

Town of Litchfield  
Select Board  
March 14, 2022  
Meeting Minutes

**1.0 Convened at 6:30 PM; Pledge to Flag; Selectmen:** 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.; John Upham, Acting Transfer Station Manager; Tiffany Caton, Rec. Director; Road Advisory Committee Members: Toby Jutras, Chm., Tamas Szepsy and Richard Lane; Larry Bell, Chm., and Joline Ball, Broadband Comm. and Tom Wood, Budget Comm and Broadband Comm. via Zoom.

**2.0 Minutes of Feb. 28, 2022 Meeting submitted for final approval.** A motion to approve the minutes with correction of typos was made by Rayna Leibowitz, seconded by Rick Gowell and voted 2- 0.

**3.0 Reports and Correspondence:**

3.1 Town Manager: A. Route 197, MTA overpass, The MTA will be closing Route 197 from April 4 to Oct. 28 to replace the structure. The MTA will coordinate with the schools for rerouting school buses.

B. Additional work is being done regarding the Clerk of the Works position and candidates may be sought soon.

C. The Facebook page has received postings regarding the local animal shelter. This will be discussed as part of the budget review.

3.2 Code Enforcement Officer/Plumbing Inspector – A. Steve is absent and Kelly advised he plans to provide the Permit Log at the next meeting.

B. There are no updates regarding the properties being monitored for illegal junkyards.

3.3 Road Commissioner – A. Larry advised he is losing an employee this week, so he is now seeking two employees.

B. Small storms have required responses. We have plenty of sand/salt.

C. A truck is currently down for maintenance.

3.4 Fire & Rescue – A. A new member has joined the department as a First Responder. The roster is now at 23.

B. The service has been completed on the RTV and it is ready for response when needed.

C. A quote for a back up repeater for the radios has been received from RCM at \$11,114.32 with a \$6,461.00 option to allow digital communications with Kennebec County Sheriff's Office (which is the only digital user in the immediate area). More organizations are expected to go digital but the FCC deadline to do so has been pushed ahead for over a decade and there is no definite end in sight. If ordered now, expect a delay in delivery. If ordered later, expect a substantial increase in the price.

D. Fire calls for February – 7 including 3 motor vehicle calls on the Maine Turnpike, 1 chimney fire, 1 shed fire and 2 power lines down. The EMS received 39 calls and they responded to 5 of them (Gardiner Rescue handled the rest).

3.5 Emergency Management – No report on EMA but the Director advised he supports the repeater purchase.

3.6 Assessing Agent – The Assessing Agent, Ellery Bane was here last week and prepared an abatement request.

3.7 Transfer Station – A written report was provided and is part of the record.

3.8 Broadband Committee – A. Larry Bell reported the franchise agreement with Charter Spectrum should be finalized soon.

B. He also advised Tom Wood connected the Gardiner Library with Redzone for co-branding efforts. Tom gave Selectman Gowell credit for the idea.

3.9 Other Town Committees – Road Advisory Committee (RAC): Toby Jutras, Chairman, advised the RAC held an early meeting to address the issues and presented an update on the following areas:

1. Addressing Paving Quality Concerns for Fall of 2021 – Wentzel, Libby & Stevenstown Roads – To be examined after snow melts and frost recedes; expect a proposal from All States for remediation and execute the remedy.

2. Paving Bid Recommendation – All States Construction

3. Risk Identified for Construction Capacity – Staffing levels reduced at Public Works may have an impact on what can be accomplished to support planned projects.

4. Revised Proposal to 2022 Construction Sequencing – Postpone Dennis Hill Rd project one season because of the Route 126 Babcock Bridge replacement closing Route 126 for the season which may result in heavy traffic over Dennis Hill this year. Projects recommended for 2022 – Dead River Rd bridge replacement and improvements to .74 mile; Lunts Hill Rd, 2 miles of reconstruction with grinding of existing road, supplementing base as required and new base pavement and wearing surface; Whippoorwill Rd, 1.73 mi of reconstruction including ditching and culverts, grinding of existing road, supplementing as needed and new base pavement and wearing surface.

The following projects are now on the 2023 list – Dennis Hill Rd, Rt 126 to Pine Tree Rd and Ferrin Rd, bridge to Ridley Lane.

A motion to accept the revised road project list was made by Rayna Leibowitz, seconded by Rick Gowell and voted 2 – 0.

Conservation Comm., Christine Parker advised the Brown Tail Moth (BTM) Workshop has been postponed to March 26. She advised we should be watching the Legislature for funding for towns for BTM management. Tom Wood, Budget Comm. Chair, advised the Gardiner Library has purchased a pole pruner that can be checked out like a book for BTM management at lower levels.

Budget Committee, Tom Wood, Chm., advised they are looking at the following items:

A. RSU#4 budget information. Tom suggested inviting the Supt. or school committee member(s) to inform the Select Board regarding the school budget.

