

Town of Litchfield
Select Board
December 14, 2020
Final Meeting Minutes

1.0 Convened at 6:30 PM; Pledge to Flag; Selectmen: Gary Parker, Chairman, Rayna Leibowitz, Mark Russell; **Staff:** Kelly Weissenfels, Deputy Town Manager; Steve Ochamanski, CEO; Stan Labbe, Fire Chief; Larry Nadeau, Road Comm. via Zoom; Bruce Slattery, EMA Director via Zoom; Larry Bell, Broadband Comm. Via Zoom

2.0 Minutes of November 23, 2020 Meeting submitted for final approval. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Mark Russell, seconded by Rayna Leibowitz and voted 3 - 0.

3.0 Reports and Correspondence:

3.1 Town Manager: A. Storm last weekend kept the Public Works busy. EMA Director assessed shelter potential.

B. Town Office renovations are continuing with the addition of more partitions. The new carpets are in and the telephone system is in. They are happy with it.

C. The audit has been postponed yet again to Jan 5 – 7, 2021 to allow for revamping the spreadsheet and training a new bookkeeper.

D. The Town Office will be closing at noon on Dec. 24 and Dec. 31

3.2 Code Enforcement Officer/Plumbing Inspector – A. A Permit Log for November was distributed showing one new single family home and one replacement mobile home. Fees collected were \$750.00 and owner estimated value of changes was \$381,500.00

B. The Planning Board approved an enlarged parking lot and additional bay on G & E Auto Repair on Rt. 126.

C. An application for a small engine repair shop in Purgatory has been received.

D. The Meadows is developing a small campground for RV's and expects to have an application for their next meeting. The spaces will be for golfing customers only.

E. There may be suggested language changes for Stormwater issues in the Land Use Ordinance.

F. Chris Monroe has received 2 letters and a certified letter will go out 12/15/2020 regarding his property at 2789 Hallowell Road.

3.3 Road Commissioner – A. They've experienced the first real storm. Wet, heavy snow and ice mix made roads slippery. Soft dirt and soft shoulders existed. Several roads were closed because of downed trees. PW worked well with the Fire Dept. and EMA.

B. Rain last Saturday prompted sanding as the temps hovered around 32 degrees.

C. Larry advised he found 2 trucks to buy within the amount of money he had to work with. A used 2007 International wheeler, with 85,000 miles and a new International wheeler with 475 hp, automatic, heavy haul, new sander system, emission system best available, good warranty. Adjustments were made in plowing apparatus to reduce costs because some equipment had already been purchased by the Town that could be added to the new truck.

D. There was brief discussion about a solution to the water run-off situation on Buker Road.

E. Larry advised the trailer for the speed detector sign is almost done.

3.4 Fire & Rescue – A. Chief Labbe advised the storm was the worst he's been out in in quite

a while. Downed lines and trees made travel difficult.

B. Chief Labbe needs to send a list of firefighters and First Responders to get Covid-19 vaccine for them. They will be offered the vaccine and can elect to have the shot or not.

C. Training programs at the FD are limiting the number of students so distancing can be done. This will require more classes being offered to ensure everyone gets the training.

D. Santa will be at the Fire Station on Sunday for a drive through event.

E. Truck #65 has officially left Litchfield for its new home on the island.

3.5 Emergency Management – A. Bruce Slattery advised a town truck had wires come down on it. The new protocols were used to notify CMP and the response was very acceptable. Communications with Kennebec County EMA and CMP worked very well. CMP crews Sunday and Monday were very responsive.

B. There was a conflict with the battery system for UPS power and the generator. It has been resolved.

C. Bruce advised he felt the PW crew did a very good job with the storm.

3.6 Assessing Agent – Kelly advised Rob will be here Thursday and will have telephone appointments with residents instead of in-person appointments.

3.7 Transfer Station – A. Byran was absent but had advised Kelly the Transfer Station will be closed Friday, Christmas Day, and open on Saturday.

B. Brush is not accepted after the first snowfall so he had to turn away some folks. Kelly was asked to post this information on the website.

C. Bryan recommends not taking any refrigerators or freezers as they, too, hinder plowing. This will be posted on the website as well.

3.8 Broadband Comm -A. Larry Bell, Chairman, advised they are helping with training for the Senior Center through a Train the Trainer program.

3.9 Other Town Committees – no reports.

4.0 Agenda Adjustments

4.1 Road Commissioner’s Contract

4.2 Future Board Meetings

4.3 Approval of Purchase Agreement

4.4 General Assistance Portal Access Authorization

5.0 Scheduled Business

5.1 R02, Lot 016, 2787 Hallowell Road – The CEO reported he received permission to go onto the property with the 2 bidders to assess the interior of the building for a final bid price. He has looked into the costs of an exterminator (\$625) and \$175 minimum for a dumpster to get rid of trash. A motion was made to authorize the Chairman and CEO to make decisions regarding this property on behalf of the Town with the exception of approval of a bid for demolition of the building which will be addressed by the full board by Mark Russell, seconded by Rayna Leibowitz and voted 3 – 0.

