

Town of Litchfield
Select Board
August 8, 2022
Meeting Minutes

1.0 Convened at 6:30 PM; Pledge to Flag; Selectmen: Gary Parker, Chairman, Clarence Gowell III (identified as Rick Gowell in these minutes), Scott Weeks; **Staff:** Kelly Weissenfels, Town Manager; Steve Ochmanski, Code Enforcement Officer; Michael Sherman, Fire Chief; Larry Nadeau, Road Comm.; John Upham, Transfer Station Manager; Richard Lane, Road Advisory Committee Member; Tom Wood, Chairman, Larry Bell, and Ellery Barrett, Budget Comm.; Pat Soboleski, Senior Director; Tina Gowell, LFD/Rescue Chief , and several Fire Department Officers and members.

2.0 Minutes of July 25, 2022, Meeting submitted for approval were tabled to the next meeting.

The meeting of the Select Board was recessed to allow for convening the Special Town Meeting at 7:00 PM.

The Town Manager read the notice for the Special Town Meeting and **Article 1. To choose a Moderator to preside at said meeting.** He invited nominations for the position of Moderator. Earl Lamoreau was nominated by Clover Craig, seconded by Lindsay Nelsen. Three written votes were cast, all for Earl Lamoreau. He was sworn in by Town Manager Kelly Weissenfels, and proceeded to conduct the remainder of the meeting after receiving verbal concurrence for using the Maine Moderators Manual as guidance.

Article 2. was read and a motion was made by Helen Sherman, seconded by Tom Wood to approve appropriating \$126,500 from the Unassigned Fund Balance (G10-100-00) for a SPECIAL PROJECT (80-6) entitled CENTRAL FIRE STATION REPAIR AND PAVING (83-6-045) with a lapse date of June 30, 2023. Discussion included identification of the balance of the Unassigned Fund to be \$1.8 Million plus \$319, 294 which was surplus at the close of the 2023 fiscal year (6/30/23). The paving that exists was installed originally in 2002 and was not extended far enough in front of the building. The repair work including changing the contour of the rear yard to improve water runoff management which will be done by Public Works employees. The vote was in favor by a large majority and only two opposing votes.

Article 3. was read addressing a change to Article 200, Section 202 of the Litchfield Fire/Rescue Department Ordinance, Cooperation with Other Communities. A motion to approve this article was made by Ellery Barrett, seconded by Jay Danforth and the vote was unanimous in favor with no opposing votes.

Article 4. was read addressing a change to Article 400, Section 403 of the Litchfield Fire/Rescue Department Ordinance, Number of Members. A motion to approve this article was made by Tom Wood, seconded by Reginald Poirior, and the vote was unanimous in favor with no opposing votes.

Article 5. was read addressing a change to Article 900, Section 906 of the Litchfield Fire/Rescue Department Ordinance, Restitution. A statement from the minutes of the Budget Committee was read stating that committee recommends passage. A motion to approve this article was made by Jerry

Label seconded by Jan Danforth, and the vote was in favor by a large majority and only one opposing vote.

A motion to adjourn the Special Town Meeting was made by Alton Stevens, seconded by Tom Wood and the meeting was adjourned at 7:55 PM.

The meeting of the Select Board resumed at 8:05 PM.

3.0 Reports and Correspondence:

3.1 Town Manager: A. Kelly Weissenfels, advised the two trees at the Woodbury Pond Dam have been removed. The contractor which will be doing the sheet pile installation is currently waiting for delivery of the metal sheets.

B. Kelly has talked with David Larrabee regarding the metal fencing for the Memorial Lot. The condition of the material David has offered needs to be assessed.

C. A list of town-acquired properties has been referred to the Conservation Commission for review and comment before offering them for sale by bid.

D. A concern was expressed that paint chips coming off Litchfield Academy onto the playground at Libby Tozier School might contain lead in the paint. Paint samples were tested and found to NOT contain lead. Also, an inspection of the playground found no paint chips were evident on it.

E. An agreement with the State has been reached regarding the payments due to the State for Plumbing Permits since 2017. The payments will be made in two installments, one from this fiscal year and one from FY 25.

F. The Town Manager is talking with Chadd Hill regarding some renovations needed for the Town Office. An estimate of cost has been requested.

G. There is a Library Trustee position open for the Gardiner Public Library. Christine Parker has expressed interest in being appointed.

3.2 Code Enforcement Officer/Plumbing Inspector – A. The Building Permit Log was distributed by Steve Ochmanski, CEO, for the month of July. \$650 was collected in permit fees. The question was asked about where these funds were credited and the Town Manager advised they go into the General Fund and cannot be used without appropriate authorization.

B. Jeff Craig was introduced to the Select Board. He is requesting to be appointed to the Planning Board.

3.3 Road Commissioner – A. One of the new employees has been absent without a call in for 8 work days now. A new employee is expected to start next Monday. Another employee is being sought.

B. The Whippoorwill Road will be graded next week. Gravel will be added when staffing levels and availability of flaggers allows.

3.4 Fire & Rescue – A. Chief Sherman provided the Select Board with the July statistics: 19 fire calls and 41 EMS calls with Litchfield's First Responders covering 9 of them.

