

Town of Litchfield
Select Board
June 8, 2020
Meeting Minutes

1.0 Convened at 6:30 PM; Pledge to Flag; Selectmen: Gary Parker, Chairman, Rayna Leibowitz, Mark Russell; **Staff:** Diana Larrabee, Kelly Weissenfels, Town Office Staff; Stan Labbe, Fire Chief; Larry Nadeau, Road Comm. (via Zoom); Bryan Lamoreau, Transfer Station Manager; Tom Wood and David Blocher, Budget Comm. (both via Zoom), Larry Bell, Broadband Comm. (via Zoom), Richard Lane, Road Advisory Comm, (via Zoom).

The meeting is being made available to the community via interactive telecommunications which allows video and audio participation to those having camera capability using instructions available via the Internet. Voting by the Select Board will be done by roll call and will be recorded in the minutes using their initials and their vote.

2.0 Minutes of May 26, 2020 Meeting submitted for final approval. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Mark Russell, seconded by Rayna Leibowitz and voted RL yes, MR yes and GP yes.

3.0 Reports and Correspondence:

3.1 Town Manager: A. Diana Larrabee reported for the Town Manager that submissions for the Town Report need to be provided to Kelly so they can be prepared for final review by the Select Board on June 22 and sent to the printer immediately after that.

B. Several calls a day are received by the Town Office asking about plans to open Woodbury Pond Park. The Recreation Director will be out on medical leave until the end of June so it will not be open until after her return. Staff has not been hired for it. The website and Facebook pages should be updated to advise the park will not be open in June.

C. Discussion about the scheduled Town Meeting on July 18th. The Sportsmens Club does not provide sufficient space for the required social distancing. A rented tent could be erected there but it would take up the parking lot, creating another dilemma. Another potential venue was identified at Litchfield Fairgrounds in the Pulling Ring. Seating in the grandstand is large enough to meet requirements and there could be chairs (or other seating) on the ground for accessible seating. A Public Address system would be needed. A call was made to the President of the Litchfield Farmers Club and permission was received to use it if there were no other commitments for that date. Rayna will contact the Fairgrounds scheduler to verify availability. Chairman Parker thought the town-owned PA system might work just fine. Selectperson Leibowitz, being a Director of the Fair, has a key to allow testing the equipment at a convenient time.

D. The Secretary of State's Office has informed the Town Office that they will provide plexi-glass barriers, hand sanitizers, masks, face shields and sanitizing products for elections. It was determined that pens or pencils (stubby ones) for one time use would be purchased and one provided to each voter.

E. Opening the Town Office so one customer at a time could come in has worked very well. Folks who want to talk with the CEO use the side entrance and meet in the conference room only.

3.2 Code Enforcement Officer/Plumbing Inspector – A. Diana reported as the CEO had left

earlier that day that he has been busy.

B. The proposed changes for the Land Use Ordinance and Shoreland Zoning Ordinance have been sent to the printer for use at the Town Meeting.

3.3 Road Commissioner – A. Larry Nadeau, Road Comm., reported via Zoom that ditching on the Lunts Hill Road has been completed.

B. Plans are to work on culverts for Lunts Hill Road next week.

C. They started working on Stevenstown Road.

D. The crew is trimming overgrown vegetation on Pine Tree Road.

E. The State Inspection of the underground tank won't require any budget consideration for the coming fiscal year.

F. He discussed what road work might be expected to get done this year. The Academy Road MIGHT get done, but don't count on it. No big jobs are planned as funding isn't certain and contractors will have most of their season filled with commitments by the time he'll know the financial situation. Most of the monies approved in mid-July will expect to be used in the construction season for 2021.

3.4 Fire & Rescue – A. Chief Labbe advised he has been notified our new fire truck has been delivered to Massachusetts for finishing details including lettering. We can expect delivery in late June. A video inspection has been done and he was very impressed.

B. Response data for May – FD, 10, Rescue, 11.

C. Response data for the period Jan 1 – June 8, FD, 65, Rescue, 53

D. Chief Labbe said he would like to sell the old fire truck when the new one arrives, and have the money go to the Fire Equipment Reserve Fund. It was discussed having it go into the General Fund initially and later transferred to the Reserve Account

3.5 Emergency Management - No report

3.6 Assessing Agent – The Assessing Agent was here one day last week and is expected to return on June 29 (note the change of day away from Thursday).

3.7 Transfer Station – A. Bryan Lamoreau reported the Transfer Station was busy last weekend.

B. The hauler for the bulky containers has been leaving one container beside the other instead of putting them end to end under the roof, to avoid another collision with structural supports of the roof. This results in having the container left outside receive and absorb water when it rains, costing more in disposal costs. Additionally, the Public Works equipment lacks adequate reaching capacity to crush and pack the contents of the container left outside. The Manager was urged to contact the hauler to arrange for the containers to be put end to end again, carefully, to eliminate both issues.

3.8 Other Town Committees: Broadband Committee – Chairman Larry Bell advised Casco Bay Advisors contacted him requesting the status of their payment. Selectman Russell checked tonight's Warrant and verified the approval was expected to be given and the check would be mailed tomorrow.

Budget Committee – Tom Wood advised a final meeting of the Budget Comm. is scheduled for June 10 via Zoom to produce a final list of recommendations for the proposed budget. It will be provided to Kelly immediately so it can be added to the Town Warrant information prepared for June 22.

5.0 Scheduled Business

5.1 R02-016, 2787 Hallowell Road – Our attorney requested a conference call in Executive session to discuss next steps. A motion to enter an Executive session in accordance with 1

M.R.S.A. §405 (6) (E) for consultation with legal counsel at 6:45 PM was made by Mark Russell, seconded by Rayna Leibowitz and voted RL yes, MR yes and GP yes.

