

Town of Litchfield
Select Board
September 28, 2020
Meeting Minutes

1.0 Convened at 6:30 PM; Pledge to Flag; Selectmen: Gary Parker, Chairman, Rayna Leibowitz, Mark Russell; **Staff:** Kelly Weissenfels, Deputy Town Manager; Stan Labbe, Fire Chief; Pat Soboleski, Senior Director and Richard Lane, Road Advisory Comm.

The meeting is available to the community via interactive telecommunications and by attending the meetings in person, using Covid-19 precautions.

2.0 Minutes of Sept. 14, 2020 Meeting submitted for final approval. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Mark Russell, seconded by Rayna Leibowitz and voted 3 - 0.

3.0 Reports and Correspondence:

3.1 Deputy Town Manager: A. Kelly advised Wednesday is the final day for folks still owing 2019 taxes to avoid having a lien placed against their property, so it is expected to be busy.

B. Kelly met with the RSU#4 Supt. for an update, as Trudy had done regularly. They discussed the deadline on the proposed middle school. The Supt. prefers a 2 year wait to start building. They are looking for an architect. The expectation is that K-2 for all 3 towns would be at Carrie Ricker School and grades 3 – 8 for all 3 towns would attend the new or expanded Sabattus Middle School. Our discussion identified that this timeline would mean the 3 towns would be expected to bear the full cost of construction without state assistance, as there is a multi-year waiting list for state funding.

C. One of the new employees, Amy Grecenko was introduced to the Select Board. She was welcomed to the staff.

D. Kelly advised a letter was officially sent stipulating a vacancy date of Oct. 5 for residents of 2787 Hallowell Road, via both regular mail and registered mail. It was noted some other neighborhood concerns have arisen that the CEO will be working on.

3.2 Code Enforcement Officer/Plumbing Inspector - Absent

3.3 Road Commissioner – Absent – A. Kelly reported the Public Works Dept is down one worker for medical leave.

B. Ditching continues on the Stevenstown Road to prepare for some drag-shim work in October in two areas.

C. The meeting to hear the plans of the Maine Turnpike Authority regarding proposed work on the Route 197 Overpass was held last Thursday. It is planned for 2022 and will result in Route 197 being closed for 6 months. The proposed detour uses the Small Road. The MTA is asked to 1) post a bond to cover rehabilitation work that might be required for the Small Road; and 2) modify the guard rail design to allow a wider road space. Consideration by the Select Board closer to construction may include the temporary installation of speed tables on the Small Road to moderate speeds, which will reduce wear and tear on the road.

3.4 Fire & Rescue – A. Chief Labbe advised the weekend of Sept 19-20 was a busy one. The FD responded to a motor home fire at the Birches Campground, a motor vehicle accident and a woodfire on Saturday, with a flare up of the woodfire on Sunday and another woodfire in a near

location later in the day.

B. The hoses are being tested and he will try to get them put on the new fire truck when they are done, to eliminate having to handle them twice.

C. The new fire truck is expected to be on the road next weekend.

3.5 Emergency Management -The new generator at the Red Cook Station is operational.

3.6 Assessing Agent – Ellery Bane was here on Sept. 21 and will return on October 1. Several calls have been received regarding the recent tax bills.

3.7 Transfer Station – A. Last weekend was relatively uneventful. The two bulky containers and the cardboard one are scheduled for removal on Thursday.

3.8 Other Town Committees – Broadband Comm. - Larry Bell, Chairman, reported they are waiting for the funds from their grant to be received. He has had a call from a group in Winthrop forming a Broadband Committee. He would like to see if they, Monmouth and other neighboring towns want to work together to leverage coverage. The mapping project is underway. Joline is talking with the RSU#4 IT representative regarding hot spots for the students. There are apparently some mobile units available to enable student access. She will get more information and prepare an article for the Sodalite, website and Facebook pages.

3.9 Road Advisory Committee – Richard Lane reported they are exploring the possibility of submitting an application for a DEP grant for a stream crossing. There needs to be clarification if this is limited to culverts or may include other options. Culverts may be considered for the Dead River Road.