5.2 7:00 PM Casco Bay Advisors – Broadband Presentation - Mr Brian Lippert provided a summary of the Broadband planning effort. A copy of his full report will be made available to the public via the Town’s website. Some high points:

* The majority of current services are provided by DSL from telephone companies or Internet via cable service.

* Most DSL service is below FCC standards and customers are considered unserved.

- * Cable builds out if density is 20 customers per mile.
- * Consolidated is not serving the town well.
- * If a fiberoptic line was to be run, 3100 poles in town would need to be used at a rental cost of \$20. per pole per year.
- * Brian recommends exploring options with any and all potential providers to see what the best options might be.

Larry Bell advised they are seeking some guidance from the Board. Chairman Parker responded that a short term goal should be meeting the needs of unserved households with a longer range plan of a fiberoptic system.

Larry advised some towns have enabled funding through a bond and a \$10/month charge to consumers to pay it back.

Tom Wood, Broadband Committee member, commented that considerations need to include quality of services as well as cost to the end customers.

Next Steps- Revisit the mission statement and set goals with the intention of meeting jointly with the Select Board after the first of the year.

5.3 Executive Session to Discuss a Personnel Matter - An Executive Session did not occur. There was discussion of potential benefits of Family Medical Leave and Kelly will research information about it.

5.4 Abatement Request, Map U28, Lot 47 – Robert Sinclair, the Assessing Agent was allowed an interior inspection resulting in an abatement for tax year 2020 of \$234.30. The owner is now requesting the same abatement for 2019. A motion to approve the abatement of taxes in the amount of \$234.30 for 2019 was made by Rayna Leibowitz, seconded by Mark Russell and voted 3 – 0.

5.5 Leave of Absence Request – No action at this time.

6.0 Unscheduled Business

6.1 Road Commissioner’s Contract – A motion to sign the service contract with Lawrence R. Nadeau II as presented was made by Mark Russell, seconded by Rayna Leibowitz and voted 3 – 0. A motion to authorize the Select Board to sign outside a regular meeting in the presence of a Notary Public was made by Mark Russell, seconded by Gary Parker and voted 3 – 0.

6.2 Future Board Meetings – Chairman Parker advised he has designated the Conference Room a restricted area not open to the public until further notice because of the Governor’s mandate.

A motion to cancel the December 28 Select Board meeting and authorize the Board to sign the Town Payroll and Warrant that need to be signed outside of a meeting was made by Mark Russell, seconded by Gary Parker and voted 3 – 0.

6.3 Approval of Signed Purchase Agreement – A motion to approve the purchase of a 2020 International Truck for \$177,000 and a 2007 International Truck for \$17,000 and authorize the Deputy Town Manager to sign the appropriate paper work was made by Mark Russell, seconded by Rayna Leibowitz and voted 3 – 0.

6.4 G.A. Portal Access Authorization – A motion to approve authorization for the Deputy Town Manager to access the General Assistance Portal was made by Mark Russell, seconded by Rayna Leibowitz and voted 3 – 0.

9.0 Warrants

9.1 Town Warrant #11 for \$399,204.37 of which \$313,680.33 was for RSU#4. This

amount was approved on a motion by Mark Russell, seconded by Rayna Leibowitz and voted 3 – 0.

9.2 Town Payroll #11 for \$21,535.87 was approved on a motion by Mark Russell, seconded by Rayna Leibowitz and voted 3 – 0.

11.0 Selectmen/Public Discussion/Communication

11.1 Mark Russell presented the RSU#4 budget schedule. The District Meeting will be May 12 with the Budget Referendum on June 8.

11.2 Mark advised Requests for Proposals for an addition on the Sabattus Middle School have been requested. This will precipitate a beginning to close Libby Tozier and Sabattus Elementary Schools. It has previously been noted that the proposal to add an addition to the Sabattus Middle School will be entirely at the expense of RSU#4 towns without state funds being requested or obtained. Because of the voting authority, if Sabattus approves it, neither Wales or Litchfield can disapprove it, singly or together. Litchfield will be required to pay the largest proportion of the costs.

12.0 Future Agenda Items

12.1 Feedback on Selectman's Handbook

12.2 Update Regarding the New Dispatching protocols

12.3 R02, Lot 016, 2787 Hallowell Road

12.4 R02. Lot 017, 2783 Hallowell Road

12.5 Determine Broadband Steps Forward – after Jan 1

12.6 Personnel Policy Workshop – after Jan 1

13.0 Adjournment at 10:10 PM

Respectfully Submitted By

Rayna Leibowitz