

Town of Litchfield
Select Board
July 25, 2022
Meeting Minutes

1.0 Convened at 6:30 PM; Pledge to Flag; Selectmen: Gary Parker, Chairman, Scott Weeks; **Staff:** Kelly Weissenfels, Town Manager; Michael Sherman, Fire Chief; Larry Nadeau, Road Comm.; John Upham, Transfer Station Manager; Tom Wood, Budget Comm and Broadband Comm.; Pat Soboleski, Senior Director; Larry Bell, Chm., Broadband Comm. and Budget Comm via Zoom. Selectman Clarence Gowell was absent.

2.0 Minutes of July 11, 2022 Meeting submitted for final approval. A motion to approve the minutes as amended was made by Scott Weeks, seconded by Gary Parker, and voted 2- 0.

Minutes of July 6, 2022 Emergency Meeting submitted for final approval. A motion to approve the minutes as amended was made by Scott Weeks, seconded by Gary Parker, and voted 2- 0.

4.1 Public Hearing for Special Town Meeting Warrant Items – 6:30 PM - The Draft Warrant was reviewed. The time was changed from 6:30 to 7:00 PM on Monday August 8. The location was changed from the Town Office to the Central Fire Station to accommodate more people without having to move from the Town Office.

Article 1 was not changed.

Article 2 regarding the SPECIAL PROJECT (80-6) entitled CENTRAL FIRE STATION PAVING was modified to have an end by date of June 30, 2023, at which time any unexpended funds will lapse back into the UNASSIGNED FUND (G10-100-00). Included in this project are changing the contour of the rear yard at the Central Fire Station to support better water drainage, adding more gravel and paving it as well as grinding the pavement in front of the front doors to allow new pavement to be the correct height and extending the pavement beyond the existing pavement, going closer to the road. These costs are expected to \$25,000 for Public Works materials and \$90,000 for paving (and grinding in front of the doors). Because of the volatility of pricing in these times, a 10% contingency was added to result in a total of \$126,500. Tom Wood, Budget Comm. Chairman, advised the Committee would offer its recommendation at the Special Town Meeting. The Town Manager was directed to bring clear information regarding the Unassigned Fund balance to that meeting.

Article 4 was changed to Article 3 since there was no Article 3. This amends the Litchfield Fire/Rescue Department Ordinance, Article 200, regarding Cooperation with Other Communities. There was little discussion and no opposition to this proposal.

Article 5 changed to Article 4. This amends the Litchfield Fire/Rescue Department Ordinance, Article 400, regarding the number of Fire/Rescue Department members. There was little discussion and no opposition to this proposal.

Article 6 was changed to Article 5. This amends the Litchfield Fire/Rescue Department Ordinance, by adding Article 900, to allow the recovery of funds to cover emergency response costs for motor vehicle accidents, as most insurance policies cover such costs. Chief Sherman introduced Mr David Hewins of Central Maine Cost Recovery (CMCR), a firm that contracts with towns to recover emergency response costs. This firm contracts with nearly 70 towns and cities in Maine and last year recovered some \$650,000 for them. He has a staff of 8 employees, trained in this work. If Litchfield

Fire/ Rescue Department contracts with his company, the Chief would prescreen the report of a response by First Responders and/or the Fire Department to determine the likelihood of collections. If it appears recovery of expenses is likely, the claim is then sent to CMCR for processing. Each claim has a processing charge of \$25.00. If funds are recovered, the \$25.00 plus 20% of the money recovered is retained by CMCR and the balance forwarded to the Town of Litchfield. Discussion held included ensuring the funds this effort generated would be specifically directed to benefit the maintenance and purchase of equipment and/or vehicles for the Fire/Rescue Department, as that is the stated intent of the Fire Chief. The outcome was to have a clear intent in the Ordinance that the funds received were to benefit the Fire/Rescue Department's Equipment Reserve Fund by stipulating that recovered funds would be deposited into the Unassigned Fund and transferred into the Fire/Rescue Department's Equipment Reserve Account by an Article on the Town Warrant at the Annual Town Meeting.

Article 7 changed to Article 6: Seeks adoption of M.R.S.A Title 30-A, §2527, Alternative procedure to allow residents who are willing to be write-in candidates for elected office to declare their candidacy to the Town Clerk on or before the 7th day prior to the election. The names of those candidates would then be posted in each voting booth. Several questions were raised and additional information will be gathered, which may result in changes to the proposed Article or withdrawal of the proposal.

