

**Town of Litchfield**  
**Select Board Meeting Minutes**  
**July 28th, 2025**

**1.0 Convenes 6:30 PM; Pledge to Flag; Selectmen and Guests present**

Selectmen: Gary Parker, Chairman; Clarence Gowell III (identified as Rick in these minutes); Tom Pelletier.

Staff: Kelly Weissenfels, Town Manager; Michael Sherman, Fire Chief (Zoom); Larry Nadeau, Road Comm. (absent); John Upham, Transfer Station Manager; Tom Wood, Chm. Budget Comm.(absent); Steve Ochmanski, Code Enforcement Officer(absent); and others per the sign in sheet.

**2.0 Minutes of July 14th, 2025**

There was a motion made by Rick to approve the minutes of July 14, 2025. This was seconded by Tom P, vote 3-0.

**3.0 Reports and Correspondence**

**3.1 Town Manager**

A. RSU4 budget vote will be held tomorrow July 29, 2025, from 8am – 8pm at the Litchfield Town Office.

B. The front office has been cycling through summer vacations, which Kelly has been covering.

C. Rick asked about the overtime line highlighted in the budget to be signed later in the meeting. Rick noted that the amount of overtime at 32 hours (over a two-week period) is close to another full-time person. Kelly said he would have to investigate it but might have been the time Tanya took to catch up after her vacation.

**3.2 Code Officer/Plumbing Inspector**

A. There have been lots of activities for the CEO to keep up with.

B. The lighting changes at the Meadows Golf Course were approved. This was previously spoken about during May 28, 2025, as well as the June 9, 2025, meetings. An entirely new light fixture was ordered and placed at the parking lot. All parties seem to be satisfied with the results.

**3.3 Road Commissioner**

A. Huntington Hill Road shoulders as well as cross culverts are done. The crew has been working at the area just past Buker Road where there was some washout as well. Buker Road ditching has been completed in anticipation of the paving project getting done. However, the paving project has been delayed so the crew will start grinding the trees. This will help them keep up with their summer projects.

B. Gary asked if the crew had been over to Gustin Road. Kelly responded that the FEMA mitigation project has been completed. Kelly has submitted the paperwork so the town will receive its check that was promised.

Rick said he was happy with the signage seen during the road work recently and he looks forward to seeing how the riprap [Huntington Hill Rd] holds up during the rain that will inevitably come.

### 3.4 Fire & Rescue

A. The hydrant project is moving forward, with the application process and notice to the abutters that the project will be started. This has come after the specific permissions needed have come through. This will be scheduled so a public works crew member and the excavator can be utilized.

B. If you see the little red fireboat out on the lake it's for more training. Chief Sherman reports that they have almost completed all the training needed to put the boat into service. The boat will be a very helpful asset to the department and the town. Chief Sherman thanked all that were involved in the fundraising and acquisition of the boat.

C. Gary asked if the gentleman who did the stump grinding has gotten his machine fixed yet? Chief Sherman said he has not heard from him since this was last spoken about. Gary also wanted to know if the ditch at the fire station had been weed wacked yet. He and Chief Sherman had driven by the ditch and couldn't recall if the area had been cleaned up or not. Chief Sherman will take a look and if need be, Kelly will speak with the company again about holding up the contract that was signed.

D. Rick asked when the new tanker truck was due to arrive. Chief Sherman said he believed that, barring any unforeseen circumstances, it should be sometime in the spring, around March.

A. Chief Sherman was able to meet with the new Superintendent and the Facilities Manager for RSU4. The operation of the shelter at Carrie Ricker School was the top priority. Chief Sherman provided them the previous mutual aid agreement; they will be looking at that and getting back to Chief Sherman soon.

B. Rick wanted to give Chief Sherman a heads up that under Unscheduled Business for tonight's meeting that he will be asking about what triggers the town to get notified about large events in case he wanted to be part of that conversation.

### 3.6 Assessing Agent

A. Ellery was in the office on Thursday July 24, 2025, leaving an abatement to be reviewed.

B. Next scheduled day for Ellery to be in the office will be Wednesday, August 6, 2025.

### 3.7 Transfer Station

A. John said both bulky bins needed to be emptied this week.

B. The number of stickers issues has increased to 3,054

C. The Swap Shop is still up and running with a total of 6,307 items sent back out this season, for a new life.

D. Tom P. asked if the brush pile would be cleared soon. John said that Old Castle will be down to clear the brush the week of August 4<sup>th</sup>.

