

Town of Litchfield
Select Board
May 11, 2020
Meeting Minutes

1.0 Convened at 6:30 PM; Pledge to Flag; Selectmen: Gary Parker, Chairman, Rayna Leibowitz, Mark Russell attending by Zoom; **Staff:** Trudy Lamoreau, Town Manager; Kelly Weissenfels, Town Office Staff; Larry Nadeau, Road Commissioner attending by Zoom; Larry Bell, Broadband Comm, attending by Zoom. Tom Wood and David Blocher, Budget Comm. Attending by Zoom. Twenty-two people were signed on via Zoom.

The Chairman, Gary Parker, advised the meeting is being available to the community via interactive telecommunications which allows video and audio participation to those having camera capability using instructions available via the Internet. Voting by the Select Board will be done by roll call and will be recorded in the minutes using their initials and their vote.

2.0 Minutes of April 27, 2020 Meeting submitted for final approval. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Rayna Leibowitz, seconded by Gary Parker and voted: RL Yes, MR Yes, GP Yes. Minutes for an Emergency Select Board meeting held May 6, 2020 tabled to the next meeting.

3.0 Reports and Correspondence:

3.1 Town Manager: A. The Town Office staff is still doing business through the mail drop box. This practice will continue. It has been busy.

B. The Town office continues to be closed to the public and Department heads.

C. The budget looks pretty good and may be close to final.

D. The absolute final date for Town Report material was discussed, assuming the local voting and Town Meeting will be occurring on July 14 and 18, respectfully. See 6.3 below.

E. The revenues side of the budget has a lot of uncertainty because of potential adjustments of Revenue Sharing and Sales Tax. MDOT has announced likely cuts of funding to towns for roads.

3.2 Code Enforcement Officer/Plumbing Inspector – The Town Manager advised building and plumbing permit applications have been busy, again working through the drop box.

3.3 Road Commissioner – A. Larry reported they expect to be ditching Lunts Hill Road for another week or two.

B. He opened the Gustin Road to traffic last week. He expects to grade it Tuesday, 5/12/20.

C. There is trash to be picked up down over the bank.

3.4 Fire & Rescue – A. The Chief is out of state for a family emergency. Deputy Chiefs Kevin Buckmore and Ricky Gowell are in charge in his absence.

B. The FD responded to a fire on the little island just north of the bridge/causeway on Buker Road. A pontoon boat in the area ferried firefighters over to it and they extinguished the blaze.

C. The FD is doing fundraising for the purchase of a boat of their own, but there are low expectations of a successful fundraising effort this year with the cancellation of the Litchfield Fair and the Car Show.

D. The number of Rescue calls continue to be low, in general.

3.5 Emergency Management – No report.

3.6 Assessing Agent – The Assessing Agent is expected to be in the office this Thursday

(5/14/2020).

3.7 Transfer Station – A. The Town Manager reported they were busy last weekend. Collected \$482 in fees for various disposals.

B. There was discussion about the topics identified by the visit to the Transfer Station last week. See 5.2 below.

C. Brush and leaves removal is being discussed with a vendor.

D. A call was made to the tire guy and he came the next day to remove them.

E. Bryan has forwarded a letter to the Budget Committee advising them of potential changes to the Transfer Station proposed budget.

3.8 Other Town Committees: Mass Gathering Ordinance Committee: Chairman, Gary Parker advised the proposed draft Ordinance has received final vote of the Committee and it is submitted for review by the Select Board.. The process to get it on the Town Warrant will require a Public Hearing. The schedule for this will be discussed at the May 26 Select Board meeting.

Broadband Committee: Larry Bell, Chairman, advised the application was submitted to ConnectMe as planned. Because so much information had been gathered by the Committee, the cost of the consultant's services was reduced to \$875.00. The committee was praised for their efforts. The Committee is exchanging information with Monmouth and Winthrop. Both seem interested in collaboration for regional efforts. Larry advised the July 14 voting includes a referendum vote for funds to strengthen broadband improvements.

4.0 Agenda Adjustments

4.1 Sodalite Submissions

4.2 Fire Department Personnel policy

4.3 Schedules for the Calendar

5.0 Scheduled Business

5.1 Recreation Department Update – Tiffany Caton – Tiffany advised she is talking with surrounding towns about potential sports activities, especially the baseball season. American Legion Baseball season is canceled. A decision about Litchfield sports will be made by June 1. They will be working on the dugouts on the middle field using user fees to purchase materials that aren't donated and volunteer labor.

Whether Woodbury Pond Park will open is still being considered. They will follow state guidelines if they open, and attendants will need clear info about their requirements and expectations. The decision will not be made immediately.

