. He said that most of the wells tested were shallow, but some were artesian. Flagollet said that several people with whom he spoke complained of abnormally high blood pressure, and point to excess salt in the drinking water as the cause. He said that he also did a quick survey and found that 28 of the 29 residents with whom he spoke would like the center of town designated as a no road salt area.

Cady said that an Annual Town Meeting warrant article may be drafted. He noted that the Planning Board has a salt meter available to anyone who wants to test their well water for salt content. As Citizens Committee Chair Cady thanked Highway Superintendent Larry Delaney for his cooperation in doing what he can. He then said he felt that this was important enough for the Selectboard to act on it prior to the meeting next week with Mike Smith.

Young recommended that the Board not make a decision until the meeting with Mr. Smith. He said that if a salt ban is adopted and an exception needs to be invoked it would result in 3 times as much material being used on the roads. Young said that it would be best to hear from Mike Smith before enacting a ban.

John Gagliani suggested that the center of town be plowed more than it has been to remove more snow and alleviate build-up. Delaney explained that after plowing there is always some residue left behind, and that there is a bit more left every time the road is plowed because plowing does not get all the snow off the road. He said that he is working on using just half of the recommended amount (125 lbs. per road mile instead of 250 lbs.) with some success.

Elizabeth Lochhead said that people who live here with wells in front of their houses and close to the road are more important than those driving on the road. Young said that he could find no liability cases against sanding/salting/plowing if reasonable maintenance is performed and signs are posted. Delaney said that without the aid of some salt the new segmented plows will not completely clear all snow and residue from the roads.

Flagollet said that careful driving and respect for the weather and road conditions make him feel safe on our winter roads. He said that he has photographs of low salt signs and wanted to know who in town could instruct the Highway crew to remove those signs. Flagollet said that high blood pressure, especially in older residents is a serious health issue, and that no road salt expert can lower the high blood pressure of affected residents. He stated that it was time for the Selectboard to make a decision on this issue.

Magi said that she had read about an under-sink filter that will filter out salt and that she needs to research this further to see if it is a viable option. Bob Croke said that removing salts from water is much more expensive and difficult than other materials such as rust. Young said that there is a tension between doing all we can to keep the roads clear and compromises based on what we can afford. He noted that there have been 11 motor vehicle accidents so far this winter, and that some vehicles were totaled. Young said that if the salt ban is enacted, alternative road treatment must be found. He said he was willing to drive as slowly as

necessary and that he would eventually get to work, and therefore has no problem if a salt ban is put in place.

Croke said that the center of town gets lots of sunshine, which will melt the snow in several days, and that drivers will simply have to drive more slowly. Colin Killay, the Highway Superintendent in Orange, urged the Board to first sit down with Mike Smith. He said that Mr. Smith possesses a great deal of knowledge of good alternatives, has resources from the State, and has handled this issue in other towns. Young said that Mike Smith will meet with the Board on Tuesday, January 23 at 3 p.m. in Town Hall.

Flagollet said that it takes a very long time for the wells to flush, and that even a small amount of salt on the roads on a regular basis would mean that the wells might never get back to normal.

Police Chief David Shoemaker said that none of the previously mentioned motor vehicle accidents occurred in the center of town, and that it seemed to him that people expect to be able to enjoy the same road conditions on December 1st as on July 1st. He said that public expectations need to be addressed. The Chief said that he did not believe signage would make a large percentage of drivers pay attention or slow down in a no salt zone.

Cady said rock salt doesn't work below 15 to 20 degrees. He noted that we could use alternatives with significantly lower impact, but the Highway Department does not have the equipment to distribute such materials. He said of magnesium, calcium and sodium, sodium is the worst. Cady said that the Board can evaluate what Mike Smith has to say, but they should stand with the citizens and ban salt use now or give bottled water to residents with affected wells. Delaney said that when no salt was used earlier this winter there was at least one car went off the road and he has seen numerous tracks of vehicles that bounced off the granite curbs.

Elizabeth Lochhead said that she spent five days in the hospital due to the salt in her well. She said she has been treated for high blood pressure. She noted that her blood pressure must now be checked regularly at home and not just at the doctor's office, and stated that this is caused by road salt. Gail Beauregard said that she has also had a dramatic increase in her blood pressure and decided it had to be caused by the salt in the well water.

Steve Ruggiero said that the town should look into purchasing a solar powered sign that lights up with the capability of displaying different sayings including "no salt area". Chief Shoemaker said that he had looked into applying for a grant because such signs cost around \$10,000.00, as it is a great idea but the issue would be the cost. Young said it would be a large ask for a small town. He also said that we are learning a lot and he understands there is mistrust.

Erviti MOVED to table this issue until Mike Smith meets with the Board.
Magi SECONDED.
Motion CARRIED 3-0-0.

