

Town of Litchfield
Board of Selectmen
March 27, 2017

- 1.0 Convened at 6:30; Pledge to Flag; Selectmen: Mark Russell, Chairman, George Thomson and Rayna Leibowitz Present, Staff: Tiffany Caton, Rec. Comm; Stan Labbe, Fire Chief, Tina Gowell, Rescue; Kevin Buckmore, FD; Richard Lane and Tamas Szepsy, RAC;; Pat Soboleski Budget Comm; Selena Nadeau and Diana Larrabee, Office Staff; Kelly Weissenfels, Webmaster; Vicki Russell, Sodalite Editor; and Guests Dian White, John Upham, Dennis Pomerleau, Gary Parker and Leo Jacobson.
- 2.0 Minutes of March 13, 2017 Meeting submitted for final approval. A motion to approve as presented was made by George Thomson, seconded by Mark Russell and voted 3 - 0.
- 3.0 Reports and Correspondence
 - 3.1 Town Manager
 - A. Trudy reported being out last week with an injury
 - B. Tax payments are coming in very well.
 - C. April 6 is the deadline for 2014 taxes to avoid foreclosure.
 - 3.2 Code Officer/Plumbing Inspector- Absent as road conditions were very bad with icing north of town.
 - 3.3 Road Commissioner
 - A. Icy roads were sanded early this morning and later this afternoon.
 - B. Sand stockpiles are holding up
 - C. Getting some applications for the PW vacancy but we need someone with mechanical capabilities so as much work as possible can be done in house.
 - D. Crews have been out 29 or 30 times this winter season, more than anyone can remember. The fatigue level is very high.
 - 3.4 Fire & Rescue
 - A. Stan reported meeting with the Regional Communications Center for dispatching services. Changing to a codes system was not supported by the 5 towns involved, so they will not be implemented for these towns. An agreement was reached to review the protocols among the 5 towns to develop a uniform set that will be used by everyone.
 - B. Tina discussed the issue of uncollectible ambulance charges that member towns are responsible for paying. The most recent figures she had was for 2014 when they were \$13,122.30 for Litchfield. The cost for ambulance services for Litchfield to be included in the budget is the base rate plus the uncollectibles for the previous year. If payment is received from patients or insurances later, those sums will be returned to the Town. Note: Dresden is exempt from paying their uncollectibles this year as a inducement for contracting with Gardiner. Future years will require payment by the Town of Dresden.
 - 3.5 Emergency Mgmt.
 - 3.6 Assessing Agent

Trudy reported Ellery had sent a request for the reporting of Personal Property to 72 commercial operators in town. This is the first time in several years an update has been requested, but the two newest businesses, Dollar General and Gowell's Shop and Save prompted it.

3.7 Transfer Station - The Manager reported the Cardboard Roll-off needs some repair work. The Public Works Foreman will check to see if it can be accomplished at the Town Garage.

3.8 Other Town Committees

The Budget Committee would like to review and discuss the Capital Improvements Plan at the next meeting and the Road Advisory Committee would like to add discussion a of Invasive Plant Control Measures and costs to the budget.

5.0 Scheduled Business

5.1 Junkyard/Auto Graveyard Public Hearing - At 6:53 PM a motion was made by George Thomson, seconded by Rayna Leibowitz to enter a Public Hearing for Gerald Kenney's Junkyard. No negative verbal or written comments were received. Positive verbal ones were received from a neighbor and the Fire Chief. A motion to approve the Junkyard License was made by George Thomson, seconded by Mark Russell and voted 3 - 0.

5.2 Executive Session - Poverty Abatement Request - A motion to enter an Executive Session at 7:00 PM in accordance with 1 M.R.S.A § 405(6)(F) Discussion of Confidential Records was made by Rayna Leibowitz, seconded by George Thomson and voted 3 - 0. The Executive Session ended at 7:21 when the Chairman announced its end. A motion was made by Mark Russell, seconded by Rayna Leibowitz that the Board will consider the request with further information from the Assessing Agent and the involved lawyer indicating that the requested action will result in the desired outcome. The vote was 3 - 0.

