

Appleton Select Board
February 12, 2019

1. Convene, 5:30 p.m. due to weather-related earlier meeting request from auditor (Gushee, Wyman, Fenner, Beckett, Costigan)
2. Reminder: Meetings are recorded.
3. Costigan: Motion to sign warrants #69, school payroll, \$55,552.81; #70, town expenses, \$9,204.35; and, #71, town payroll, \$4,236.30. Wyman: Second. Unanimous.
4. Beckett: Motion to approve minutes of Feb 5. Wyman: Second. Unanimous.
5. Beckett: Motion to approve minutes of Feb. 7. Wyman: Second. Unanimous.
- 6 Appleton Town Audit: Auditor Ron Smith: Town is good shape with audit. School audit delays are hard to understand and impacts timing of town audit. Moving items (cost centers) into individual funds would help treasurer's process, reporting and auditing. For example, checking account for the school is currently within general checking for town and auditor recommends breaking accounts into separate funds. Auditor advises town/treasurer can better utilize TRIO software to maximize reporting and efficiency. Auditor referenced largest part of the budget is the school budget, which is comingled with town. Separate funds via TRIO reporting and specific bank accounts would allow faster, more efficient reporting. Auditor can provide TRIO training. Auditor reiterated treasurer of the town is the treasurer of all the funds and the ultimate authority for oversight lies with the town board. Cited his concerns for certain school budget lines were not malfeasance but an issue of transparency.
Fenner: Superintendent looking forward to a fresh set of eyes and agrees with the idea of shared auditor for town and school. (Currently two auditing/accounting firms.)

Auditor Smith: Flagged lack of reconciliation on school account as an issue that should raise concerns, not because of malfeasance but because of lack of transparency and accuracy. By example, all school checks, even from fundraising account, need to go through the warrant process.

Auditor Smith: School and town will continue to have two billing processes (school uses ADS/Tyler), but it is possible to merge ADS/Tyler with TRIO. Training of the treasurer and deputy clerk can assist his process

Fenner: This will also improve tracking of foundation support to schools.

Auditor Smith: Whatever the school does in a special fundraising account the town should see. It's not an issue of trust, but rather of process and verification. He advised having the clerks prepped on TRIO training by July 1, 2019 to start to fiscal year.

Fenner: Need to make sure the deputy clerk can do the same.

Auditor Smith: A week's worth of training with due diligence with some accounts, should be over and above audit cost between \$3,000 and \$5,000. Ultimately we would be working with the select board.

Beckett: Is there any reporting the select board should be seeing that we are not?

Auditor Smith: Trial balance reporting. It is available in TRIO and so are other reports. It's not abnormalities; it's just setup and system training that will provide these reports and they will give more instantaneous reporting at any time of the budget cycle.

(Action item: Smith needs email clarification of how to move forward with single auditor and TRIO training. E-mail to come from Fenner.) With final school audit now in hand, final town audit will be done in two weeks.

7. Town Forest Policy Draft: Second reading has been sent to abutters of all five lots with notice of February 19 meeting.

Beckett: Wonder if we should just reference state law or otherwise stay away from specifications in signage.

Fenner: We are elected to make policy-level decisions.

Wyman: In the absence of doing anything, what is the current law? I called MMA Legal to learn the default on public access.

Fenner: The policy backs up a sign. We do have a trail. There is very little public land and recreational opportunities in this town.

8. Fenner: Motion to approve \$1300 purchase order for 4 portable radios for fire/EMS. Costigan: Second. Unanimous.

9. Other:

Charlie Garrigan: Wondering current status of town forest policy and designated trails and dogs on leash.

Stephen Powers (Town Forester): I don't know what's happening as far as the trail system agenda. What is going to change from what we have now?

Gushee: Only trail is what was created with the logger skidder trails.

Fenner: Not a lot of public land in town.

David Flanagan: People can walk on a town lot now so that's not changing anything.

Gushee: Plan is to have a landing and parking at town forest and probably not much more at this time.

Fenner: We need a policy and a map.

Flanagan: Because of municipal laws the town is free of the liability of putting in more parking. Collamore Lot: Did the town pay for the landing improvement? Has the town considered what it would cost to build a landing and road to Collamore? (He noted Powers and Flanagan had logged the property before.)

Nick Marston: People wanted to keep it as a town forest. The town needs to consider from a taxpayer's point of view if you are going to recover anything of value. That's why no one cut it. My only concern is that everyone considers costs. If the

town is going to agree to pay for the road or the landing you'd spend all your gain on the stumpage and a little box for instructions then you may get caught maintaining that road. Something (a landing) next to W. Appleton Road is different than getting to Collamore. (He referenced approximate \$2,100 cost paid by town to logger Mansius to install landing.)

Fenner: We have a three-rod right of way (along Johnson Pond Trail Rd).

Clark-Staples: I want to take the focus off that particular piece and am curious as to what the people who are affected on other town lots what invite dog owners from everywhere and say anything that is a town lot is open to all. The hiccup is that when you present it this way you are skipping from what is a benefit for people of the town of Appleton to welcoming all -- but there are actual, physical repercussions to that (for residents and property owners). Ask what is best for the Appleton taxpayers: What benefits them the most.

Fenner: All abutters have been notified and have been sent the draft policy and the letter. The counterbalancing thing is there are a lot of people in town who (may want to) realize there is public land in town where I could take my dog.

Staples: When is the next time we will cut the lot on W.

Appleton. Who maintains the culvert and landing?

Fenner: Doubt it will deteriorate that much.

Wyman: Active logging restriction signs coming down and the town needs to have something in place now there is a road and a landing that could invite greater use.

Powers: My biggest concern as the town forester is what happens if we do have to put money into it. If people start to say there is no place to park, or 15 years from now we try to cut it and there is a big uproar not to cut at all. This is in a forest management plan and this needs to be secured (as a forest). When you are in the forestry business you have to keep

your overhead low. I'm pretty happy with the way it is now.
Simple is good.

Gushee: Don't you think they should be marked as town forests?

Powers: I don't have any issues with a sign.

Fenner: The town would decide by town vote if increased parking is needed. No plan to make anything bigger. We need to block access so they cannot drive on trails. Not trying to make a dog park.

Garrigan: How long before people say, 'Can we get a trashcan? Can we get more parking?' You don't know.

Powers: They all have landings.

Fenner: The townspeople might value quite highly what town property is available (for use).

Clark-Staples: There are 124 acres courtesy of Georges River Land Trust. Ridge to River trail and Georges River Land Trust does ask you to have your dog on a leash. River to Ridge is part of a more significant system that integrates 50 miles of trails.

Beckett: What is it what you would like to see us do?

Clark-Staples: Have the most information in place (before a decision is made) and that the town of Appleton is represented. I think when it becomes something any general traveler can see it can become bigger than what was intended.

10. Beckett: Motion to adjourn. Fenner: Second. Unanimous.