4.0 Agenda Adjustments

4.1 Discussion of requesting an extension of the 30 MPH speed Limit on Route 197 west beyond Percy's Hardware, the addition of caution and stop lights at the Route 197/Huntington Hill Road/Center Road intersection and the addition of a marked crosswalk on Route 197.

5.0 Scheduled Business

5.1 1987 Fire Truck Sale – Matinicus Island Fire Dept has offered \$4,000 for the fire truck being retired. If the sale is approved, one of our firefighters will drive it to the ferry and travel with it to the island and provide instruction on its use. Matinicus will cover the cost of the ferry. After some discussion, a motion was made to sell the fire truck to the Matinicus FD for the sum of \$2,500 by Mark Russell, seconded by Rayna Leibowitz and voted 3 – 0.

5.2 2020 Municipal Valuation Return – A motion to sign the Municipal Valuation Return was made by Mark Russell, seconded by Rayna Leibowitz and voted 3 – 0.

5.3 CDBG ADA/Section 504 Self Assessment – Yet another piece of the CDBG puzzle is an assessment for ADA compliance that was completed by the Deputy Town Manager. A sign for the wheelchair ramp needs to be put up and the fire extinguisher level needs to be lowered. These will be done immediately. After a review of the document, a motion to adopt it was made by Mark Russell, seconded by Rayna Leibowitz and voted 3 – 0 and the document was signed.

5.4 Abatement, Map U14, Lot 006, Harold Marden for \$434.52 and a supplemental bill for Brian and Kathleen Harrison for the same parcel in the amount of \$434.52. The property changed hands but the tax bill was issued to the prior owner in error. A motion to approve the abatement and the supplemental, both in the amount of \$434.52, was made by Mark Russell, seconded by Rayna Leibowitz and voted 3 – 0.

5.5 Abatement, Map U28, Lot 054 for \$347.97 for 2018 and \$347.97 for 2017 – This action is

to correct an error that occurred in the size of the lot that was recently identified. An abatement for 2019 has previously been made. It was necessary to determine the correct amounts to abate for 2017 and 2018. A motion to approve the abatement for \$347.97 for 2018 and \$347.97 for 2017 and sign the document outside a regular meeting was made by Mark Russell, seconded by Rayna Leibowitz and voted 3 – 0.

6.0 Unscheduled Business

6.1 Select Board member Rayna Leibowitz requested the Board send a letter to MDOT requesting an extension of the 30 MPH speed limit from Litchfield Corner on Route 197 to a point going west beyond Percy’s Hardware Store, providing a blinking caution and stop lights at the intersection and painting a crosswalk at about 491 Richmond Road. Discussion identified the current speed limit of 30 MPH ends and becomes 40 MPH just before the intersection of the Richmond Road (Route 197) and the Center Road/Huntington Hill Road, which has been the scene of numerous accidents. Traffic on Route 197 in the area of Percy’s Hardware to the intersection is often traveling more than 40 MPH. The Litchfield Food Bank is now open at 491 Richmond Road and operates there two days a week. A Day Care Center has just been created and is awaiting licensing in the building at 491 Richmond Road. These two operations will increase traffic which is entering and exiting the road. Pedestrians are often crossing the road to reach the restaurant (and return). A motion to authorize Selectperson Leibowitz to draft a letter to MDOT on behalf of the Board regarding this situation was made by Mark Russell, seconded by Rayna Leibowitz and voted 3 – 0. The Deputy Town Manager will provide Selectperson Leibowitz with the appropriate MDOT Contact.

8.0 Appointments /Resignations

8.1 Richard Lane – Community Development Advisory Committee – This Committee is required by the CDBG received by Slane 18 Productions. When the grant is completed, it will be dissolved. A motion to approve the appointment of Richard Lane to the Community Development Advisory Committee was made by Mark Russell, seconded by Rayna Leibowitz and voted 3 – 0.

8.2 Patricia Soboleski - Community Development Advisory Committee - A motion to approve the appointment of Patricia Soboleski to the Community Development Advisory Committee was made by Mark Russell, seconded by Rayna Leibowitz and voted 3 – 0.

13.0 Adjournment at 7:45 PM

Respectfully Submitted By

Rayna Leibowitz