

August 29, 2019  
Conference Room A  
Town Hall

Present:

DPW Board Members George Clark, Paul Brinkman, Pat Harrington; DPW Director Ken Kalinowski;  
residents Tony Beattie, Jan & Virginia Malouin

8/29/2019 - Minutes

1. Call Meeting To Order At 5:30p.m.

Vice Chairman Paul Brinkman called the meeting to order at 5:34 p.m. and announced that it was being broadcast and recorded.

2. DPW

2.a. Stormwater Fee - Exemption Request

Public Comments (Beattie):

Paul Brinkman explained that there was only 1 item on the agenda for this special meeting, and that this meeting was a follow up to the stormwater discussion that took place at the August 22nd meeting. At issue was whether or not farms should receive special consideration, ie, a waiver, when assessing stormwater fees. Tony Beattie introduced himself and had several questions regarding the towns "urbanized area". He also noted that he had had a conversation with Tom Nephew and that Toms opinion was that the town voters should be the ones to decide whether or not farms should be exempted. There was some misunderstanding as to whether the BPW was going to present a warrant article, but it was clarified that since the BPW did not wish to favor one 'class' of property owners against another, it would need to be a citizens petition. Paul explained the basis of creating an enterprise fund and using the simplified rationale of setting the per parcel fee. Paul also noted that Pepperell's fees were the lowest of which he was aware, and that the methodology of setting the fees was not permanent, but could be adjusted and modified over time. Tony mentioned that there was a significant loss of farms and not many young people coming into the trade. He hoped to glean what the townspeople value about farms and find a way to make the industry viable and attractive in Pepperell. Tony agreed with Paul that the stormwater fee was not a huge financial impact per se, but rather that it was an impediment to expanding the farming community. Ken clarified that the DPW was not 'anti-farm' and in fact, the stormwater program was 'land use agnostic'. The permit was issued to the inhabitants of the town of Pepperell and the program and fees were based on anticipated permit compliance costs related to drainage systems associated with municipal streets which all property owners presumably use. George reiterated that the town meeting approved the creation of the enterprise fund and fees, and if someone wants an exemption, they should take it up with that body. There was then a brief discussion about Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) grant program and potential stormwater ties. Tony then brought up the subject of bio-char and the Board informed him that that matter was off topic. Tony noted that it may be helpful to put bio-char in catch basins to capture pollution. Ken noted that the towns program was in its infancy and that this may be a potential matter in the out years. Paul noted that the Board was not likely to vote on creating a 'class exemption', and left it to the proponent to pursue the issue via the towns' voters. Tony wished to do more research and would send the Board a letter detailing his proposal with the hopes that they would support his position.

3. Adjournment

• Pat Harrington made a motion to adjourn the meeting. George Clark seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 6:02 p.m.