The Public Hearing was recessed at 8:00 to allow the Select Board to finalize changes to the proposed Warrant. At 8:15, The Select Board returned to the Public Hearing having approved the changes incorporated into these minutes on a motion by Scott Weeks, seconded by Gary Parker and voted 2 – 0.

3.0 Reports and Correspondence:

3.1 Town Manager: A. Kelly advised Redzone hosted a Launch Meeting on July 18 at Doolin's. They are in the installation phase now. Redzone presented a check for \$500 to Dian White, Co-Director for the Litchfield Food Bank. It was gratefully accepted.

B. RSU#4 has issued their annual RFP for fuel oil and diesel. The Town of Litchfield is included in the eligibility to purchase at the bid price.

C. A resident requested information regarding the RSU#4 Building proposal. As a result, RSU#4 requested a meeting with representatives of the Select Board, Budget Committee and Town Manager. That meeting is scheduled for Thursday at 10:00 AM.

D. An effort is being made to meet compliance requirements for the Workers Comp. Safety Program by Sept. 1.

3.2 Code Enforcement Officer/Plumbing Inspector – A. See 4.2 below.

3.3 Road Commissioner – A. The Public Works crew was at the Transfer Station last week, pouring a slab for one of the recycling containers.

B. A second portion of the slab was poured today. One more to be done.

C. The bridge on Dead River Road is coming along. Guard rails are going in Tuesday. It will be hot topped and then it can be reopened.

D. The crew was down a man (temporarily) last week and he is expected back on Wednesday.

E. Work on Whippoorwill Road was interrupted as they had no one for safety flagging.

F. They will be working on Tuesday to remove the pavement over the culvert/bridge at the causeway on Whippoorwill Rd.. Because of fiber-optic cables buried in the area, AT&T representative must be present when the work is being done.

3.4 Fire & Rescue – A. Chief Sherman thanked those present for their input and recommendations on the proposed Ordinance changes.

B. The Fire Dept. is transitioning to battery powered equipment. Two spotlights have been received to facilitate nighttime response. These will be especially helpful for creating safer conditions for nighttime traffic control.

3.5 Emergency Management – No report.

3.6 Assessing Agent – Mr. Bane will next be here on August 18 to prepare tax information for consideration by the Select Board for the Tax Commitment. It will be reviewed at a workshop on August 25.

3.7 Transfer Station – A. John Upham advised 2179 stickers have been issued. 4307 items have been removed from the swap Shop. The Public Works Crew was thanked for their work on the cement pads. Citizens are cooperating with the new (temporary) traffic pattern. Fewer residents are using the Station in really hot weather. Recyclable containers are being emptied as needed. The paper container needs a new door as the existing one is rusting out along the bottom. Expected cost, \$1,000. The bush hog needs to be replaced as it is not working well and the tools and knowledge to keep it repaired is not there. A replacement has been found for about \$1,900. The status of the budget will be explored.

3.8 Broadband Committee – A. Larry Bell, Chairman, advised installations are under way. The committee's purpose has been successfully achieved. See 4.5

3.9 Other Town Committees – Senior Center – Pat Soboleski, Director, advised they were warmly welcomed to the Central Fire Station for use by the Senior Steppers. The Music Groups have several concerts this month starting with one on Wednesday morning for the Richmond Seniors and the 24th for a concert at Woodbury Pond Park with donations being collected for the Litchfield Food Bank Building Fund.

Libby Tozier Transition Committee – Tom Wood advised information is being gathered. RSU#4 provided maintenance costs for the past 4 years. Records from the 2012-2013 needs assessment have been provided by a resident.

Other: Tom Wood advised information regarding the Redzone Internet availability and the RSU#4 construction bond proposal cost is being provided by him to residents who visit the transfer Station.

4.0 Scheduled Business

4.1 Public Hearing for Special Town meeting Warrant Items - See previous information

4.2 Remediation/implementation of state plumbing permit fee payment processing – Plumbing permit fees collected have 25% which must be forwarded to the State of Maine and the remaining 75% stays in Litchfield's Unassigned Fund. Litchfield is in arrears for completing its payment of fees to the State. Fees before 1/1/2017 have been waived by the State of Maine. Fees for 2021 have been paid as required. The amount of the arrears needs to be determined and paid. The Plumbing Inspector stated that this should not take much longer to accomplish, as he has been working on it. A process needs to be established to ensure these fees are forwarded on a timely basis.