5.2 Transfer Station Discussion - The Select Board visited the Transfer Station to identify issues, problems and discuss possible solutions. Several issues need addressing. A full list is included in the minutes of the May 6, 2020 meeting. Another option that has been identified for the recyclable containers is to leave them where they are and put a travel lane at the north end to facilitate customers putting items in, leaving the other end accessible for the trucks to load and unload the containers. This would require less site work including cutting trees and eliminate the need to reverse the plastics compacting capability. This option would likely require an attendant to remain at the north end of the containers to monitor depositions so a building or trailer here might be appropriate. A suggestion was made to check with David Kamilla regarding a site map for the Transfer Station. A member of the Budget Committee suggested getting as many cost estimates as possible or providing a target budget to see what can be done.

5.3 Date for Transfer Station Manger Evaluation – A motion to set the date and time for Thursday, May 21 at 1:00 PM for a Special Select Board meeting in Executive Session was made by Mark Russell, seconded by Rayna Leibowitz and voted: RL yes, MR Yes and GP yes.

5.4 R02, Lot 016, 2787 Hallowell Rd – No movement

5.5 R02, Lot 017, 2783 Hallowell Rd – No movement

5.6 Present Mass Gathering Ordinance – Gary Parker, Chairman of the Mass Gathering Ordinance Committee provided a copy of the Ordinance Draft for review. It will be discussed at the next meeting on 5/26.

1. 5.7 Budget Review – Garage Account, Fuel Tanks issue, Larry Nadeau, Road Commissioner, reported that if the tanks are inspected and are OK, they can go another 10 years. He can probably have a date for the inspection within 3 days. The above ground tanks that have previously been discussed are no longer available. The Finance Authority of Maine (FAME) may have a grant or loan program that can assist with replacement costs if the present tanks do not pass inspection. There was discussion regarding staffing levels and wage levels. Research had been done regarding area towns' wage levels, however, the competition for laborers is with area construction companies which need personnel.

RSU#4 is struggling with 2 new positions. If they are not included in the \$127,000 amount on the Town's increase projected, they will bring that increase to \$200,000. RSU#4 is discussing using their share of CARES funds to pay for these the first year, but we know they will then be added to our cost for the following year in addition to the contractual increases already established. The increase in the additional local share of education costs (\$200,000) will result in a half mil increase for Litchfield taxpayers. Dave Blocher, Budget Comm. advised the proposed budget has a 3% increase, but their revenues are very, very uncertain.

6.0 Unscheduled Business

6.1 Sodalite Submissions – There have been many comments received regarding an article in the May Sodalite that was perceived to be demeaning. The Town Manager was directed to discuss the issue with department heads and encourage them to keep editorialization and personal opinions out of their articles.

6.2 Fire Department Personnel policy – There has been no report of the Transfer Station incident that has prompted considerable discussion. There seems to be no clear path of process for informing the Select Board of incidents, but some additional research needs to be done.

6.3 Schedules for the Calendar – Discussion was held to identify deadlines for the Town Report to get it to the printer for distribution before Town Meeting. The Town Manager advised a new printer is being used and turnaround time is very good, perhaps within 48 hours. She would like to have the Town Report sent to the printer no later than June 17. Final action on the contents by the Select Board should be completed at the May 26 meeting. The Budget Committee may change their meeting to June 10 for their final review with plans to get it to the Town Office on June 11. The Budget Committee has offered to provide some draft boilerplate language for review by the Select Board.

There was discussion about the date for a required Public Hearing for the draft Mass Gathering Ordinance if the decision is made by the Select Board to offer it for the July 18 Town Meeting. This will be discussed further at the May 26 meeting.

8.0 Appointments and Resignations

8.1 Patricia Soboleski – Ballot Clerk – A motion to appoint Patricia Soboleski as a Ballot Clerk was made by Rayna Leibowitz, seconded by Gary Parker and voted: RL yes, MR yes and GP yes.

9.0 Warrants

9.1 Town Voucher # 23 for \$326,545.30 A motion to approve was made by Rayna Leibowitz, seconded by Gary Parker and voted: RL yes, MR yes and GP yes.

9.2 Town Payroll #23 for \$19,975.96 A motion to approve was made by Rayna Leibowitz, seconded by Gary Parker and voted: RL yes, MR yes and GP yes.

10.0 Other Business

10.1 The Town Manager advised two Town Office staff members have decided to not work, given the COVID-19 situation. The remaining staff are working to do as much as possible.

11.0 Selectmen/Public Discussion/Communication

12.0 Future Agenda Item

12.1 Feedback on Selectman’s Handbook

12.2 Town office Renovations Update

12.3 Cemetery Signs

12.4 Update Regarding new Dispatching Protocols

12.5 Approval of Minutes of 5/6/2020

12.5 Mass Gathering Ordinance Review and Public Hearing Schedule

13.0 Adjournment 9:25 PM

Respectfully Submitted By

Rayna Leibowitz