

Town of Litchfield
Select Board
May 9, 2022
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, Code Enforcement Officer; Larry Nadeau, Road Comm.; Michael Sherman, Fire Chief; John Upham, Acting Transfer Station Manager; Pat Soboleski, Senior Director; Richard Lane Road, Advisory Committee Member: Tom Wood, Chm. Budget Comm and Broadband Comm.; Elton Wade, Budget Comm.; Larry Bell, Chm., Broadband Comm.; Joline Bell, Broadband Comm and Woodbury Pond Park Volunteer Organizer.

2.0 Minutes of April 25, 2022, Meeting submitted for final approval. A motion to approve the minutes as drafted was made by Rayna Leibowitz, seconded by Rick Gowell and voted 2- 0 – 1 (Parker abstained).

3.0 Reports and Correspondence:

3.1 Town Manager: A. Kelly Weissenfels, Town Manager advised 224 signatures were validated for the petition regarding the Animal Shelter issue. 174 was the minimum required.

B. The contract with Kleinfelder was signed. Jim Laflin will be our representative.

C. Kelly completed the purchase of Jersey Barriers.

D. A Poverty Abatement Application has been filed and needs scheduling. See 5.1

E. A proposed contract for the Assessing Agent has been received. See 5.2

3.2 Code Enforcement Officer/Plumbing Inspector – A. The Building Permit Log for April was provided. \$400 in fees was collected for owner estimated value of buildings of \$389,517

B. May is shaping up to be busy.

C. The CEO requested a waiver of the building permit fee and the Town’s portion of the plumbing permit fee (if one is required) for the proposed Food Bank on the Plains Road. It has been the practice of waiving these fees for local non-profit organizations. A motion was made by Rick Gowell, seconded by Gary Parker approving the fee waiver request. Vote: 2 – 0 – 1 (Leibowitz abstained).

D. The CEO has received 10 – 12 trash complaints. None were at Litchfield Corner.

3.3 Road Commissioner – A. Larry Nadeau advised ditching is being done on Whippoorwill Road.

B. A job offer was extended to an applicant and he accepted and is expected to start on 5/23. Another new hire is expected in 3 weeks.

C. Larry walked jobs with Kleinfelder representatives. One guy arrived 1.5 hours late!

D. Dead River Road will be ground Thursday or Friday. All States Paving will grade behind the grinder leaving 1 lane open for traffic.

E. The Grader is down for repairs and parts won’t be here for 7 – 10 days.

F. Discussed whether specific authorization was needed from the Select Board regarding road projects. The work plan approved by the Board can be scheduled without further authorization by the Board.

G. A resident asked about the duration of the project planned for the Whippoorwill Road.

Larry advised 6 – 8 weeks is expected.

H. Libby Road paving repair work will be starting soon. Some equipment was delivered today. Kelly was asked to get starting dates to be provided to the Select Board.

3.4 Fire & Rescue – A. Chief Michael Sherman advised the Seniors have been invited to use the Fire Station Meeting Room for Band Rehearsal and Line Dancing activities, saving the expense of renting the Sportsmens Club. The Senior Director thanked the Fire Chief and accepted the invitation. She is monitoring Covid conditions and will modify masking requirements as needed.

B. The Public Works completed temporary repairs to the back yard of the Central Fire Station that should last the summer. The lot has survey data that will be obtained and made available to Calderwood Engineering if needed.

C. The Fire and Rescue response report will be provided at the next meeting.

D. Chief Sherman advised the proposed Reserve Account identified in 4.7 is for equipment and not fire trucks.

3.5 Emergency Management – No report at this time.

3.6 Assessing Agent – Kelley advised Ellery Bane will be in on 5/12. The spring work is proceeding and is expected to be completed by late May.

3.7 Transfer Station – A. The Acting Transfer Station Manager provided a written report and is attached.

B. He described an incident with a resident who was out of line. His plate number was used to identify him and a warning letter will be sent. If he creates another incident, his privilege to use the Transfer Station will be withdrawn. The suggestion was made to use a piece of glass and demonstrate how easy it is to remove stickers and reapply them for the next trip to the Transfer Station.

3.8 Broadband Committee – A. Larry Bell, Chairman, received an update today from Andrew Weeks. Equipment is being installed on the AT&T Tower. They are working on the South Monmouth and WCBB towers this week. Pre-sign-ups are continuing. The company is communicating with folks who want the service in advance of June installations.

3.9 Other Town Committees – Friends of Woodbury Pond Park, Joline Bell advised a sponsorship and materials drive has started. 5/14 will be a work day at the park from 8 to 12. The first mowing and raking has been done. She provided a copy of the outreach letter being used. Several folks have responded to her social media requests for help.

Budget Committee – Tom Wood advised their next meeting will be 5/16 at 6:30 They are hoping for final copies of budgets and revenues to review.

Senior Center – 1 trip had been made with the bus. Another is scheduled for Thursday to Penobscot Narrows. On June 1 they are going to Lakewood Theater. The bus will be used to transport the band to various venues.