4.3 Woodbury Pond Dam periodic maintenance cost estimates (sluice gate metal guard) – Status report - Kelly advised quotes requested were for the guard (which IS needed) to be made of Stainless Steel and the cost would be \$2300. Another alternative (at significantly less cost) would be cold rolled steel. Calderwood Engineering recommended galvanized. An installer would also need to be

found. The status of sheet pile installation was provided by Kelly. The contractor is waiting for delivery which is expected to be in mid-August. A review of bids for the tree removal project identified the low bid was by a bidder from Winthrop. The 5% local bidder consideration was not applicable because of the difference in the amount of the bids.

4.4 Clerk of the Works – approve additional funds for remainder of the season – Discussion was held regarding the focus of the Clerk’s activities for the rest of the season to be monitoring the paving projects and documenting the quantities of gravel used. A motion to approve an additional \$5,000 from the Roads and Bridges Bond Fund was made by Scott Weeks, seconded by Gary Parker and voted 2 – 0.

4.5 Ad Hoc Broadband Committee task completion and committee disbandment – A motion to disband the Broadband Committee with gratitude from the Select Board, the Town Manager and the community was made by Scott Weeks, seconded by Gary Parker and voted 2 – 0.

4.6 LD-290 - Property Tax Freeze for seniors – Kelly advised this law allows eligible senior citizens to freeze taxes at the previous year’s level. The State of Maine will reimburse towns for the difference between that amount and what the new tax amount is. Applications must be completed by Dec. 1, eligibility will be determined to state by 11/1 and reimbursed by Dec. 1 of the tax year. Eligibility requires applicants to be a resident for 10 years and receive a Homestead Exemption for 10 years. The cash lag of reimbursement is a concern. The suggestion was made for an adjustment on the final tax payment so minimal disruption of cash flow is the result.

4.7 Quitclaim R03-104B, 48 Ridley Lane, Michael Cunningham – Repurchase Agreement completed. A motion to approve signing the Quitclaim Deed was made by Gary Parker, seconded by Scott Weeks and voted 2 – 0.

4.8 Quitclaim R14-001-9, 77 Norris Point Rd, Ronald Evans - Repurchase Agreement completed. A motion to approve signing the Quitclaim Deed was made by Scott Weeks seconded by Gary Parker, and voted 2 – 0.

4.9 Quitclaim U28-058A, 485 Peacepipe Dr, Jeremy Nelsen - Repurchase Agreement completed. A motion to approve signing the Quitclaim Deed was made by Scott Weeks seconded by Gary Parker, and voted 2 – 0.

4.10 Quitclaim U24-021, 17 Pelican Dr, Stacy Vannah – This is to correct a lien that was not discharged when it was paid previously. A motion to approve signing the Quitclaim Deed was made by Scott Weeks seconded by Gary Parker, and voted 2 – 0.

6.0 Appointments/Resignations

6.1 Appointment – Historic Preservation Commission, Ed Avis – A motion to appoint Ed Avis to the Historic Preservation Commission and sign the appropriate form outside a regular meeting was made by Gary Parker, seconded by Scott Weeks and voted 2 – 0.

7.0 Warrants

7.1 Town Warrant # 3 for \$223,521.51, A motion to approve the Warrant #3 for \$223,521.51 was made by Scott Weeks, seconded by Gary Parker and voted 2-0. This amount included \$132,624.45 for Chip Seal and \$38,566 for gravel.

7.2 Town Payroll # 1 for \$29,684.01 A motion to approve the Payroll #1 for \$29,684.01 was made by Scott Weeks, seconded by Gary Parker and voted 2-0.

8.0 Selectmen/Public Discussion/Communications

8.1 The suggestion was made to honor the work of the Broadband Committee by recommending

them for the Spirit of America Award.

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 Selling Town Property
- 9.6 Determining the source of road maintenance funding
- 9.7 Schedule assessing visits to Town owned properties

13.0 Adjournment at 10.00 PM

Respectfully Submitted By

Rayna Leibowitz