**Minutes for Tuesday, September 8, 2020 Sweden Selectmen’s Meeting**

1. **Pledge of Allegiance**
2. **Call to Order:**
The meeting was called to order by Selectman Frum at 6:02 PM.
3. **Introduction of Attendees:**
Those in attendance included Selectman Frum, Selectman Carty and Selectperson Ridlon. Town Treasurer Patnaude and Town Clerk Porter were in attendance as well. Attendees from the community included: Melanie Eldracher; Pat Watson; Bill Centamore; Gail DeWildt; Warren DeWildt; Daniel McQueen; Julie McQueen; Art Dunlap; Troy Mash (sp?); Bill Graham; Brad Nelson; Robin Nelson; Ruth Conly; George Conly; Steve Baker and Mary Sohl.
4. **Review of previous minutes (8/25/20):**Minutes of the August 25, 2020 were reviewed. A motion was made by Selectman Carty; seconded by Selectperson Ridlon. The minutes were unanimously approved as written.
5. **New Business:***- Stearns Pond Construction & Tree Removal Concerns:*
Code Enforcement Officer Dunlap was asked to present a comprehensive update as to all approvals, permits, reviews and any potential breaches of code or permitting on this property. In short, Mr. Dunlap presented recent facts as to the permit, building and tree removal that has occurred on the property to date. Those details are provided in an eMail from Mr. Dunlap (attached). Key concerns still needing to be fully vetted and/or validated include: is there an increase in the new structure in comparison to the original structure (which is known to be classified as non-conforming and to have been previously expanded (in the 1980’s) the 30% maximum allowable expansion); was there a breach in the number of trees removed from the property to accommodate this construction project; and, were there any other material variances in the construction of the property versus the permits.

There was substantial discussion and concern from the public covering a variety of topics from excessive tree removal, the expansion of the size of the structure, the very limited oversite time available to CEO Dunlap; and the Town needing to rely on the property owner(s) to provide for a licensed forestry company to assure compliance with shoreline codes. Mr. Dunlap did mention the owner of the property in question utilized Q-Team, a licensed, reputable forestry company. Selectman Frum and the other Selectman assured the public deeper review and oversite would follow, including a review of all documents and history of this property. Given the concerns expressed on both sides of this contentious issue, the Board of Selectmen instructed MR. Dunlap to execute additional “check in’s” on the project and to advise of any concerns with compliance with code, ordinance or permits. Selectman Carty commented he is following up with DEP for additional support and/or input as the Town does not employ or possess such specific skills/trades. . It is expected this issue will be raised again at an upcoming meeting.
*- Volunteer Policy*

Selectman Frum provided an update as to a proposed new Volunteer policy. After discussion, it was suggested a differentiation be made in the policy in regard to “occasion” volunteers and “consistent” volunteers. Selectman Frum committed to provide a draft of the volunteer policy at an upcoming BOS meeting, preferably at the 9/22 or 10/13 meeting depending on other priorities for the agenda.

*- Appointment to the Board of Appeals:*

Selectman Carty presented Mr. Warren DeWildt as candidate for the vacant Board of Appeals position for a four year term (ending in 2024). Mr. Dewildt introduced himself and Selectman Carty made a motion to approve Mr. DeWildt for the position. Selectperson Ridlon seconded the motion and the motion was approved unanimously.

*- Tax Assessment & Delinquency Process:*

Ms. Patnaude presented an update on the annual tax assessment process. She made clear that assessments and bills have been delayed State wide due to the current pandemic. However, the Town of Sweden is in the final stages of being able to release tax bills to the public. Several matters were discussed in relation to this process and the following decisions were made:

A) After review and discussion of the tax rate options provided by O’Donnell and Associates, Selectman Carty moved approval of recommended “Option A” (of three options), which calls for a rate of 14.3 per thousand dollars of assessed value and an overlay of $23,966. This motion was seconded by Chairman Frum and the motion carried unanimously (O’Donnell report attached).

B) Once the rate was approved by the Board, a warrant was drafted to authorize a special meeting to occur September 19, 2020 in order to publicly discuss a change in the delinquency date for this year’s tax bills. The recommendation to be discussed at the public meeting is that tax bills will be sent out by 9/23/20 and delinquency (e.g., interest), will begin to accrue as of 10/31/20. The delinquency date is the subject of the special meeting to be held on 9/19/20. Selectperson Ridlon moved approval of the warrant for the special meeting. The motion was seconded by Selectman Carty and the warrant was unanimously approved (attached). The warrant will be posted and provided to local newspapers to assure as broad a public notice as possible.
6. **Old Business:**
- *Staffing interviews, Changes & Updates:*

Chairman Frum presented findings of a series of interviews conducted with staff to ascertain what changes, if any, need to be made to staffing; hours and/or job duties to assure staff are meeting the needs of the residents of Sweden. After discussion and input, the following conclusions were made:

A) A town workshop (or two) will be conducted in the near future to fully assess demands and needs of the Town by way of changing job descriptions and/or hiring staff to replace recently announced departures.

B) It was decided NO decision would be made as to replacing the currently vacant Administrative Assistant position until such time the workshop(s) had made its recommendations.

C) Chairman Frum committed to conduct these workshops in the very near future with appropriate public notice being provided.

- *Update on potential acquisition of Fire Truck*:

Selectman Carty provided a brief update and will follow up with Fire Chief Cook.

- *Outstanding Bills/Warrants*:

Ms. Patnaude presented to the Board of Selectmen the currently due bills by way of warrant. Chairman Frum reported the largest item was the monthly payment to the school district with all other items being typical and of small dollar amounts. The Board of Selectmen discussed, moved approval, seconded & unanimously signed the warrants.
7. **Announcements:**
- The next SPECCIAL meeting of the BOS will be September 19, 2020 at 9 AM.

- The next regular BOS meeting will be September 22, 2020 at 6 PM.

- Request was made for this year’s provider of road salt for the Town. Follow up will occur shortly.

- Request was made to place the access policy for the Town Landing at Stearns Pond. Will be placed on the next regular meeting agenda.
8. **Adjournment:**
There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:07 PM.