

PLYMOUTH TOWN BOARD MEETING

FEBRUARY 12, 2024

6:30PM

PRESENT: Supervisor Patricia Murray
Councilman Frank Williams
Councilman Ray Elsworth
Highway Superintendent Louis Redenback

Two Councilman seats were vacant.

Supervisor Murray brought the meeting to order and led in the Pledge to the Flag.

She asked if there were any additions or corrections to the minutes of the January meeting. There were none. Mr. Elsworth made a motion to approve the minutes as sent. Mr. Williams seconded the motion. The Board was polled and the motion was carried with three yeases and no nos. Two Councilman seats were vacant.

DOG CONTROL OFFICER'S REPORT: Mr. Brian Franklin reported the following:

- 1/20/24 Rt. 16 – dog at residence – found owner of dog, owner picked it up
- 2/3/24 dog was on neighbor's property. Warning was given.
- 2/8/24 Rt. 23 – dog at large – no dog found
- 2/10/24 dog on Co. Rt. 21 – found owner

- 2/12/24 Rt. 19 – dog on neighbor’s property – will investigate

Mr. Franklin advised everyone that the SPCA has changed their policies. The SPCA is limited on the number of dogs they can take in, so if a person has an unwanted dog, they should contact the SPCA to see if they have any room.

CODE ENFORCEMENT OFFICER’S REPORT: Mr. Steve Fox gave the following report:

- Two calls about subdivisions. Referred them to the Planning Board.
- Issued a Notice of Violation for garbage to Kelly Cushman on County Rd. 21. I suggested she share it with Brian Cushman being both names are on the deed.
- Site visit to 122 County Rd. 21 Preston Branagan. Spoke with Preston and Gladys about the debris and weeds in the front yard. Asked them to neaten it up. They agreed to do some when the weather gets better.
- Site visit and call to Josh Kisner, Plymouth N. Norwich Rd. apartment house. Garbage is piling up again. Working with Dave from the Health Dept. Dave also spoke with Josh about the garbage problem. Josh is making the excuse that no one is paying their rent. He has until the 15th to clean it up or he will be issued a ticket.
- Complaint about garbage at 3189 State Hwy. 23. Did a site visit and spoke with the owner Kim Treacy. She stated she got behind

on the garbage pickup bill but will get it taken care of. Went by a few days later and the pile was smaller.

HIGHWAY SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT: Mr. Louis Redenback gave the following report:

- The Highway crew has been out plowing and sanding 8 times since the last meeting.
- Repaired the screen for sand.
- Truck maintenance and repairs.
- Cleaned the shop and more organizing.
- Dug up the septic system. Fixed the crushed pipe.
- Did not hear from Palmer Electric for the project on the west wall which was run all new conduit and all new outlets on that side of the shop, so the crew ended up doing the work themselves which saved a lot of money.
- Palmer also never came back to replace a faulty GFI which was a part of the first project he did, so the highway crew fixed that and deducted it off his second bill.
- Almost finished a complete inventory of everything the Highway has.
- If the weather allows, they will start cleaning ditches and get a jump on spring work.
- The truck from Hamilton has arrived. It is all lettered thanks to Tim Manwarren. Waiting for paperwork so it can be registered.
- This month Mr. Redenback turned in 33 bills.

There was discussion about Palmer Electric.

PLANNING BOARD REPORT: Mr. Tim Manwarren reported on the following:

- Asked the Town Board for approval of adding Mr. Dick Schutt to the Planning Board to replace Mr. Earing. His term will expire 12/31/25.
- Verification from Catherine Murphy that the dry hydrant located at the Reservoir is open and working.
- Consulted with Bainbridge, Columbus, and Smithville about developing Plymouth's Comprehensive Plan. Currently comprising a survey.
- Drafting a form for use by the Planning Board to clarify the decision on site development, property divisions, etc.
- Requested approval by the Town Board to appoint Mr. Manwarren and Mr. Schutt as Project Managers for the repairs on Foster Park.
- Made some suggestions concerning the cost of materials and the secondary use of materials for Foster Park. (The old roofing should be saved to use on the salt shed.)
- The Planning Board's next meeting is March 4, at 6:00pm.

Ms. Murray said she did speak with the Association of Towns about creating a Project Manager position. They weren't aware of any authority of the Supervisor to do so. The Town Board could create such a position. Once created, it would have to be titled and classified through the County Civil Service. Once this has been done, the Board

may fill the position or delegate the authority to fill the position to the Supervisor.

Ms. Murray said she got 4 estimates for the roof. She also received a letter from the insurance company concerning replacing the whole roof vs. doing a partial job. Discussion followed. Ms. Murray said the Board would take all this information under advisement.

Mr. Ray Elsworth read a resolution to APPOINT PATRICIA J. COLLIER to TOWN COURT CLERK (RESOLUTION #10 OF 2024). Mr. Williams seconded the resolution. The Board was polled and the resolution was adopted with three yeases and no nos. Two Councilman seats were vacant.

Mr. Williams read RESOLUTION 11 OF 2024 having previously expended \$8,000.00 in wages for the Town officials that the previous Town Supervisor Nucero-Alger determined were authorized by American Recovery Plan (ARP) Guidelines, and such funds having been paid out of the General Fund because the Town did not have access to ARP Funds, the Town hereby authorizes reimbursement to the General Fund for such expenses from available ARP funds, with all such reimbursements of expenditure to be within ARP requirements. Mr. Elsworth seconded the resolution. The Board was polled and the resolution was adopted with three yeases and no nos. Two Councilman seats were vacant.

Mr. Williams read RESOLUTION 13 OF 2024 FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF TOWN PLANNING BOARD MEMBER. Mr. Elsworth seconded the resolution. The Board was polled and the resolution was adopted with three yeases and no nos. Two Councilman seats were vacant.

