

Town of Litchfield
Select Board
June 14, 2021
Meeting Minutes

1.0 Convened at 6:30 PM; Pledge to Flag; Selectmen: Gary Parker, Chairman, Rayna Leibowitz, Clarence Gowell III (identified as Rick Gowell in these minutes); **Staff:** Kelly Weissenfels, Town Manager; Steve Ochmanski, CEO/LPI; Stan Labbe, Fire Chief, Michael Sherman, Betsy Sherman and Reggie Poirior, FD; Larry Nadeau, Road Comm.; Pat Soboleski, Senior Director; Road Advisory Committee Members: Toby Jutras, Chm., Tamas Szepsy and Richard Lane; Tom Wood, Chm., Budget Comm and member of the Broadband Comm. via Zoom, Larry Bell, Chm., Broadband Comm. via Zoom.

2.0 Minutes of May 24, 2021 Meeting submitted for final approval. A motion to approve the minutes as drafted was made by Gary Parker, seconded by Rayna Leibowitz and voted 2 – 0 – 1 abstained (Gowell).

Minutes of June 8, 2021 Emergency Meeting submitted for final approval. A motion to approve the minutes with 1 minor typo correction was made by Gary Parker, seconded by Rayna Leibowitz and voted 2 – 0 – 1 abstained (Gowell).

Election of Chairman – A motion to nominate Gary Parker as Chairman of the Select Board for the next year was made by Rayna Leibowitz, seconded by Rick Gowell and voted 2 – 0 – 1 abstained (Parker).

3.0 Reports and Correspondence:

3.1 Kelly Weissenfels, Town Manager: A. Town Office traffic is slower. That's good as the office is down by 2 employees. One is out for medical reasons, the other is vacationing.

B. The Town Office will be closing at 3:00 PM on June 30 to begin the closing of the books for the fiscal year.

C. The contract for dispatching has been received. See 4.1

D. A request has been received to use the tennis court for skateboarding with a user bringing his own ramps. Kelly checked with the insurance carrier to ensure the tort coverage applies, but the caller did not leave a call back number. When Kelly checked over the weekend, a small ramp had been left at the tennis court. The Board requested the owner be informed to take it back home after use and a note left on it might be the best way of doing that.

E. Maine General wants to do a pop-up Covid Vaccine clinic in Litchfield. The caller was referred to the Health Officer. The suggestion was made to consider having it at the Transfer Station.

F. Kelly has started investigating the loans for the road work authorized by the vote of residents on June 8. More information will be gathered including potential penalties for early repayment.

G. The newly approved Personnel Policy contains specific benefit amounts for insurance. If the insurance costs change, Kelly asked how that will be addressed. The response from the Board is that the Personnel Policy will be reviewed and adjusted if necessary.

3.2 Code Enforcement Officer/Plumbing Inspector – Steve Ochmanski – A. The Permit Log for May 2021, was distributed showing \$1,000 collected in permit fees and \$1,071,712 of owner-

identified value of property improvements. One commercial addition has been approved and inspected - Rick Gowell's Shop N Save is adding a new beer cave and expanded space for liquor.

B. The Chairman asked for information identifying the owner (and/or lien holder) of a property at Litchfield Corner. Steve will get the information to him.

3.3 Road Commissioner – Larry Nadeau - A. Ditching on Dead River Road is completed. Cross culverts will be addressed.

B. Information about the estimated time of delivery for the 8 foot culvert for Dead River's stream crossing is expected tomorrow. It will be drop shipped to the job site.

C. The plans for the bridge on Dead River Road have not been received.

D. All States is expected to do the Chip Seal by the end of August.

E. Calcium has been spread on dirt roads to control the dust.

3.4 Fire & Rescue – A. Chief Labbe provided the FD report for May prepared by Reggie Poirior. 12 fire calls including 3 accidents, 1 propane investigation, 1 wire down, 1 Mutual Aid call (Wales structure fire). 1 outside rubbish fire, 1 fuel spill, 3 woods fires and 1 vehicle fire. The First Responders received 10 calls and responded to 1 of them.

B. A letter of resignation from Chief Labbe as Fire Chief was read, to be effective June 30, 2021.

C. The FD is preparing for purchase of SCBA as authorized at Town Meeting by contacting all identified Scott dealers who will be able to service the equipment as well as sell it.

D. New tires have been put on vehicle #65 and brake work is scheduled to be done on it. This lead to discussion with the Road Commissioner regarding another potential vendor for tires. Tires need to be replaced at least every 10 years under state standards. This will be factored into the Capitol Improvements Plan in the future.

E. Two additional wireless headsets (radios) will be installed in the new fire truck to improve communications at a lower cost than the original specs offered.

F. Two sets of turn-out gear have been ordered and delivery is expected to be in December.

3.5 Emergency Management – The Director has purchased a new mobile radio with year end funds.

3.6 Assessing Agent – The new Tax Maps are expected to be delivered in late July or early August. Home values can be scaled to reflect higher home values being experienced in the current housing market if necessary, rather than requiring a new revaluation which has been done quite recently.

3.7 Transfer Station – A. Kelly reported for Bryan Lamoreau, Transfer Station Manager, that usage has been slower than usual.

B. Two men were hired for Sunday coverage, Mike Crew and Larry Parlin.

C. A resident advised he has been turned away more than once because the bulky bins have been filled already. He was advised a new transporter is proving to be more dependable about removing filled bins and larger bins have been obtained to avoid that problem.

