

Town of Litchfield
Select Board
August 22, 2022
Corrected Meeting Minutes

1.0 Convened at 6:30 PM; Pledge to Flag; Selectmen: Gary Parker, Chairman, Clarence Gowell III (identified as Rick Gowell in these minutes), Scott Weeks; **Staff:** Kelly Weissenfels, Town Manager; Michael Sherman, Fire Chief; Larry Nadeau, Road Comm.; John Upham, Transfer Station Manager; Richard Lane, Road Advisory Committee Member; Tom Wood, Budget Comm. Chm.

2.0 Minutes of July 25, 2022, August 1st, 2022 and Aug. 8, 2022 Meetings submitted for final approval. A motion to approve the minutes for all these meetings as drafted was made by Scott Weeks, seconded by Rick Gowell and voted 3- 0.

3.0 Reports and Correspondence:

3.1 Town Manager: A. Kelly advised 30-day notices will go out August 30, giving folks 30 days to pay their delinquent tax bills or a lien will be filed. Residents will then have 180 days to pay to avoid foreclosure.

B. A fundraising concert is being held at the Woodbury Pond Park for the Litchfield Food Bank Building Fund. The Park Manager has requested permission to donate all admission funds collected that day to the Food Bank Building Fund as well. There was concurrence without a motion or vote.

C. Kelly participated in a virtual table top exercise regarding election issues. Various scenarios were developed which the Town Manager brought back to Town Office staff for discussion. This will lead to development of emergency action plans. A suggestion was made that video recording the elections might be useful, since we have all the equipment necessary to do it.

D. Repairs to Woodbury Pond Dam are starting this week.

3.2 Code Enforcement Officer/Plumbing Inspector – A. The Town Manager advised Steve assisted with information about property sales.

3.3 Road Commissioner – A. Dead River Road has been hot topped.

B. His crew is adding gravel to the Whippoorwill Road. Discussion of the expected depth of gravel above the fabric layer confirmed that 8 inches was agreed to verbally.

C. Larry advised a new guy has started. He has a Class A license.

D. Lunts Hill Road has been ground. The injection process will start tomorrow. Larry was asked what is the process for determining how road work requirements are determined. He advised testing is done by core drilling and an analysis of the base determines what is there, what needs to be done and added as well as which surfacing method will be most effective. The level and type of traffic is also considered.

E. Larry advised another round of grant applications has opened but they are for stream crossing/culverts and we don't need those, so we'll watch and wait.

3.4 Fire & Rescue – A. Chief Sherman advised the Sportsmens Club pond is too low to obtain water from it. There are other sources in town that are serviceable. He was asked if there was a remedy for the Sportsmens Club pond. He advised there is a special pump that can be purchased (\$6,000). Some area towns have one and he wants to see it in action as an information gathering effort. Livermore Falls will be his destination.

B. The Brush Truck has a broken pump. It is a small agricultural pump that will need to be replaced. Steps to avoid problems like this in the future were identified and will be implemented.

3.5 Emergency Management – No report

3.6 Assessing Agent – Ellery Bane will be here Thursday for a tax commitment workshop at 6:00 PM.

3.7 Transfer Station – A. The Manager reported 2219 Transfer Station stickers have been issued. 5030 items have been removed from the Swap Shop. Sunday hours will be ending in late Sept. A new door has been ordered for the paper container. Freon and Tires will be removed soon. Waiting for the third concrete pad to be poured by Public Works, then all recycling containers can be moved together.

3.8 Budget Committee – Tom Wood, Chairman, advised they met last week to discuss TRIO issues. A process and procedure will be developed with Kelly supervising and working with Town Office staff. An initial review identified several areas that need to be addressed.

3.9 Other Town Committees – No reports

4.0 Scheduled Business

4.1 Award FD Paving Contract – The Town Manager advised a new bid process was done with a consultant providing the parameters as original figures were not based on consistent information among bidders. Accordingly, second bids received were from St. Laurent for \$88,000 and All States Paving for \$86,123. A motion to accept the bid from All States for \$86,123 was made by Scott Weeks, seconded by Rick Gowell and voted 3 – 0.

4.2 Approve Winter Sand RFP – Road Commissioner Nadeau advised this is the standard 3,000 cubic yard bid for delivery by November 30. A motion to approve the sand bid package was made by Scott Weeks, seconded by Rick Gowell and voted 3 – 0.

4.3 Discuss Strategic Use of Road Bond and Carry forward Accounts – Chairman Parker expressed concerns about which projects were paid for by Bond Funds and which were paid for by appropriations from tax revenue. The Town Manager advised that the Bond funds were approved in June, 2021, and must be used within a four-year window. Close to \$2 million of those funds have been used or committed. He also advised the bond funds cannot accrue interest. Accordingly, costs for major road and bridge projects will be taken from the Bond Funds to ensure they are used within that four-year time period. The expectation is that annual appropriations for the Capital Road Improvement (carry forward) Account will continue to be made and interest can accrue to those funds. When the Bond Funds are all used, these funds in the Capital Road Improvement (carry forward) Account, plus the interest they have accrued, will be available to continue the road and bridge work outlined by the Road Advisory Committee and approved by the Select Board. The suggestion was made to have core testing done on roads scheduled for work so more accurate estimates of costs can be made. The experience of the Whippoorwill Road and Lunts Hill Road costs being inaccurate because the testing had not been done as part of the planning process provided a good lesson. The Road Advisory Committee has developed information on work done, project costs and projections of future work and costs which should be maintained in an easily available format.

