

Town of Litchfield
Select Board
July 12, 2021
Meeting Minutes

1.0 Convened at 6:30 PM; Pledge to Flag; Selectmen: Gary Parker, Chairman, Rayna Leibowitz, Clarence Gowell III (identified as Rick Gowell in these minutes); **Staff:** Kelly Weissenfels, Town Manager; Michael Sherman, Fire Chief; Larry Nadeau, Road Comm.; Road Advisory Committee Members: Toby Jutras, Chm., and Tamas Szepsy; Tom Wood, Budget Comm and Broadband Comm. Via Zoom; Larry Bell, Chm., Broadband Comm. and member of the Budget Comm. Via Zoom; Terry Averill, Woodbury Pond Dam Keeper.

2.0 Minutes of June 28, 2021 Meeting submitted for final approval. A motion to approve the minutes with one typo corrected was made by Rayna Leibowitz, seconded by Rick Gowell and voted 3 – 0.

3.0 Reports and Correspondence:

3.1 Town Manager: A. Kelly advised he received a copy of Richmond’s letter stating they do not support the unlimited access of alewives above the Gardiner dams. The Board requested a copy of this letter.

B. Kelly reported Kennebec Savings Bank is considering handling the roads loan similar to a construction loan for the first year at the same interest rate. This would allow incremental draw down(s) as needed, thus lowering the interest and principle payments for the first year.

C. The Budget Committee Chairman, Tom Woods, has talked with Kelly and suggested having a specific person (not town office staff who already have specific duties) to handle the monitoring and record keeping related to the grants the town receives. The costs for this could be deducted from the Grant. Tom has offered to do it and will bill the town for 1 hour a week, regardless of the time required, as a community service. The person doing it should have knowledge and experience with federal grants and requirements of the Government Accounting Standards Board, which he has.

D. Recreation Committee – Kelly is working with Tiffany and the Committee to draw up a charter to more clearly define the roles of the director and committee members. The draft will be brought to the Board.

E. A request has been received to have lines painted on the tennis court for Pickle ball. There was no objection.

F. Kelly has approved the creation of a ‘Go Fund ME’ page for contributions for repairs to the Woodbury Pond Dam. \$345 has been received so far.

3.2 Code Enforcement Officer/Plumbing Inspector – Steve is absent tonight. The hearing scheduled for 2787 Hollowell Rd was postponed to ensure the occupants can attend to make their case. The date identified in the meeting is August 9, but corrected after that meeting to July 19 at 1:00 PM. The delay was allowed by the judge as the defendant’s attorney had been unable to reach his client. He has since made contact. An effort will be made by Kelly to obtain a Quitclaim from the owner which might hasten the process. The Town is allowed to secure the property and file a record of it with the Kennebec County Registry of Deeds in Augusta. A request has been made to have an officer of the law accompany the person boarding up the structure.

3.3 Road Commissioner – A. Larry reported they are continuing to do ditching on the

Wentzell Road.

B. Two of three lengths of culvert for the Dead River Road project have been delivered. The last piece is expected this week.

3.4 Fire & Rescue – A. Chief Mike Sherman reported the fire calls for June were 9; 2 accidents, 1 odor identification, 1 branch on a power line, 1 mutual aid to Richmond, 1 lock-out and 1 water rescue. The First Responders had 30 calls and responded to 11 of them.

B. The Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus has been ordered and is expected to be delivered in mid-August.

C. The Tire vendor discussion with the Road Commissioner has not been held yet. There was encouragement to ensure the vendor is insured for emergency vehicle services.

3.5 Emergency Management – No report

3.6 Assessing Agent – No report

3.7 Transfer Station – A. Kelly reported for Bryan that bush-hogging the mound is being done. Some perimeter branches need to be cut back as well.

B. The question has been asked about using some of the infrastructure finding coming to the town to cover the attendants' building.

C. There was additional discussion about securing the services of a grant-writer. Rayna knows of a person who does it and she will check with him regarding his interest.

3.8 Broadband Committee – A. Larry Bell, Chairman, via Zoom, advised Axiom has responded to the follow-up questions directed to them.

B. The Committee would like some dates to be identified by the Board to meet in Executive Session with the finalists. Some dates were provided and Larry will confirm which is accepted.

C. Spectrum has not yet filed their responses as of this meeting (but Larry later reported they did soon after and their meeting was set up as well).

D. The Town of China's Broadband Committee held a public meeting via Zoom which 4 members of the Litchfield Broadband Committee listened in on. Many towns are planning a November vote on bonds and Larry suggested Litchfield should accelerate our process to get ahead to line up contractors. Larry advised a few customers in China are asking for very high speeds.

E. A Community Foundation report is planned by the end of the week.

3.9 Other Town Committees – Budget Committee – Tom Wood, Chairman, advised the Committee is not meeting in July but will resume their regular schedule in August.