3.8 Broadband Committee – Larry Bell, Chairman, A. Four bids are expected to be received by 5:00 PM on June 15.

B. He asked if the bid opening could be accessed via Zoom for the vendors and was assured it would be.

C. A 1 hour video presentation has been forwarded electronically to the Board to provide some foundation information to better understand the bids submitted.

3.9 Other Town Committees –

Senior Center - Pat Soboleski, Senior Center Director – A. The Senior Center has secured 4 picnic tables to be donated to Woodbury Pond Park. The Seniors plan outings there this summer and will enjoy using them. Discussion of Woodbury Pond Park occurred identifying that the gates have been observed as being open even after the 8 PM closing time. It appears that if the temperature drops and few visitors are expected, the gates are left open and the attendant leaves. The Board feels that if the attendant leaves the gates should be closed and locked. A sign stating the policy of closing for cold temperatures (specified) or adverse weather should be posted.

B. A trip to Lakewood Theater has been scheduled for June 20. All available tickets have been spoken for.

Road Advisory Comm. (RAC) - Toby Jutras, Chairman A. The RAC will hold a meeting Wednesday, June 16 at 7:00 PM at the Town Office as a planning workshop regarding the schedule for road work to be done based on the funding available through the loan approval.

Budget Committee – Tom Wood, Chairman – A. The proposal for a grant from the NRBC for road work in the amount of \$1 Million with a \$400,000 local match has been submitted. A decision is due in August.

B. Information regarding the infrastructure funding available from Washington, D.C. has been requested from both Jared Golden's and Susan Collins' offices.

C. Budget Committee meetings are held the third Monday of each month at 6:30 PM.

4.0 Agenda Adjustments

4.1 – Maine Department of Public Safety Dispatching Contract signing - See 6.1

5.0 Scheduled Business

5.1 Street lights – Upgrade to LED – CMP has offered to upgrade Litchfield's street lights at their cost with a 15 year lease agreement. Kelly has not been able to identify any electrical contractors interested in the work. This led to discussion about the possibility of more or less lights and same or different locations. A committee has been appointed to assess and bring a recommendation back to the Board. This committee – Richard Lane, Michael Sherman and Rayna Leibowitz with Kelly Weissenfels providing support. Assessment will be made after dark with a follow up meeting for analysis. Kelly will request member availability for these steps.

5.2 Town Office renovations funds use – Kelly requested using \$2,000 from this fund to cover costs of computers and ethernet incurred when improving the work space and function. A motion was made to allow the use of \$2,000 from the Town Office renovation funds for computer and ethernet expenses by Rayna Leibowitz, seconded by Gary Parker and voted 3 – 0.

5.3 Spirit of America Award (SoA)– Contacts have been received from Bruce Flaherty, State SoA Committee, encouraging the selection of one or more persons in Litchfield to receive the Spirit of America Award. Discussion was held and the decision was made to invite each Board, Committee or Commission to submit a nomination of one or more (in writing with reasons for nomination) to the Board no later than July 12 for review by the Board. Kelly was asked to contact the organizations so invited.

5.4 Brown Tail Moth Remediation Discussion – Kelly has received several calls regarding infestations throughout the community. While some private homeowners have contracted with pesticide applicators for their property, the Town is not interested in providing any funding for generalized spraying. That said, there was discussion about Kelly getting a cost estimate for Woodbury Pond

Park and reporting back.

5.3 R02 – Lot 016, 2787 Hallowell Rd – Kelly provided some procedural information regarding this property and foreclosure steps taken. The attorney has identified one required step that apparently was not done and has offered a checklist (just a tad after the fact) that might be helpful. It was determined an Executive Session by telephone with the attorney and the Board is desirable. Kelly will try to set it up for 6/22 at 2:30. Rick expects to be out of town but can join by Zoom or conference call. The Chairman is interested in obtaining information both regarding civil and criminal procedures that may be taken.

5.6 Quitclaim, John W. Gauthier, Map R02, Lot 081A – The Repurchase Agreement having been fulfilled, a motion to issue a quitclaim deed was made by Rayna Leibowitz, seconded by Gary Parker and voted 3 – 0.

6.0 Unscheduled Business

6.1 Maine Department of Public Safety Dispatching Contract signing – The contract is for a 2 year period commencing July 1, 2021 at a cost the first year of \$34,662.88 and July 1, 2022 at a cost of \$36,036.46. A motion to authorize the Town Manager to sign the contract on behalf of the Town of Litchfield was made by Rayna Leibowitz, seconded by Rick Gowell and voted 3 – 0. Michael Sherman was invited to review the document before it was signed.

9.0 Warrants

9.1 Town Warrant #23 for \$491,420.60, including \$313,680.31 for RSU#4. A motion to approve the Warrant# 23 was made by Rayna Leibowitz, seconded by Rick Gowell and voted 3 – 0.

9.2 Town Payroll #24 for \$ 21,096.38 A motion to approve the Payroll #24 was made by Rayna Leibowitz seconded by Rick Gowell and voted 3 – 0.

11.0 Selectmen/Public Discussion/Communication

11.1 Chairman Parker requested changes to the Agenda format eliminating Legal and Other Business and renumbering the list. There was no opposition.

12.0 Future Agenda Items

- 12.1 Feedback on Selectman's Handbook
- 12.2 R02, Lot 016, 2787 Hallowell Rd
- 12.3 R02, Lot 017, 2783 Hallowell Rd.
- 12.4 Street Lights Committee Recommendation
- 12.5 Spirit of America Award
- 12.6 Woodbury Pond Park spraying costs
- 12.7 Animal Shelter Contract
- 12.8 Road work loan information

13.0 Adjournment at 8:35 PM

Respectfully Submitted By

Rayna Leibowitz