

BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS
MEETING MINUTES

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April 30, 2019

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TOWN OF LUDLOW

Members Present: Thomas Haluch, Bill Rodrigues, Barry Linton, Alex Simao, John Davis

Members Absent: None

Also Present: Ken Batista, Amy Priest, Carrie Ribeiro, Derek Debarge

Mr. Haluch called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M. All present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPOINTMENTS: Michael Suprenant-Interview for Director/Town Engineer position. Mr. Simao asked Mr. Suprenant to explain his background and why he'd like the position. Mr. Suprenant said he is friends with Ed Miga, Director in Wilbraham, and he suggested he would be a good fit. He thinks he could be of help. He would aim to make everyone's job easier and more productive. Mr. Simao asked if he would be ok with short term, maybe 6 months. He said Yes. Mr. Simao asked if he is currently working. He said he is doing something every day, i.e. pro bono work. Mr. Suprenant said the last place he was employed was the Town of Ware. He said he left as part of a mutual agreement. Mr. Simao asked him to explain his time in Blackstone. He again said it was mutual consent. Mr. Suprenant said he has had to deal with personnel issues and has even had to fire someone. Mr. Linton said engineering is about 10% of the job, management is the rest. Asked how he would handle some of the personnel problems here. He said he would make it very clear that any issues should be submitted to the Director first, before Human Resources. Ms. Ribeiro clarified there is a personnel policy and procedures in place that indicate she may need to be involved. Her office has an open door policy. Mr. Suprenant said he would become educated on town policy and union contracts and abide by both. Mr. Linton said he would need to get on board with getting GPS back on the vehicles. He also said there are 2 big projects he would like to get started, getting 1-2 streets a year on sewer and new

cemetery. The cemetery is a conceptual plan right now, but would like to get that started soon. Mr. Rodrigues asked if he had any experience with snow and salt operations. He indicated the Town of Webster was having a problem with wasting salt. He said he got everyone up to par with using the spreader and using a magnesium chloride product. Mr. Davis asked about when he owned his own business. Did it make him more educated about keeping a better handle on costs? Mr. Suprenant said Absolutely. He said he is assuming there is a maintenance plan in place, but he could take a look at it and make any suggestions if needed. Mr. Haluch said he spoke w/ a representative from the Town of Webster. He verified that Mr. Suprenant's employment went smoothly, there was an issue with a Town Manager/Administrator. Mr. Haluch then reached out to Scott Charpentier, who took over the job in Webster. He also had issues and left. He talked to Ed Miga and told him that he thought Mr. Suprenant would do a good job. Mr. Suprenant said he is on the Massachusetts Municipal Association Policy Committee on Public Works Transportation Utilities. He said he has met with Secretary Soderberg, who is the head of the Energy Department for the State regarding solar costs. They made some recommendations about what will need to be done to reduce costs. He is keeping up to date on it. He is an advisor to the state government. Says the recycling costs are killing us. He expects cost to end up around \$50/ton. He said all he can promise is to keep the department informed of the newest information. Mr. Haluch asked if he would have any problems with the development of the cemetery and sewers. He said he has done a lot of sewer design. Mr. Haluch said the Center Street project is ongoing. Ms. Ribeiro asked Mr. Suprenant to clarify his experience with budgets. He said he has prepared and administered at least 15 DPW budgets, including as a Town Engineer. Ms. Ribeiro asked what the largest budget he's worked with. He responded about \$4 Million. He said he also handled the Chapter 90 budgets in most of his positions. Ms. Ribeiro asked about his procurement experience. He said he's done some Chapter 149 bidding. Ms. Ribeiro wanted to relay to him about his comments about GPS. She said it is not a management right to change working conditions, so he would need to negotiate that with the union. She asked what his role was when he had experience with implementing GPS in his previous jobs. He responded he entered into an agreement with the low bid carrier on the state contract. He met with union to clarify what it was going to be used for. The town administrator did not know how to use it but he had access to it. The system had no connection to the payroll