The Town attorney, Mr. Gregory read RESOLUTION 12 OF 2024 – PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD TIME LIMIT. Mr. Williams made a motion to adopt

this resolution. Mr. Elsworth seconded the motion. The Board was polled and the resolution was adopted with three yeases and no nos. Two Councilman seats were vacant. Many objections were raised by the public.

Ms. Murray introduced Mr. David Craine from the Town's insurance company. Mr. Craine reviewed the Town's insurance policies. Mr. Redenback pointed out some errors in coverage. He and Mr. Craine agreed to get in touch with each other to make corrections.

Ms. Murray announced that she, Mrs. Brown and Mr. Franklin had gone over the new contract with the SPCA. Mr. Williams made a motion to accept the new contract and the addendum with the SPCA. Mr. Elsworth seconded the motion. The Board was polled and the motion was passed with three yeases and no nos. Two Councilman seats were vacant.

Ms. Murray said the County will give \$1,200.00 toward the youth activities of the Town.

Ms. Murray introduced Mr. Gregory, the Town attorney. He addressed The electrical issues at the Town Garage. He said that the law says that all Town physical properties are the responsibility of the Town Board. Discussion followed.

Ms. Murray announced that anyone needing vaccines could consult the information on the bulletin board in the entrance way. She also said

that February is American Heart Health Month. Information is also available on that board.

Mrs. Brown announced that \$999,545.82 in property taxes have been paid to the Supervisor. The Town will still receive \$130,433.92 more as the taxes are paid.

Ms. Murray introduced Mr. Richard Rifanburg, the Town Assessor. He explained the processes he needs to perform in doing his job. He said grievance day will be May 31, 2024. He also listed several tax exemptions and how to apply for them. Several people have asked about a re-evaluation. Mr. Rifanburg said it would cost the Town about \$100.00 per parcel which would amount to a cost of about \$134,500.00. He also explained the equalization rate and how that effects taxes.

Ms. Murray said she had 10 people who had signed up for a councilman seat. She gathered three names of people who were willing to be interviewed on Saturday, February 24, 2024. She will call a couple more so five people can be interviewed. There will be a special meeting called so the Board can go into executive session to hold interviews. It was decided that the remaining five will be interviewed on a week night.

PUBLIC CONCERNS: Tim Manwarren asked how much money was rolled over from 2023 to 2024. Mr. Wightman answered \$194,866.00. Mr. Manwarren asked why the taxes had to be raised so much when

that money was left over from 2023. He also asked what the percentage of the total Town budget was Highway. He said it was 76%.

He expressed concerns over how much time he thought it took Mr. Redenback to get budget information to work with.

Mrs. Ciborowski asked why the funding for the Youth Bureau was not provided for in the budget. Ms. Murray said, last year the former Supervisor had signed an agreement with the City of Norwich for about \$3,600.00. She said it wasn't in the budget what so ever. Ms. Murray was told the money had to come from the Contingency Line. There was no money on that Line. This year the cost was raised to \$4,700.00. It was not budgeted because of the Town's financial situation at that time. When the letter asking for more money was received, Ms. Murray said the budget had already been done. Mrs. Ciborowski asked that this issue be reconsidered.

Mr. Ed Pierno raised questions about the procedure that was followed when posting about the meeting for the Tax Cap override. Attorney Gregory said the Town was waiting for a decision, by the State Comptroller, about whether the posting was done correctly.

Mr. Gray said he never saw a posting for the Tax Cap meeting. He agreed with the Youth Bureau issue as well. He also complained about not being able to see recent meeting minutes on the website. He suggested that resolutions also be posted on the site as well as the agenda for the next meeting.

Mr. Tom Prisco asked why the Highway Department needed a 55% increase in funding, and the General side of the budget was increased by 35%. Mr. Redenback said that everyone was more than welcome to stay in the room when bills were being paid and see how much more expensive everything has become. Mr. Prisco also asked why the Planning Board never signed paperwork that his son was trying to get. Mr. Manwarren said that Mr. Prisco's son was complying with everything as it was required. Mr. Manwarren said a new form was being created to clarify processes going forward.

Mr. Brett Wightman said that Ms. Murray was incorrect about the budget being done when the letter from the City of Norwich Youth Bureau announcing the increased fee had been received. He felt that the public never got any answers to their questions or concerns.

Mr. Jim McCormack spoke opposing the time limits that were imposed earlier in the meeting. He asked the Board to reconsider this action.

Mrs. Sandy Pierce expressed her disappointment in the way people have turned against each other. She said that energy could better be served to work together. She defended Town officials and their actions.

Ms. Rhonda Fairbanks asked why Mrs. Brown does not poll the Board now. She also said that Mr. Wightman has the backing to prove the things he says, but the Board does not want to hear it. She said Mr. Wightman should be the first one chosen to fill one of the vacant Councilman seats. Ms. Murray said the Fire Commissioners' meeting and the County Board of Supervisors' poll the Boards in the same way she has started doing it.

Mrs. Bernadette Jackson said Ms. Murray had time to write up several resolutions, but she had no time to choose new Board members.

The bills were reviewed and signed. Mr. Williams made a motion to pay the signed bills. Mr. Elsworth seconded the motion. The Board was polled and the motion was passed with three yeses and no nos. Two Councilman seats were vacant.

Mr. Williams made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Elsworth seconded the motion. The Board was polled and the motion was passed with three yeses and no nos. Two Councilman seats were vacant. The meeting was adjourned at 9:46pm.

Respectfully submitted by,

Virginia E. Brown

Plymouth Town Clerk

February 29, 2024