5.2 R02-017, 2783 Hallowell Road – No movement.

5.3 Conservation Commission/Lindsay Nelsen – Protocols for Tax Acquired Property - Selectpersons Rayna Leibowitz and Mark Russell visited the subject parcel. Selectman Parker was familiar with it. All agreed the list of attributes the Conservation Commission developed would be a useful tool to allow assessment of consistent factors in reviewing property and would provide a useful resource for the Select Board to use in decision making. The process (procedure) following an assessment of a parcel would be for the Select Board to make a decision regarding the disposition of the parcel. Mark advised if we were making a decision on this parcel that he would suggest offering sections of the rear area of this parcel to the three abutting property owners to increase each of their lots by a little and retaining the portion along the stream to buffer run-off to protect the water quality. No further action was taken as this had been an exercise in refining the process and testing the assessment criteria. Chairman Parker requested a clean copy of the assessment form for the Town Office records so it would be available in the future for assessments on other properties. Lindsay Nelsen and David Larrabee of the Conservation Commission participated in the discussion via Zoom. They and the Commission was thanked for their efforts in developing the assessment tool.

5.4 Discussion on Single Source Recycling – Cost information from EcoMaine (a non-profit organization) and Casella’s (for-profit business) was provided. Bryan Lamoreau advised the 2019 volume of recycling for cardboard, paper, glass and tin was 200 tons. The proposals sent included costs for tipping. Transportation would be an additional expense and contaminated loads would have increased charges, making the monitoring process for appropriate disposal more critical. Additional calculation work is needed to adequately compare costs

5.5 Supplemental Tax Bill, R13-018 \$5,497.20 Tree Growth Removal - \$5,497.20 – a motion to approve the supplemental tax bill for Removal from Tree Growth in the amount of \$5,497.20 was made by Rayna Leibowitz, seconded by Mark Russell and voted RL yes, MR yes, GP yes.

5.6 Town Meeting 07/18/2020 - determine location and necessary technology – A discussion was held regarding the Town meeting, see 3.1 C. above

5.7 Budget review – and Town Warrant review – The location for the Town Meeting needs to be changed in three places on the Town Warrant, first page.

The request was made by the Budget Committee to add account numbers to the Warrant articles for better accuracy when referencing the actual budget information.

Article 12 needs a phrase added that allows unspent funds from the vacation/sick leave line to be carried forward.

Article 17 prompted discussion about the repairs and maintenance the Town Office needs (Account 15-5 Town Office Operations, line 268 of the detailed budget). The CEO and Office Staff are directed to make a list of needed repairs and maintenance.

Article 19, end the sentence at ANIMAL CONTROL.

Article 21 becomes the text from the original Article 37.

From the old article 21 (which now becomes Article 22) the Article numbers need to be revised to Article 37.

Old Article 21 needs “vote to” removed.

Old Article 32 should have the agencies in the same order as are in the Budget.

Old Article 34 needs one L removed from “Valley”.

Article 38 needs the “Fire Equipment Reserve Fund: \$100,000” removed.

Article 44 needs U.R.I.P spelled out.

Note: several articles had the dollar amounts changed and those have not been itemized in this

report. They will be verified as the final draft is reviewed on June 22 at the Select Board meeting.

An article needs to be drafted “To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board at their discretion to appropriate monies from the Highway Equipment Reserve Fund to purchase a truck for Public Works, not to exceed \$194,000. This will, if enacted, eliminate some ambiguity from the wording in the 2018 Town Meeting minutes for Article 25. Kelly will check with the Auditor about the need to vote to rescind the 2018 vote.

The Budget Committee will offer a policy draft for the Select Board to consider regarding the structure of Warrant articles so they have an end date, if needed, and the procedure for extending the end date when necessary.

9.0 Warrants

9.1 Town Warrant #25 for \$ 352,587.17 A motion to approve was made by Mark Russell, seconded by Rayna Leibowitz and voted RL yes, MR yes and GP yes

9.2 Town Payroll #25 for \$29,863.46 A motion to approve was made by Mark Russell, seconded by Rayna Leibowitz and voted RL yes, MR yes and GP yes

10.0 Other Business

10.1 Rep. Kent Ackley was invited to call in to provide updates from the Legislature in Augusta. He advised the fraud cases in Unemployment Claims caused the shut-down of payments, creating a major problem.

When asked about funding expectations, he advised the state budget is expecting to be unchanged this fiscal year (FY) as the state has enough of a surplus to carry it through June 30, 2020, even with depleted revenues, according to the Revenue Forecasting Commission. However, next (FY) year won't be pretty. State Revenue Sharing is based on sales tax receipts which were down by 25%. It is unknown if there will be another stimulus package from the feds. His advice: be judicious and prudent in setting local budgets.

Kent would like to see the legislature go back into session to work on a lot of unfinished business, so schools and municipalities could be told what to expect. There are at least four options: 1) severe budget cuts; 2) dial back school supports; 3) dial back Revenue Sharing; and 4) increase taxes.

Selectman Russell requested biweekly emails to the town to provide status information so we could be better informed for decision-making. Rep. Ackley advised he would plan to come to the June 22 Select Board meeting to provide an update.

12.0 Future Agenda Item

- 12.1 Feedback on Selectman's Handbook
- 12.2 Town Office Renovation Update
- 12.3 Cemetery Signs
- 12.4 Update regarding the new Dispatching protocols
- 12.5 Town Warrant Final Review and Approval

13.0 Adjournment at 10:55 PM

Respectfully Submitted By

Rayna Leibowitz