

MINUTES OF THE PARKS AND CEMETERIES COMMISSION MEETING OF DECEMBER 10, 2019

PRESENT- STEVE MSCISZ CHAIRMAN (ABSENT), GRETCHEN REHAK COMMISSIONER, MARSHALL HOOK COMMISSIONER, STEVE SHEPARD SUPT., DICK GANDT SELECTMAN, AND KEVIN HARTUNIAN TOWN ADMINISTRATOR.

CALLED TO ORDER- 7:35 PM BY G. REHAK

OLD BUSINESS

HOLIDAY ON THE GREEN: G. REHAK EXPLAINED THAT SHE SERVES ON THE HOLIDAY ON THE GREEN (HOG) COMMITTEE, WHICH SHE EXPLAINED IS THE ACTING RECREATION COMMITTEE, AN OFFSHOOT OF THE PARKS & CEMETERIES COMMISSION. D. GANDT SAID THAT HE SHOVELED PICNIC TABLES ONE HOUR BEFORE THE FOOD TRUCKS ARRIVED. ALL LIGHTS ALSO LIGHTED PERFECTLY AND ALL WENT VERY WELL AT THE EVENT. HOWEVER PER G. REHAK THE STATE OF OUR THREE LIGHT BOXES ON THE COMMON IS THAT THEY ARE PRETTY DANGEROUS. THEY WERE INSTALLED APPROXIMATELY 20 YEARS AGO. THE LIGHT BOXES BELONG TO THE PARKS & CEMETERIES DEPT. PER STEVE SHEPARD WE ARE GETTING A QUOTE TO REPLACE SAME. ALSO, TO KEEP THIS EVENT UP AND RUNNING WE WILL NEED APPROXIMATELY \$5,000.00 ANNUALLY. S. SHEPARD ESTIMATES THAT THE REPLACEMENT COST FOR EACH LIGHT BOX WILL BE ABOUT \$2,500.00. THE LIGHT BOXES ARE USED FOR A NUMBER OF EVENTS. APPARENTLY WHEN THE POLICE DEPT. PLUGGED THEIR SPEED SIGN INTO THE LIGHT BOX IT SHORTED OUT, WHICH ALSO DAMAGED OUR TREE LIGHTS. M. HOOK FEELS THAT THESE LIGHT BOXES SHOULD BE REPLACED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. BUT HE ALSO BELIEVES THAT THEIR REPAIR COSTS SHOULD BE SHARED BY THE TOWN AS ALL DEPARTMENTS USE THE BOXES. G. REHAK ALSO RELATED THAT SANTA WAS A LITTLE BIT LATE FOR THIS EVENT DUE TO A MEDICAL EMERGENCY THE SAME DAY WHICH TIED UP THE FIRE DEPT. G. REHAK WENT ON TO EXPLAIN THAT THE TOPSFIELD REC COMMITTEE IS AN ALL VOLUNTEER GROUP. JRR ROSENCRANTZ ALSO DONATED THEIR TIME AND EQUIPMENT TO MAKE THE HAYRIDES HAPPEN WHICH WAS WONDERFUL. G. REHAK REPORTED THAT THE HOLIDAY DOOR CONTEST ALSO WENT VERY WELL. K. HARTUNIAN ASKED IF THERE WERE ANY FINANCIAL SPONSORS FOR THIS EVENT. TWO YEARS AGO THE COMMITTEE DID A FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN FOR THE EVENT. G. REHAK POINTED OUT THAT TOPSFIELD DOES NOT HAVE A HUGE COMMERCIAL BASE. SHE ALSO FEELS THAT THERE IS NO ONE PERSON TAKING THE LEAD IN THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY. SHE SAID THAT 15 YEARS AGO POSTERS WERE SOLD FOR THIS EVENT AT THE OLD GIFT HORSE STORE. GRETCHEN SAID THAT PERHAPS A POSTER COULD BE CREATED FOR THIS EVENT WHICH COULD BE SOLD TO THE PUBLIC AS A FUNDRAISER. M. HOOK WAS ALSO IN FAVOR OF THE POSTER FUNDRAISING IDEA. GRETCHEN ALSO SAID THAT THE PARKS & CEMETERIES DEPT. DID A LOT OF WORK FOR THIS EVENT, INCLUDING MOVING TRASH BARRELS AND PICNIC TABLES. KEVIN HARTUNIAN SAID THAT THE EVENT WAS VERY SPECIAL, IT WAS A GREAT EVENT! MARY FELTAULT WON THE MARYELLEN MCGEE AWARD. FOUR STEWARD SCHOOL STUDENTS NOMINATED HER FOR THE AWARD. D. GANDT ALSO ASKED HOW MUCH MONEY WAS RAISED WITH THE MEMORY TREE FUND. G. REHAK GUESSED THAT NOT THAT MUCH MONEY WAS RAISED, PERHAPS A COUPLE OF HUNDRED DOLLARS. M. HOOK RELATED THAT HE HAD MET WITH THE NEW OWNER OF LELA'S AND A NEW STORE EMPLOYEE FROM THE NEW HARDWARE STORE IN TOWN.