B. County budget information that Kelly is getting

C. The impacts of RSU#4 moving forward on building a school addition

D. The impact of the town having the Libby Tozier School building returned to the Town.

Tom suggested the Town should consider a committee to address the Libby Tozier School matter.

#### **4.0 Scheduled Business**

4.1 Award of Boston Post Cane to Eugene Thompson – Anne Thompson, daughter, was present to receive the Cane on behalf of her father who is 99 years old. Select Person Rayna Leibowitz provided some historical background regarding the Boston Post Cane and the cane presented tonight which is a substitute provided by Muriel Bonin when the original Boston Post Cane was found missing. It is to be awarded to the Town's oldest citizen and returned to the town for awarding again

when that recipient passes. Anne said her Dad was very pleased to be awarded the Cane and she was proud to accept it on his behalf.

4.2 Woodbury Pond Park way forward – presentation of options – Tiffany Caton and Joline Bell have compiled usage data and developed some options for the Park. They include increasing the price of a season pass from \$30 to \$40 for residents and \$50 to \$60 for non residents; keeping the daily admission fees at \$3 for adults and \$2 for kids as approved late last season and offering a venue for events including weddings that has a sliding cost scale based on expected numbers of attendees. Signage needs to be improved, Brown Tail Moth management needs to be done, some repainting and cleaning is required as well as beautification efforts. Joline can rally some volunteers to start the process, residents could be invited to share surplus perennial plants so annual flowers won't be needed and other efforts could be identified.

4.3 Award Paving Bid – 7:30 pm – In accordance with the recommendation of the Road Advisory Committee, a motion to award the bid for Paving to All States Construction Company was made by Rayna Leibowitz, seconded by Rick Gowell and voted 2 - 0.

4.4 Open/Award bids for Road Grinding– 7:30 pm – Only one bid was received and that from All States Construction for \$6,453.30 for 2640 feet X 22 feet, fine grade and compacted. A motion to award the bid for Road Grinding to All States Construction Company was made by Rayna Leibowitz, seconded by Rick Gowell and voted 2 - 0.

4.5 Open/Award bids for 1998 International plow truck – Two bids were received:  
\$2,222.00 from Doug Averill, Litchfield, Me  
\$2,155.55 from Lercy Tillson, Embden, Me

A motion to accept the bid from Doug Averill was made by Rayna Leibowitz, seconded by Rick Gowell and voted 2 - 0.

4.6 Property Tax Abatement – U19-008, R. Taylor, \$716.39 A double wide was sold off this property and the Assessing Agent was not informed. An abatement of \$716.39 was recommended by the Assessing Agent. A motion to approve this abatement of \$716.39 was made by Rayna Leibowitz, seconded by Rick Gowell and voted 2 - 0.

4.7 Budget review – Public Works, Town Office, Transfer Station, Animal Control, (revisit previous as required) Larry Nadeau, Road Comm. and Public Works Director did a quick walk-through of the proposed budget and it will be discussed as needed at the next meeting when the Select Board will be at full strength, Kelly Weissenfels addressed the Administration, General Government, Employee Benefits, Town Office Operations, Office Equipment and Animal Control proposed budgets. Several people attended with questions, comments and concerns regarding using a (State licensed) local animal shelter instead of the Kennebec Valley Animal Shelter in Augusta. Representatives and advocates of the Kennebec Valley Animal Shelter in Augusta were authorized to address the Board by a motion by Rayna Leibowitz, seconded by Rick Gowell and so voted. They strongly encouraged consideration of reestablishing the contract with that facility because of the additional services it can provide to residents of Litchfield and their animals. John Upham reviewed the Transfer Station proposed budget.

## **6.0 Appointments/Resignations**

6.1 Budget Committee – Resignation (R. Harmon) A motion to accept the letter of resignation from Mr. Harmon with our thanks for his service was made by Rayna Leibowitz, seconded by Rick Gowell and voted 2 – 0.

## **7.0 Warrants**

7.1 Town Warrant #22 RSU4 March 2022 - \$306,328.42 A motion to approve the Warrant# 22 for the March RSU#4 payment in the amount of \$306,328.42 was made by Rayna Leibowitz, seconded by Rick Gowell and voted 2-0.

7.2 Town Warrant #23 - \$82,067.05 A motion to approve the Warrant# 23 in the amount of \$82,067.05 was made by Rayna Leibowitz, seconded by Rick Gowell and voted 2-0.

7.2 Town Payroll #18 \$26,229.22 A motion to approve the Payroll # 18 in the amount of \$26,229.22 was made by Rayna Leibowitz, seconded by Rick Gowell and voted 2-0.

## **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 Budget Committee Suggestions

9.5 Safety Flaggers

9.6 Purchase of Jersey Barriers from MTA

9.7 Recommendations of Rec. Comm Re: Woodbury Pond Park

## **13.0 Adjournment at 9:50 PM**

Respectfully Submitted By

Rayna Leibowitz