4.4 Bid Policy Review - The suggestion was made to add the statement regarding 5% consideration for Litchfield bidders; in section C. add “with appropriate documentation in Select Board Minutes; and D. Add the appropriate Equal Opportunity phrase to each form. Adjustments will be made by the Town Manager and a copy emailed to Select Board members for review before the next meeting. The suggestion was made to consider appointing an Ad Hoc Policy Committee to review

Select Board minutes and Town Meeting minutes to compile information regarding past practices that are or should be policies that are compiled into a reference. More discussion will be held regarding this.

4.5 Ambulance Contract Approval – The contract has been reviewed by the Select Board and Fire /Rescue Chief. A motion to approve the contract for ambulance services from the Gardiner Fire and Rescue Department in the amount of \$66,482.00 was made by Scott Weeks, seconded by Rick Gowell and voted 3 – 0.

4.6 Review of Town-Owned Lots Proposed For Sale – The Town Manager provided information regarding four lots obtained by foreclosure for non-payment of taxes which may be proposed for sale by bid. The Conservation Commission has been asked to review the list and make any recommendations regarding the desirability of retaining any of them because of established criteria. These lots are located on R02, Lot 16, R03, Lot 41, R03, lot 58 and R14, Lot 47. The Code Enforcement Officer suggested considering transferring the lot at Peace Pipe Shores to the Road Association as it might be part of a right of way. There are currently 15 town owned lots in a Trust. No decision is expected until the Conservation has made their comments.

4.7 Discuss forming An Ad Hoc Committee to Investigate Withdrawal From RSU#4 – Selectman Weeks suggested approaching RSU#4 to request changing the funding formula for the local share of costs. No action was taken on this suggestion. The results of the recent referendum vote soundly defeating the school addition proposal has prompted a lot of discussion within the community to assess whether or not withdrawing from RSU#4 would be appropriate. The Chairman asked if anyone present was interested in serving on a Ad Hoc Committee to explore this and Percy Gowell stated that he would like to participate. To begin, he will talk with one or more towns that have already completed a withdrawal process a few years ago to see what their lessons learned were. The committee will be tasked with gathering information and exploring options. A petition may be needed which will require about 173 verified signatures of registered Litchfield voters.

4.8 Quitclaim Deed – R03 Lot 049 - Estate of Raymond DesRoschers – The Town Manager advised the Estate paid off the lien. A motion to approve and sign the Quit Claim Deed was made by Scott Weeks, seconded by Rick Gowell and voted 3 – 0.

6.0 Appointments/Resignations

6.1 Appointment to Appeals Board – Fran Rudoff – A motion to approve the appointment of Fran Rudoff to the Appeals Board was made by Scott Weeks, seconded by Rick Gowell and voted 3 – 0.

6.2 Appointment to Recreation Committee-Christina Stonier – A motion to appoint Christina Stonier to the Recreation was made by Rick Gowell, seconded by Scott Weeks and voted 3 – 0.

6.3 Appointment to Senior Advisory Board – Brad Hilton – A motion to appoint Brad Hilton to the Senior Advisory Board was made by Scott Weeks, seconded by Rick Gowell and voted 3 – 0.

7.0 Warrants

7.1 Town Warrant # 6 for \$76,551.14, A motion to approve the Warrant #6 for \$76,551.14 was made by Rick Gowell, seconded by Scott Weeks and voted 3-0.

7.2 Town Payroll #3 for \$31,081.73 A motion to approve the Payroll #3 for \$31,081.73 was made by Rick Gowell, seconded by Scott Weeks and voted 3-0.

8.0 Selectmen/Public Discussion/Communication

8.1 A member of the board requested a schedule of entry level rates of pay for various town positions.

8.2 The first drafts of the sections of the Selectman's Handbook were provided to the Select Baird members and the Town Manager on April 9, 2018, by Rayna Leibowitz. The computer diskette they were on has been corrupted so the electronic copies are no longer available and she was unable to locate paper copies. The Town Manager and Chairman Parker were requested to look for them in their papers. An outline of the planned topics was provided to the Town Manager to be copied for the current Board. Selectman Weeks requested a list of acronyms be created.

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 Appointment of a Gardiner Library Trustee
- 9.5 Bid Policy Review
- 9.6 Selling Tax Acquired Property
- 9.7 Forming an Ad Hoc Policy Committee

13.0 Adjournment at PM

Respectfully Submitted By

Rayna Leibowitz