3. Planning for Meeting with Mr. Smith Regarding Winter Snow and Ice Practices —Young said that Ted Cady had suggested this meeting be open to including those from other towns, and he asked the Board if they would like to extend an invitation to other towns. There was a consensus of the Board to invite people from other towns.

- 4. HEART Committee Report: Sue O'Reilly McRae**—Ms. O'Reilly McRae said that she was checking back in with the Board with an update. A \$25,000.00 grant was awarded in August of 2017, and she said that the State awarded the Gill/Montague District a \$110,000.00 grant. O'Reilly McRae said that the PVRSD School Committee voted to collaborate with the Gill/Montague District within the larger grant. She said they are working on regionalization, lower enrollment and increasing costs, and noted that it seems similar issues and problems are the same throughout Franklin County. O'Reilly McRae said that there will be a meeting on March 24, 2018 at GCC where they will be asking for suggestions on topics of discussion. O'Reilly McRae said that the District Agreement is being looked at and will be brought up at this month's School Committee meeting. She said that the HEART Committee has remained very active as it meets every two weeks, but pointed out that she is the only active member from Warwick and that Warwick should have a full working group within the committee. She said that Alan Genovese had been very helpful through last August but has not been available since then due to his Superintendent job in Winchester, NH. O'Reilly McRae said that transportation, special ed., sports and transportation for special ed. are among the major questions for which they are trying to find answers. She pointed out that as a rural district we have different issues and concerns from the urban districts, and that Massachusetts is almost the lowest of all states in State funding for rural districts. Erviti suggested that certain aspects of the urban model be looked into to see if they could be adapted to the rural model to increase efficiency. O'Reilly McRae said that all Selectboards are being asked if volunteers should be allowed to vote, or if only appointed HEART Committee members should be voting. Pruyne said that he thought only members appointed by the Selectboard should be voting members on the HEART Committee.
- 5. Contract for Outsourced Town Accountant**—Erviti said he received a response from the owner/operator of Baystate Municipal Accounting Group (BMAG). He noted that the owner said it was wonderful news but as the firm is currently quite busy with the MMA they would not be able to move forward until late this month. Erviti said that BMAG is definitely on board and will be ready to go. He estimated the contract would be signed some time in February of 2018.
- 6. Codifying Behavior Guidelines**—Pruyne handed out copies of the Standards of Conduct/Civility Policy from The Town of Foxborough's Personnel Policies. There was a consensus of the Board that each member will study the document and discuss the matter further at the next meeting.
- 7. Selectboard Reports**—There were no reports this meeting.
- 8. Coordinator Report**—There was nothing to add to the written report.

9. New and Other Business Unanticipated at Time of Posting Meeting —Young brought up a memo from PVRSD Superintendent Ruth Miller to the Selectboard Chairs of the four member towns. He said that each Board is requested to have one member serve as a representative in collective bargaining negotiations. There was a consensus of the Board that they will decide who will represent Warwick.

Young said that the Chair of the budget subcommittee has requested that the Selectboards of the four member towns to allow the assessment numbers to be presented by late March. The subcommittee would like, by agreement of the four Selectboards, to extend the time to work on the PVRSD budget. He noted there will be a pre-hearing on February 8, 2018 to hear what the communities' priorities are. Young said that 80% of the PVRSD budget is rising between 4 and 5 percent.

10. Public Comment—Finance Committee member Steve Ruggiero suggested that the Board deal with the Telecommunication Department within the State rather than file legal action in court. He pointed out that the State licenses Verizon, and for this reason Verizon will likely not be willing to go up against the State.

11. Executive Session—

Magi MOVED to go into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing pending litigation and not to reconvene in open session except to adjourn. Erviti SECONDED. Motion

IV. Adjournment

At 8:03 p.m. Magi MOVED to adjourn. Erviti SECONDED. Motion CARRIED 3-0-0: Pruyne – AYE; Magi – AYE; Erviti - AYE.

Documents consulted at this meeting:

*Draft Minutes of January 2, 2018 Selectboard meetings

*Coordinator Report dated January 11, 2018

* HEART Committee Meeting Minutes of December 18, 2017

*Emails from David Young to Dave Charbonneau and Charbonneau to Young, dated January 8, 2018

Re: Warwick 2.0 Status

*Emails from Dave Charbonneau to David Young dated January 4, 2018 and June 28, 2017 Re: Warwick 2.0 Status

*Memo to Chairpersons, Boards of Selectmen: Bernardston, Leyden, Northfield and Warwick from

PVRSD School Superintendent Ruth Miller dated January 11, 2018 Re: Collective Bargaining: Participation of municipal officials

*Town Coordinator Activity Log January 2 -12, 2018

*Town of Foxborough Personnel Policies Standards of Conduct/Civility Policy