

Town of Litchfield
Select Board
January 25, 2021
Meeting Minutes

1.0 Convened at 6:30 PM; Pledge to Flag; Selectmen: Gary Parker, Chairman, Rayna Leibowitz, Mark Russell via Zoom; **Staff:** Kelly Weissenfels, Deputy Town Manager; Tina Gowell, Litchfield Fire Dept. Rescue; Larry Nadeau, Road Comm. via Zoom, Bryan Lamoreau, Transfer Station Manager via Zoom, Toby Jutras, Chairman, Road Advisory Comm. (RAC) via Zoom, Richard Lane, RAC via Zoom; Larry Bell, Broadband Comm Chairman via Zoom; Pat Soboleski, Senior Center Director, via Zoom.

The Chairman, Gary Parker, advised the meeting is being available to the community via interactive telecommunications until Covid 19 restrictions can be relaxed. Information regarding Zoom access is available on the Town of Litchfield website and Facebook page. Votes are recorded by the initials of the Board members.

2.0 Minutes of January 11, 2021 Meeting submitted for final approval. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Gary Parker, seconded by Rayna Leibowitz and voted RL Yes, MR Yes and GP Yes.

3.0 Reports and Correspondence:

3.1 Deputy Town Manager: A. Kelly has received notification from the Gardiner Library that they plan to move to a per-capita formula to calculate the proposed cost to the Town of Litchfield for the next budget cycle. It is expected to result in a \$1,500 increase.

B. The Animal Control Officer has been meeting with John Alexander regarding the provision of a dog shelter as an alternative to the Kennebec Valley Humane Shelter (KVHS) in Augusta. The proposed contract for sheltering reflects a 40% decrease from the cost of KVHS. The facility has been inspected and licensed by the state. Mr. Alexander intends to put the funds towards building a dedicated structure in the future. Sonny Black will accept any large animals. This topic will be put on the agenda for Feb. 8.

C. Central Maine Power Co is proposing to change the street lights to LED's at CMP expense to save \$650 a year in projected costs before negotiating a new 15 year contract for street lights. Kelly was asked to determine the cost of changing all lights we want to continue to use at Town expense and simply pay for the power they use. Two lights identified to be considered changing is the light in front of the Town Office that is 95% blocked by the tree and the light in Pottertown that might be moved to the north end of the Small Road.

D. A citizen has requested opening Woodbury Pond Park in the winter to facilitate access to the pond for ice fishing. This issue was discussed but the Recreation Director has not been contacted, so no decision was made at this time. The Road Comm. advised keeping the road plowed and sanded would be a challenge. He felt there was parking available along the Whippoorwill Road and at the bird sanctuary across the road so folks could walk in at any time if they wanted to.

3.2 Code Enforcement Officer/Plumbing Inspector – Steve is absent

A. Chairman Parker advised re: R02-016, 2787 Hallowell Road, the dumpster will stay until

demolition is scheduled for the benefit of the folks staying there at no additional cost. An exterminator has been identified who will bait the property for \$600 and replace the bait every two weeks until it is no longer being eaten or the demolition is completed.

3.3 Road Commissioner – A. Larry Nadeau advised light work has been done for the last 2 weeks as little plowing or sanding was needed. Painting and maintenance work is being done.

3.4 Fire & Rescue – A. Tina Gowell, representing the Gardiner Ambulance Advisory Board discussed the proposed budget for 2021-2022. Gardiner Fire Dept purchased 2 new ambulances and will be purchasing a third, according to Chief Rick Sieberg. They are requesting that the funds normally refunded to the towns be allowed to be maintained in a reserve account for the purchase of large ticket ambulance equipment that might be needed, rather than include it as a cost in budget proposals in the future. Control of the funds would be by the Ambulance Advisory Committee. She advised 4 of the towns who contract with Gardiner have been approached so far. She provided information that Litchfield has historically been refunded up to \$1,100 annually. If approved, the arrangement would continue year after year until canceled. Select Board member Mark Russell asked if the Gardiner auditor has approved the establishment of such a reserve fund and advised that Litchfield's participation would need to be approved at a Town Meeting by the Town's legislative body through a Warrant Article. Tina will get an answer to his question.