4.0 Scheduled Business

4.1 Proposed amendments Litchfield Fire/Rescue Department Ordinance – Chief Sherman presented proposed changes to the Litchfield Fire/Rescue Department Ordinance. Some suggestions were made to the proposals for Article 906 which removed the authority for certain decisions from the Chief and Town Manager (as proposed) to the Chief and Select Board. For Article 200, changes were suggested which are intended to strengthen mutual aid agreements and in Article 400 to clarify the standards referenced. The Board was invited to review the full Ordinance to see if any other needed changes are identified. Article 906 is prompted by information that vehicle insurance policies include coverage for covering the costs of emergency response and that many area response agencies have received funds in reimbursement of their response costs to vehicle accidents.

4.2 Annual road salt bid approval, request New England Salt versus Morton – The KVCOG bid identified Morton Salt Co as the low bidder. Last year, Morton Salt was unable to adequately maintain deliveries to the organizations purchasing salt from them including MDOT and several area Public Works Departments. The Town of Litchfield had purchased salt from New England Salt and had no trouble getting prompt deliveries and good service when we needed them. While the Morton bid was \$5.75 per ton less, their dependability makes paying a little more, a better choice. A motion to authorize the Town Manager to enter into a contract with New England Salt for \$77.00 a ton was made by Rayna Leibowitz, seconded by Rick Gowell and voted 3 – 0.

4.3 Review/Approve Woodbury Pond Dam Engineering Report Final Design and RFP - Discussion was held and concerns were raised regarding the proposed seal between the existing concrete of the dam and the sheet pile being installed. The RFP needs to be modified so it's a bonafied dam seal or provide written guarantee that there will be no leaking. A motion to authorize the Chairman and Town Manager to approve and accept a final engineering design and RFP to accomplish that was made by Rayna Leibowitz, seconded by Rick Gowell and voted 3 – 0.

4.4 Review proposed budget; projected revenues; draft warrant - A workshop to review the budget was set for May 12 at 2:00 PM. The Town Manager advised that \$145,000 would come from the Public Works Equipment Reserve Account to go towards the PW Truck purchase.

An extension of time for the completion of the Public Works Fuel Depot from 6/30/22 to 6/30/23 was made by Rayna Leibowitz, seconded by Rick Gowell and voted 3 – 0.

Article 53 of the Draft Town Meeting Warrant needs more work. The Board was asked to review the full draft and be prepared to bring any changes to the meeting on 5/23/22.

4.5 Review/Sign Certified Ratio Declaration - The Assessing Agent has calculated the ration at 99%. A motion to approve and sign the Certified Ratio Declaration Form at 99% was made by Rayna Leibowitz, seconded by Rick Gowell and voted 3 – 0.

4.6 Review/Sign Temporary Land Use Agreements to enable Gustin Rd and Old Mill Rd bridge replacements – Bids are to be sent out to enable construction to be done by the end of the construction season 2023. These agreements allow a temporary foot bridge to be installed to provide access for residents living across the bridges. A motion to allow the Town Manager to sign Temporary Land Use Agreements for Gustin Road Bridge and Old Mill Stream Bridge was made by Rayna Leibowitz, seconded by Rick Gowell and voted 3 – 0.

4.7 Approve Reserve Account for Various Identified FD Expenses – Tabled for more information

4.8 Approve paying Calderwood Woodbury Pond Dam invoice from overlay: \$3,134.96 – A motion to approve paying Calderwood Woodbury Pond Dam invoice from overlay: \$3,134.96 was made by Rayna Leibowitz, seconded by Rick Gowell and voted 3 – 0.

5.0 Unscheduled Business

5.1 Poverty Abatement – An Emergency Select Board Meeting was set up for May 12, at 1:30 PM. The Town Manager was asked to confirm if GA could pay the foreclosure amount then use the abatement process for the current amount.

5.2 Assessing Agent Contract – A proposed contract from RJD Appraisal for July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2025 was presented, showing a 2% increase. A motion to authorize the Town Manager to sign the three year contract was made by Rayna Leibowitz, seconded by Rick Gowell and voted 3 – 0.

5.3 Select Board schedule to visit town owned properties and activity venues as recommended

in 2018 – the Board will entertain a schedule to be developed following the Town Meeting on June 18.

7.0 Warrants

7.1 Town Warrant #28 for \$73,791.37. A motion to approve the Warrant #28 for \$73,791.37 was made by Rayna Leibowitz, seconded by Rick Gowell and voted 3-0.

7.2 RSU#4 Warrant #29 for \$306,328.40. A motion to approve the RSU#4 Warrant #29 for \$306,328.40 was made by Rayna Leibowitz, seconded by Rick Gowell and voted 2-0-1 (Parker abstained).

7.3 Town Payroll # 22 for \$20,744.15 A motion to approve the Payroll #22 for \$20,744.15 was made by Rayna Leibowitz, seconded by Rick Gowell and voted 3-0.

8.0 Selectmen/Public Discussion/Communication

9.0 Future Agenda Items

9.1 Feedback on Selectman’s Handbook

9.2 R02, Lot 015, 2793 Hallowell Rd

9.3 R02, Lot 017, 2783 Hallowell Rd.

9.4 Safety Flaggers

9.5 Pavement Repairs for Libby, Stevenstown and Wentzell Roads

9.6 Selling Town Property

9.7 Select Board Visits to Town Property and Operations

10.0 Adjournment at 9:50 PM

Respectfully Submitted By

Rayna Leibowitz