4.0 Agenda Adjustments

4.1 Meeting with County Sheriff to discuss 2787 Hollowell Road - See 6.1

4.2 Discussion re: Pledge of Allegiance at Committee meetings – See 6.2

4.3 Policy discussion re: charitable contributions and solicitations and endorsements -See 6.3

5.0 Scheduled Business

5.1 CEO Contract Approval – Tabled in the absence of the CEO.

5.2 Rines Rubbish Removal – concerns/infractions – Mr Rines had not responded to the letter sent to him and is not present at this meeting. Another letter will be sent.

5.3 Dead River Bridge Bid Package – Larry advised if the bid can go out immediately, we might be able to get the work done this year, but he doesn't think it will be done this fall as most contractors have scheduled their projects for this construction season, but starting now will get us at the head of the list for next spring. The bid package was reviewed. A motion to authorize distribution of

the bid request was made by Rayna Leibowitz, seconded by Rick Gowell and voted 3 – 0.

5.4 Road Bond Issue Authorization – Discussion was held and some additional information was requested. A motion to authorize the Town Manager and Chairman of the Select Board to sign documents authorizing general obligation bonds for road work and matching grant usage was made by Rayna Leibowitz, seconded by Rick Gowell and voted 3 – 0.

5.5 Animal Shelter Contract Review/Approval - The current proposed contract was reviewed and a motion to approve the contract was made by Rayna Leibowitz, seconded by Rick Gowell and voted 3 – 0.

5.6 Demolition Bid Review/Approval – This will be held until authority to issue it is obtained.

5.7 Schedule Executive Session to review Broadband Bid with bidder’s Representatives. The dates of July 20 and July 26 at 1:00 PM were offered for 1.5 hours and if Spectrum submits their information and can schedule a meeting to follow Axiom, that would be helpful.

5.8 Woodbury Pond Dam Phase 1 Proposal (Updated) Authorize Acceptance – Tabled as no additional information was available.

5.9 Woodbury Pond Park Revenue History- That Park was supposed to be self-sustaining but is currently losing about \$600 a week and is many thousands of dollars in the red. It was suggested the Recreation Director needs to assess the situation including the history of usage and develop a business plan to be submitted to the Select Board. Information regarding what other beaches are charging also needs to be gathered. Tom Wood reminded the Board that Article 59 passed at the June 12 Town Meeting requires this and other “enterprise accounts” develop a plan of work. The Budget Committee offered their assistance with this effort. Immediate responses to the shortfall include reducing hours of operation (an 8:00 AM opening may be unrealistic) and increasing advertising so usage increases.

5.10 Quitclaim, Completion of Repurchase Agreement – Gene and Tamara Marsella, Map U13, Lot 002 – A motion to approve and sign the quit claim deed for this property since the repurchase agreement was successfully completed was made by Rayna Leibowitz, seconded by Rick Gowell and voted 3 – 0.

6.0 Unscheduled Business

6.1 Meeting with County Sheriff to discuss 2787 Hallowell Road -Kelly was asked to set this up as a workshop so the Board could participate.

6.2 Discussion re: Pledge of Allegiance at Committee meetings – The request to open committee meetings with the Pledge of Allegiance will be forwarded to the Chairman of all Committees.

4.3 Policy discussion re: charitable contributions and solicitations and endorsements -Discussion of the proposed policy was held. A motion to adopt the policy was made by Rayna Leibowitz but died in the absence of a second. The question: does a town employee have the right to put his/her message on Town owned property will be researched by the Town Manager.

8.0 Warrants

8.1 Town Warrant #1 for \$516,049.30, including \$306,328.42 for RSU#4 and a payment on the new Fire Truck. A motion to approve the Warrant # 1 was made by Rayna Leibowitz, seconded by Rick Gowell and voted 3 – 0.

8.2 Town Payroll #26 for \$ 23,717.12 A motion to approve the Payroll # 1 was made by Rayna Leibowitz, seconded by Rick Gowell and voted 3 – 0.

9.0 Selectmen/Public Discussion/Communication

9.1 A motion to elect Gary Parker as Chairman of the Select Board for FY 2022 was made by Rayna Leibowitz, seconded by Rick Gowell and voted 2 – 0 – 1 abstained (Parker).

12.0 Future Agenda Items

- 12.1 Feedback on Selectman’s Handbook
- 12.2 R02, Lot 016, 2787 Hallowell Rd
- 12.3 R02, Lot 017, 2783 Hallowell Rd.
- 12.4 CEO Contract Approval
- 12.5 Rines Rubbish Removal – concerns/infractions
- 12.6 Demolition Bid Review/Approval
- 12.7 Woodbury Pond Dam Phase 1 Proposal (Updated) Authorize Acceptance
- 12.8 Charitable, political, endorsement Policy

13.0 Adjournment at 8:40 PM

Respectfully Submitted By

Rayna Leibowitz