system. It was used mostly for snow complaints to determine if a street had been plowed or not. It was not used as a disciplinary tool. Ms. Ribeiro asked him to clarify why he left Blackstone. He responded that he left when the Superintendent started complaining about over time. He gave the job to him because he had other things he could do. He said he did not resign, it was a mutual agreement. Ms. Ribeiro asked why he left his family owned business, Suprenaut, Inc. He responded it closed. It was a small company & he was being outbid by larger companies. Ms. Ribeiro asked why he left the private sector to get into the municipal world. He responded because there was no work. He stated he left the Town of Winchester for the Town of Ashland for the challenge. Ms. Ribeiro asked why he left the Town of Auburn. He responded because the opportunity came up in the Town of Webster. Ms. Ribeiro asked what his level of experience is with Munis. He said he has not had to input payroll, but he has done budgets. He said the last time he used it was in Blackstone. He is sure he could be up to speed in a short period of time. He would rate his Excel knowledge a 10, Word knowledge is good, PDF, Adobe, Acrobat are all good as well. His P.E. license is valid and up to date. Ms. Ribeiro asked how he would fit in the role when he has mainly engineering experience, not management. He said he has several years as a DPW Director and ran his own company. He said he has 15 years of municipal union experience and several years working with a construction union. Ms. Ribeiro asked why he had most of his jobs short term and how do we know that won't be the case here. He responded that this is a temporary position. He also said he just went through item by item why he changed employers. He is open to staying here as long as the Board would want him to. He said he has not been actively seeking employment since his job @ the Town of Ware. He has not had to. He has remained busy. He is ok with references being contacted. Ms. Ribeiro asked for 2 other references. Kenny had no questions, Derek had no questions.

Mr. Rodrigues motion to hire Michael Suprenant for the temporary Director/Town Engineer position. Mr. Linton second. Position is 6 months, then will review. No benefits to be paid. All in favor. Mr. Davis motion to pay GL V, Step 3 (\$92,759). Mr. Rodrigues second. Vote 4-1, Mr. Simao against. All subject to background checks.

INTERIM DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

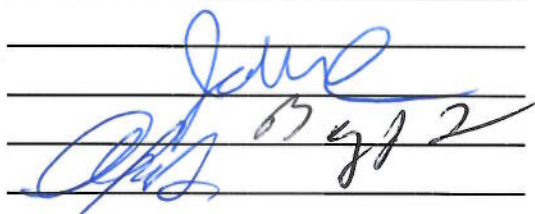
Sewer back up @ 430 Center Street. Fletcher took a video of the line. We could not get past the sign. Got 37' into the main, where they found a rock. Lateral was crushed with installation of catch basin. Goncalves will repair if necessary. We also need to repair 63 Ray Street. Sewer lateral is in the chimney. Murray will be in town this Thursday for reclamation of Rood Street. Expect to take 3 days. Palmer Paving will be out May 9, the latest. Deroche & Helene Streets will be done @ the same time. Columbia Gas scheduled to do compliance work. They are asking for a blanket permit. Kenny told them NO. Testing is pretty much isolated to the high pressure line. Mr. Simao asked about previously asking Columbia Gas coming in to speak with Board about work in town. Kenny said he spoke w/ Doug Stefanik, Town Planner, to introduce language into bylaw that requires developer install laterals in new developments. He met with Jim Goodreau and Dave Goncalves about stormwater management proposal. He will have for Board review in the next couple weeks. To be implemented by June 30. Thunder storm last week kicked the Chapin Street Pump Station offline. It is still functioning good, but with only 1 pump. Wet well needs to be cleaned out. The truck Weston & Sampson brought in was not equipped. Mr. Simao motion to accept Interim Directors Report. Mr. Linton second. All in favor.

NEW BUSINESS: Mr. Linton asked Kenny if he got a hold of stump grinder. He will mark & dig safe them and get them in.

Next meeting Monday May 6, 2019.

At 8:02P.M. Mr. Linton made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Simao second. All in favor.

NOTES ACCEPTED:



Clerk 