### 3.8 Other Town Committees

## **4.0 Scheduled Business**

### 4.1 Transfer Station DEP licensing

Kelly said the transfer station has had visits from DEP as well as inspectors, etc. in the past. When the transfer station transitioned from a dump to a transfer station this was done under a “permit by rule”. The latest inspector at the DEP reviewed the original permit and realized that this has a limited scope of what changes can be made at the transfer station. Kelly said that the brush pile being moved [from down the hill a few years ago] requires a license and review. The review requirement also applies to current projects such as the addition of the concrete pads that are required for the new garage/shop/workspace that the transfer station has been working towards. John read from a document during the meeting, which stated that the current license needs to be amended to be able to proceed with the current plans. DEP is willing to help the town expedite the process of seeking an amendment to the current permit/license. This will require the brush pile to be smaller and likely removed every year. John suggested putting a cement pad under the brush pile to help with ease of removal. A new site plan will be submitted to Steve and the DEP and go forward from there.

Gary feels that the concrete pad for the brush pile is a hard pass and shouldn't happen. Kelly said that a DEP representative also came out to inspect the “mound”. There is a fallen tree on one side that is in process of being removed. Otherwise, everything is good per the representative.

### 4.2 Woodbury Pond Park Lease Agreement

Gary hasn't read the agreement yet. Kelly gave the highlights, one being that the park is required to use any profit to maintain and upgrade the park. Then Kelly said that what caught his eye in the report was that with one year's notice the State can take back the park. Rick said the thing that stood out to him the yearly report that is supposed to be done. Per the conversation it's not clear who the report is supposed to be sent to. Kelly will be in contact with Richmond, Maine and see what they do their state/town park.

### 4.3 Board of Assessment Review

This was spoken about at the last select board meeting, Kelly and Rayna were going to do some investigating. Rayna's research has come back. The Select Board had appointed in an appointment a Board of Assessment Review in 2010. There was no ordinance approved at a Town Meeting, therefore the governing document found was not an official ordinance. Kelly agreed and said it was more like a charter. There are no current appointees.

An appeal had been filed regarding a denial of abatement, which is what started this conversation at the last select board meeting. The appeal has since been withdrawn

since the structure in question that had been assessed by a different agent, was looked at again by Ellery and found to deserve a reduced valuation and did qualify for an abatement.

Regardless, Gary feels a committee needs to be appointed of at least three people that need to have some sort of understanding how assessing works. He doesn't believe members need to be residents of Litchfield but can't be just anyone.

Kelly agreed and said that now the urgency of getting this set up is gone he will continue to try to find eligible candidates. Gary suggested the possibility of assessors from other towns.

#### 4.4 Graffiti at the ballfields – preventative measures

The pickleball players on Tuesday last discovered graffiti on the tennis courts as well as some on the entry. This was reported to the Sheriff, but was not a high enough priority for them to respond. Kelly had previously discussed this with a couple of the board members. He will be looking into getting a camera or possibly multiple cameras to keep an eye on things. Gary asked who would be reviewing it. Kelly said it would likely be placed on a light pole. Rick would like to get some information from others that use game cameras, etc. to learn more about the quality of images captured before doing anything. Ways of cleaning up the graffiti were discussed. Options for cameras with good clarity were discussed.

#### 4.5 Abatement U13-028 \$183.83 Renee Lachapelle

There was a motion made by Rick to approve Abatement U13-028 in the amount of \$183.83 for Renee Lachapelle. This was seconded by Tom P., vote 3-0.

#### 4.6 Budget Committee recommendations for action

Gary has had conversations with the chairman of the Budget Committee about these topics. The topics have come up in their meetings. The first topic was the chairman of the budget committee having a seat at the front table to avoid having to keep getting up to a microphone to explain the budget committee recommendations each time a new warrant is discussed. This means seated at the front table at the Town Meeting will be the Select board members, the Town Manager and the Chairman of the Budget Committee. Everyone else will be seated in the audience.

There was a motion made by Rick to designate a seat at the front table for the members of the Select Board, the Town Manager and the Chair of the Budget Committee at the official town meeting. This was seconded by Tom P., vote 3-0.

Second, it's recommended by the budget committee that there be calendar dates set that get the warrant articles set up well before the town meeting. This will help the budget committee have time to be able to review the warrant articles without having to call a special meeting or feel like they do not have time to fully review the warrants.

Gary didn't feel that this past year's performance was acceptable. He would like to see the Town Manager put together a calendar with specific dates to get the process

finished with enough time to give the budget committee a final copy of the last meeting before the town meeting.

Kelly feels this is doable if he changes his approach slightly. Also, the audit getting done by December is very important. Kelly said currently the town is scheduled to have the audit done in the first week in December. Gary would like to have the town manager work with the budget committee to come up with a calendar that is acceptable to all parties (Town Manager as well as the Budget Committee) then bring it to the Select Board for review.