DEAD ANIMAL PICKUPS: THE PARKS & CEMETERIES COMMISSION WILL BE SENDING A LETTER REGARDING DEAD ANIMAL PICKUPS TO BOTH THE BOARD OF HEALTH AND TOWN ADMINISTRATOR WHICH WILL EXPLAIN THAT AS OF APRIL 1, 2020 THE PARKS & CEMETERIES DEPT. WILL CEASE TO DO DEAD ANIMAL PICKUPS. THE COMMISSION ALSO AGREED UNANIMOUSLY WITH THIS DECISION, ALTHOUGH NO FORMAL VOTE WAS TAKEN.

NEW BUSINESS

BUDGET/TOWN LANDFILL: S. SHEPARD STATED THAT WE HAVE TWO BUDGETS, THE TOWN OPERATING BUDGET AND THE MONITORING CONTRACT BUDGET FOR THE TOWN LANDFILL WITH WESTON & SAMPSON ENGINEERING. WE HAVE DONE 20 YEARS OF MONITORING WITH A FUTURE 10 YEARS OF MONITORING REMAINING, AS MOST LANDFILLS ARE MONITORED FOR 30 YEARS. WESTON & SAMPSON WILL ALSO HAVE TO BE DOING SOME NEW TESTING THROUGH DEP. WENDY OUR BOH AGENT IS ALSO INVOLVED IN THIS MONITORING PROCESS. VARIOUS CHEMICAL COMPOUNDS NEED TO BE TESTED RESULTING IN A COST INCREASE OF \$7,000.00 FOR THE FY 21 BUDGET. OUR CURRENT CONTRACT IS \$38,700.00 + \$7,000.00 + \$500.00 THIRD PARTY INSPECTION FEE = \$46,200.00. S. SHEPARD HAS TWO CONTRACTS, IF BOTH WERE SIGNED HE FEELS THAT HE WOULD BE IN A BETTER POSITION TO DO THE BUDGET. DEP WILL ALSO PROBABLY NOT GIVE US AN ANSWER ON SAID CONTRACTS FOR 6-8