3.5 Emergency Management – no report

3.6 Assessing Agent – Rob was here last Thursday, and they are preparing for Spring Work.

3.7 Transfer Station – A. Bryan Lamoreau, T.S. Manager advised the last 2 weeks have been the slowest in several years.

B. He expressed special thanks to Larry Nadeau for tractor operation instruction.

C. Bryan advised he would like to purchase a plow to facilitate snow removal as the bucket does not do a good job for that. Larry and Selena Nadeau offered to donate an 8 foot plow to the Transfer station and their offer was accepted with appreciation.

D. Almighty Waste did not pick up anything at all last week. Bryan feels it may be appropriate to seek bids for the services they provide. Kelly will work with him to develop a bid document.

3.8 Broadband Committee – A. Larry Bell, Chairman Advised a meeting was held with Casco Bay Advisors re: a franchise agreement from Consolidated Communications. A build out proposal is being requested from them before finalizing the agreement.

B. A proposal request for Charter Spectrum and others should result in multiple options.

C. A brief discussion regarding Franchise Fees was held.

D. Pat Soboleski, Senior Center Director, expressed appreciation for the efforts of Larry and Joline Bell to provide instruction on computer usage for the Seniors.

3.9 Other Town Committees - Pat Soboleski, Senior Center Director, advised a list of seniors (over 70) who would like the Covid vaccine shots is being developed in cooperation with the Richmond Senior Center for the purpose of establishing a clinic for both centers, possibly in late February or early March.

4.0 Agenda Adjustments

4.1 Budget Committee Suggestions – See 6.1

5.0 Scheduled Business

5.1 Meadows Golf Course - Donation to Food Bank and Fuel Fund – Randall Anderson, via Zoom, advised his restaurant has conducted a fundraiser for the Litchfield Food Bank and Litchfield

Fuel Fund. Diners over two weekends were given a ticket to be placed in the basket for either fund and \$1 from each dinner was donated to the appropriate fund. He will provide checks to the Town Office on Tuesday. He was thanked for his efforts.

5.2 Road Budget Finances for 2021 – Toby Jutras, Chairman, Road Advisory Comm. advised the Committee was planning out road projects for the season and is requesting guidance from the Select Board. He requested review of the proposed strategies offered a year ago and offered to again provide copies. While some figures may have changed slightly, before putting the time in to update them, he is inviting comments and direction. The Board agreed to review them and be prepared to discuss them at the next meeting on Feb. 8.

5.3 RFP for Demolition R02-016 – A review of the modified bid proposal was completed. A motion to authorize the Deputy Town Manager to issue the Request for Proposals immediately upon the property being vacated was made by Mark Russell, seconded by Gary Parker and voted RL Yes, MR Yes and GP Yes.

5.4 Schedule Personnel Policy Workshop – Kelly has researched wages, benefits and insurance and prepared a spreadsheet of costs. Electronic copies will be provided to the Board before the Workshop scheduled for Feb. 11, 2021 at 1:30 PM. This will be followed by a Workshop with the Budget Committee regarding their suggestions (see 6.1)

6.0 Unscheduled Business

6.1 Budget Committee Suggestions – A set of suggestions have been e-mailed to the Select Board for discussion and consideration. A workshop on Feb. 11 will include some discussion before the next Board meeting.

9.0 Warrants

9.1 Town Warrant #14 A motion to approve Town Warrant #14 for \$223,256.90 which includes payment of the County Tax of \$159,212.00 was made by Rayna Leibowitz, seconded by Gary Parker and voted RL Yes, MR Yes and GP Yes.

9.2 Town Payroll #14 A motion to approve Town Payroll #14 for \$21,911.29 was made by Rayna Leibowitz, seconded by Gary Parker and voted RL Yes, MR Yes and GP Yes.

12.0 Future Agenda Item

- 12.1 Feedback on Selectman's Handbook
- 12.2 R02-016, 2787 Hallowell Road
- 12.3 R02-017, 2783 Hallowell Road
- 12.4 Opening Woodbury Pond Park for Ice Fishing Access
- 12.5 Bid Review and approval for Transfer Station
- 12.6 Animal Shelter Contract
- 12.7 Budget Committee Suggestions
- 12.8 Road Projects budget

13.0 Adjournment at 8:15 PM.

Respectfully Submitted By

Rayna Leibowitz