The third topic of discussion was discussed previously when Scott Weeks was a selectman. He had asked what the ramifications of not following the state's requirements for assessment [valuations]. The budget committee was asked in a previous meeting to gather the information and present that to the select board by November. The committee wants the Select Board and the Town Manager to know that it's going to take a great deal of Kelly's time (as the acting Town Manager) and/or the accountant's time to get the information needed to get the documentation together. The committee has started the process of speaking with other towns and finding out what they are doing, how they are doing it, and why.

Tom then discussed the need to start adding the building requirements to the list of capitol improvements to start tracking. Then they will be seen coming over a year plus away. Tom believes that the budget committee could work with the Town Manager to come up with this list.

## **5.0 Unscheduled Business**

### **5.1 Electrical work that needs to be done at the Academy Building**

Gary asked Rayna if she knew what had been going on. She is in the process of trying to get the committee together to discuss. Rayna said the members of the committee have the estimate. Gary would like to have someone reach out to the gentleman that put together the estimate that is currently in hand to tell him that the estimate has been received and it's being reviewed.

### **5.2 Public events path forward**

This is pertaining to the Iron Man Triathlon that the City of Augusta put on for the 3<sup>rd</sup> year in a row. Rayna is in hopes that there will be an after actions review and suggested Rick's comments be added to the after-action review. Rick volunteered to find out why Kelly and Fire and Rescue weren't informed and if there is anything to do in the future to be informed. Gary would like to see a letter sent to whomever it concerns informing them that they may not come into the town of Litchfield and shut down roads. He would like to see the response at the next select board meeting after receiving a response.

## **6.0 Appointments/Resignations**

### 6.1 Appointment to Planning Board – Terra Riley

Gary would like to meet Terra at a Select Board meeting. Kelly will invite her to the next meeting but since she met with Steve and Kelly himself has spoken with her, Gary isn't apposed to the appointment happening tonight.

There was a motion made by Rick to appoint Terra Riley to the Planning Board.

Tom P. would like to meet and chat with the individual looking to be appointed to the Planning Board.

Motion died with no second.

Rick suggested giving this process an actual structure and starting with the individual attending at least 3 meetings to see what the process is all about. Then fill out a questionnaire of sorts and meeting with the Select Board members to introduce themselves to the members and the town. This will be written down as a procedure to be voted on at the next Select Board meeting.

6.2 There was a motion made by Tom P. to reappoint Diane Clay to the Litchfield Plantation Board of Trustees. This was seconded by Rick, vote 3-0.

### 6.3 Appointment as Registrar of Voters – Clover Craig

There was a motion made by Tom P. to appoint Clover Craig to the Registrar of Voters.

This was seconded by Rick, vote 3-0.

6.4 Resignation from Senior Advisory Committee – Richard Cutliffe, effective August 21, 2025

This will be voted on at the next meeting in hopes that the letter of appreciation discussed will be ready for the Select Board members and the Town Manager to sign at the meeting.

Rick and Gary would like to see a letter of appreciation sent to folks that have donated their time for a (to be determined) number of years to the town of Litchfield.

## **7.0 Warrants**

7.1 Town Warrant #2 \$101,720.75

There was a motion made by Rick to approve town warrant #2 in the amount of \$101,720.75. This was seconded by Tom P., vote 3-0.

7.2 Town Payroll #1 \$55,783.79

There was a motion made by Tom P. to approve town payroll #1 in the amount of \$55,783.79. This was seconded by Rick, vote 3-0.

## **8.0 Selectmen/Public Discussion/ Communication**

8.1 Community Resiliency Partnership was asked about by Rayna, wondering if the town has investigated this. Kelly said it was discussed roughly a year ago. At that time the process (requirements) to become eligible was far too much to undergo at that time. This is a "grant" for up to \$50,000.00, for climate resiliency projects. KVCOG could come and present to the Select Board if they would like to see that happen. Gary doesn't feel any different than he did a year ago.

8.2 Gary would like to have regular updates as part of the Town Manager's report about Woodbury Pond Park and the progress of the upgrades that are happening, as they have been discussed at a couple meetings now. Kelly will be discussing this with CEO now that the agreement letter has been received, they can now start moving forward.

### **9.0 Future Agenda Items**

9.1 97 Whippoorwill Road (Foreclosed Property)

9.2 Iron Man Triathlon and Future Large Gatherings

### **10.0 Adjournment** at 8:14pm

Respectfully Submitted by Angela Parker