MONTHS. STEVE S. ALSO WANTED TO DISCUSS THE COST SAVINGS OF \$7,000.00/YEAR WHICH AMOUNTS TO \$70,000.00 OVER THE NEXT 10 YEARS. THIS SAVINGS WILL RESULT IF WE TURN OFF THE METHANE FLARES. SOME OF THE FLARES ARE STARTING TO SLOW DOWN SUCH THAT TWO DO NOT IGNITE AT ALL AND ANOTHER TWO ARE ONLY INTERMITTENT. NOTE: THERE ARE FOUR ACTIVE FLARES ON THE ACTUAL CAPPED PART OF THE LANDFILL: TWO IN THE OLD BURN DUMP, ONE OF WHICH IS CAPPED AND THE OTHER IS AN OPEN FLARE WHICH HAS NEVER IGNITED SINCE STEVE HAS WORKED FOR THIS DEPARTMENT. THE METHANE IS DIMINISHING SUCH THAT OF THE FOUR FUNCTIONING FLARES, TWO DO NOT IGNITE ANYMORE, AND TWO ARE IGNITING INTERMITTENTLY. BY REDUCING THESE FLARES AND CAPPING THEM, WE WILL TURN THEM INTO WHAT IS KNOWN AS A "PASSIVE EVENT." NOTE, IT WOULD HAVE THE SAME SHAFT WHICH COMES OUT OF THE GROUND, BUT IT HAS A SPINNING CONE ON THE TOP TO ALLOW FOR AIR FLOW OUT OF THE LANDFILL. BY DOING THIS WE PROCEED WITH THE CONTRACT BUT ACHIEVE A 20% SAVINGS, WITH THE END RESULT OF A SAVINGS OF \$7,000.00 ANNUALLY. THIS WILL RESULT IN A REDUCTION IN MONITORING AND COSTS. NOTE: WE ALSO WON'T NEED TO BUY FLARE PRODUCTS ANYMORE SUCH AS SPARK ARRESTORS AND SPARK PILOTS, A SAVING OF APPX. \$1,500.00 TO \$3,000.00/YEAR. ALSO REGARDING MONITORING, IF WE REDUCE OUR REGULAR MONITORING OF AIR, WATER AND SOIL FROM QUARTERLY TO SEMI-ANNUALLY, WE WILL SEE A 20% SAVING OF \$7,000.00 X 2 OR \$14,000.00 ANNUALLY. PLUS THERE IS ALSO A 3RD PARTY INSPECTION DONE ANNUALLY BY WESTON & SAMPSON. WE HAD A 100% SCORE LAST YEAR. THE COST OF SAME IS \$2,000.00. IF THIS IS DONE BI-ANNUALLY WE WILL SAVE \$1,000.00/YEAR. THUS OUR MONITORING CONTRACT WILL BE REDUCED TO A TOTAL COST OF \$31,200.00 WITH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ALL THESE REDUCTIONS. THIS COST COULD THEN BE CONTINUED FOR 10 YEARS. DEP COULD KEEP IT GOING LONGER, BUT IDEALLY ALL MONITORING WILL END 10 YEARS FROM NOW. AFTER 30 YEARS PASS IN TOTAL WE WILL BE CONSIDERED A STAND ALONE PARK, RATHER THAN A "LANDFILL PARK." S. SHEPARD ALSO EXPLAINED TO M. HOOK THAT THE PLASTIC LINER ON THE LANDFILL IS ALSO CAPPED WITH SOIL. HE THEN EXPLAINED SOME OF THE HISTORY OF OUR UPKEEP OF THIS CAPPED LANDFILL WHICH INCLUDED A 4-5 YEAR PERIOD OF FILLING IN DEPRESSIONS WHICH WERE CAUSED BY THE DECOMPOSITION OF TRASH, BUT WE HAVE NOT SEEN ANY DEPRESSIONS FOR THE PAST TWO YEARS. S. SHEPARD THEN REVIEWED THE LANDFILL CONTRACT. HE ALSO DISCUSSED THE HISTORY OF THE CLAY PILE IN PYEBROOK PARK WHICH AT ONE POINT WAS GOING TO BE USED AS THE LINER. BUT YEARS AGO THE FORMER TOWN ENGINEER JOE DOWNING DECIDED INSTEAD TO GO WITH A PLASTIC