5.3 Judith McPherson - Tax discount for property use - A turnaround for town equipment was put on her property on the Academy Road, near the Bowdoin town line about 2007 with a verbal authorization. She is now requesting a financial consideration for the use of it. Larry advised Bowdoin plow trucks also use it. He was asked to determine the legal width of the road, measure to determine how much is on her property and photograph the situation for the next meeting.

5.4 Review of Rapid Renewal Online Registration Information/Credit Card Payments - Trudy advised she is waiting for some answers regarding TRIO. She has cash-up concerns. Tina Gowell, who works for Motor Vehicles, advised talking with other towns would be useful. Some have had good experiences, some not so good. The accuracy of data submitted is vital. The financial transaction apparently puts funds into an account weekly or monthly and electronically transfers them to the Town's account. This will be on the agenda for the next meeting.

5.5 Budget Review - Several Accounts were reviewed. The Recreation Dept. Director was asked to provide numbers of participants in various activities for the last 3 or 4 years and financial information for 2016 as the information provided last year has 2014 dates on it. The information will be provided and put into the Board's mailboxes.

8.0 Appointments and Resignations

8.1 John A. Upham- Freedom of Access Act Officer. John has completed the training required and learned some interesting information. A motion to appoint him as the Freedom of Access Act Officer was made by Rayna Leibowitz seconded by George Thomson and voted 3 - 0.

9.0 Warrants

9.1 Town Voucher #19 for \$66,455.82 was approved on a motion by George Thomson, seconded by Rayna Leibowitz and voted 3 - 0.

9.2 Town Payroll #19 for \$14,653.22 was approved on a motion by George Thomson, seconded by Rayna Leibowitz and voted 3 - 0.

10.0 Other Business:

Employee Contracts: A motion was made by Mark Russell, seconded by George Thomson to approve the 3 year contract offered to and accepted by Larry Nadeau II, Road Commissioner. Vote 3 - 0. Further revision of the Town Manager's contract must be made. It will be reviewed next meeting.

11.0 Selectmen/Public Discussion/Communication

A. The new Editor of the Sodalite newsletter advised the first issue went together well and the effort will be continued. Appreciation was expressed for the support received.

B. A request was received for clarification of the allegation that equipment rented by the Town for Town use was observed working on the new driveway for the Chairman's son. Larry Nadeau responded that the Town had rented a piece of equipment, a John Deere 80 excavator, weighing about 17,000 pounds. That piece of equipment was never used on the Chairman's son's property. L. R. Nadeau, Inc. had provided at no cost to the Town, a Komatsu excavator 200, weighing about 70,000 pounds to the town for some of its projects. That piece of equipment was used on the Chairman's son's property under contract with L. R. Nadeau, Inc.

C. Dennis Pomerleau discussed the RSU#4 School Funding Formula and its effect causing Litchfield to pay more per student than Sabattus or Wales.

D. Dennis asked if any outside consultants had been used to review internal procedures and recommend improvements. The Town Manager responded that the Auditors do that as part of their financial audit process. Recommendations they have made have been incorporated.

E. George, as outgoing Selectman, would like to see the stipend (pay) for the Board members increased to \$3,000 a year by an article on the Town Warrant in June. Mark asked Trudy to research the legal and appropriate way to address this.

12.0 Future Agenda Item

12.1 D. Blocher Property

12.2 Street Lights

12.3 Old Mill Rd Bridge

12.4 Return of the 7/14/16 Executive Session Working Papers

12.5 Capital Improvements Plan

12.6 Judith McPherson - Tax discount for property use

12.7 Control of Invasive Plants Costs

12.8 Town Manager's Contract

12.9 Board Members stipend increase

13.0 Adjournment - The meeting adjourned at 9:05 PM.