LINER. THEREFORE WE HAVE A LARGE CLAY MOUND WHICH STILL SITS IN THE PARK. IT HAS NOT BEEN REMOVED DUE TO ASTRONOMICALLY PROHIBITIVE COSTS TO DO SO. AS SUCH THERE REMAINS A BUDGET ALLOCATION OF \$35,000.00 FOR CLAY PILE REMOVAL WHICH IS NOT BEING USED FOR SAME. S. SHEPARD DID SAY THAT HE DOES HOWEVER STILL NEED \$15,000.00 TO UPDATE THE PARK'S IRRIGATION SYSTEM. S. SHEPARD THEN PRESENTED TWO \$5,000.00 CONTRACTS WHICH COULD BOTH BE FUNDED OUT OF THE REMAINING \$35,000.00 CLAY PILE BUDGET, WHICH WOULD ALLOW US TO MOVE FORWARD TOWARDS ACHIEVING THE STATUS OF AN INDEPENDENT PARK. M. HOOK PARAPHRASED THAT THIS IS AN INITIAL \$10,000.00 COST WHICH COULD RESULT IN A SAVINGS OF \$165,000 TO \$180,000.00. S. SHEPARD SUGGESSED THAT THE COMMISSION REVIEW ALL FACTS, ADDING THAT AFTER WE SPEND \$46,200.00 FOR UPCOMING DEP MONITORING, WE CAN THEN MOVE FORWARD WITH OUR NEW PLANS. S. SHEPARD ALSO AGREED TO FORWARD ALL OF HIS WESTON & SAMPSON EMAILS TO OUR COMMISSIONERS SO THAT THEY CAN REVIEW ALL OF THE SPECIFICS CONCERNING THESE NEW PROPOSED PLANS. HE THEN GAVE A BRIEF HISTORY OF LANDFILL MONITORING. APPARENTLY JUST BEFORE OUR FORMER TOWN ENGINEER LEFT THE TOWN, PYEBROOK PARK OPENED, WHICH IS WHEN THE P&C DEPT. FILLED THE GAP, AND ASSUMED THE DUTIES OF THE FORMER TOWN ENGINEER CONCERNING LANDFILL MONITORING. S. SHEPARD ALSO REMINDED THE COMMISSION THAT DEP NEEDS TO APPROVE OF OUR PLANS BEFORE WE CAN MOVE FORWARD, ADDING THAT CONTRACTS MUST BE SIGNED BY OUR COMMISSIONERS BEFORE WE CAN PROCEED WITH ANYTHING. WE WILL THEN HAVE A TIME FRAME OF AT LEAST 6-8 MONTHS BEFORE DEP IS EXPECTED TO GET BACK TO US REGARDING OUR PLANS. D. GANDT SUMMARIZED THINGS STATING THAT TWO DIFFERENT THINGS ARE GOING ON SIMULTANEOUSLY. FIRST OF ALL WE ARE TRYING TO REDUCE OUR MONITORING COSTS, AND SECONDLY WE ARE FACING \$7,000.00 OF ADDITIONAL COSTS TO MONITOR CHEMICALS BEING POTENTIALLY RELEASED IN THE PARK. KEVIN H. ALSO SAID THT HE WANTED TO REVIEW COPIES OF ALL OF STEVE SHEPARD'S RECORDS AND LANDFILL CONTRACTS. D. GANDT ALSO SUGGESTED SPEAKING WITH THE TOWN OF SEEKONK MASS. WHICH HAS DEALT WITH A SIMILAR LANDFILL PROBLEM. S. SHEPARD ALSO SUGGESTED THAT WESTON & SAMPSON COULD ATTEND A FUTURE MEETING TO MAKE A PRESENTATION REGARDING THIS ENTIRE MATTER. D. GANDT ALSO EXPLAINED THAT THE NEW BUDGET FIGURE OF \$46,200.00 IS MANDATED BY DEP, AND THIS IS A NON-NEGOTIABLE SUM. AFTER THIS DISCUSSION THE TWO \$5,000.00 CONTRACTS WERE THEN SIGNED BY OUR COMMISSIONERS.

BILLS AND DEEDS WERE ALSO SIGNED. THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 9:02P.M. THE NEXT MEETING TO OCCUR ON JAN. 14, 2020 AT 7:30 P.M.