B. Burn permits are now available on line from the forestry folks for 9 to midnight, 7 days a week.

3.5 Emergency Management – No report

3.6 Assessing Agent – Ellery Bane will be in the office on 8/18 to develop possible options for the tax commitment workshop to be held 8/25.

3.7 Transfer Station – A. John Upham, Transfer Station Manager, provided the following report: 2199 stickers have been issued; 4571 items have been collected from the Swap Shop since it opened for the year; both bulky containers were emptied; business has been steady; Public Works has

poured two of the three pads preparing to move the 3 recyclable containers to the new location; the American Legion donated 2 gallons of light gray paint and a quart of darker gray for the trim to paint the bottle barn when it gets cooler; Transfer station staff have been searching for a bush hog for the tractor at a reasonable price.

3.9 Other Town Committees – Senior Center, Pat Soboleski, Senior Director, advised they had a concert in Winter Harbor which was very successful. They are going to perform in Windsor for a Senior Group and provide a concert on 8/24 at the Woodbury Pond Park as a fundraiser for the Litchfield Food Bank Building Fund. They will also be performing at Litchfield Fair.

Budget Committee – Tom Wood, Chairman, advised the Committee is changing its start time for meetings to 6:00 PM starting with their next meeting.

4.0 Scheduled Business

4.1 Land Use Building Permit Fee Review – Steve Ochmanski advised there have been no changes in the permit fees since the Land Use Ordinance was enacted in 2004. He provided the Board with a table showing the fees being charged by several area towns. The Select Board has the authority to change the fee structure and he requested review and consideration of it to create a more reasonable experience. Currently, an 8 X 8 shed has the same permit cost as a single-family home, regardless of the size of it. The purposes of the Building Permit were explained as ensuring compliance with Land Use and Shoreland Zoning requirements and alerting the Assessing Agent that changes should be assessed to reflect appropriate valuations for property taxes. This topic will go onto the Future Agenda Items list (9.0).

4.2 Bid Policy Review – The Town Manager provided text from meetings in 2011 regarding the bid policy established. There was review and discussion of a) raising the minimum amount requiring bids, b) advertising bid requests on the website and Facebook, c) adding non-discrimination language to the policy, and d) adding special consideration will be given if a local vendor submits a bid within 5% of the lowest bid received. The Budget Committee was invited to review and comment on the proposed changes.

4.3 RSU#4 Absentee Ballots – The Town Manager advised RSU#4 was responsible for providing ballots for absentee voting and in person voting. The Town Office ran out of absentee ballots and could not get more until the following day as there was no one in the Superintendent's office who could provide them when the Town Manager went to get more. They were not available until the next day. Several potential voters (10-12) had to be turned away and urged to come back the next day. The Town Manager has sent a letter to the Supt. Regarding this problem. There was discussion and the Town Manager was directed to determine the window for filing an objection if the vote is to be challenged.

4.4 Sodalite Insert – Senior Tax Stabilization Information – The Town Manager advised there will be an application and instructions inserted in the September Sodalite. The procedure for the Town Office to process these applications needs to be developed.

4.5 Request for Budget Committee assistance with TRIO Account Structure Optimization – The Select Board invited the Budget Committee to assist with this effort.

4.6 Set Date for Town Property Walk Around – Discussed the sites to review on initial effort and set a date of Sept. 12, 7:00 – 9:00 AM. Designated sites for this date are Memorial Lot, Fire Station, Town Office, Town Garage, Community Park, Transfer Station and Veterans Athletic Fields.

4.7 Ambulance Contract Approval – Tabled to the next meeting to give the Board and Fire Chief time to review it.

5.0 Unscheduled Business

- 5.1 Tax Commitment Workshop - scheduled for August 25.
- 5.2 Request for Report from Recreation Department – The Select Board requested a monthly report during the active recreation season.

6.0 Appointments/Resignations

- 6.1 Planning Board Appointment – Jeff Craig – A motion to appoint Jeff Craig to the Planning Board was made by Rick Gowell, seconded by Scott Weeks and voted 3 – 0.
- 6.2 Litchfield Academy Trustee – Dian White - A motion to appoint Dian White to the Litchfield Academy Trustees was made by Rick Gowell, seconded by Scott Weeks and voted 3 – 0.

7.0 Warrants

- 7.1 Town Warrant #4 for \$362,268.21. A motion to approve the Warrant # 4 for \$362,268.21 was made by Scott Weeks, seconded by and voted 3-0. This amount includes payment for the new bridge for the Dead River Road.
- 7.2 RSU#4 Warrant #5 for \$348,777.42. A motion to approve the RSU#4 Warrant # 5 for \$348,777.42 was made by Rick Gowell, seconded by Scott Weeks and voted 2 -1.
- 7.3 Town Payroll # 2 for \$29,721.23. A motion to approve the Payroll # 2 for \$29,721.23 was made by Rick Gowell, seconded by Scott Weeks and voted 3-0.

8.0 Selectmen/Public Discussion/Communication

- 8.1 There was discussion about the Selectman’s Handbook and a request for a list of Acronyms to be included

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 Selling Town Property
- 9.5 Building Permit Fee Consideration
- 9.6 Ambulance Contract
- 9.7 Central Fire Station
- 9.8 Appointment of Gardiner Library Trustee

13.0 Adjournment at 9:45 PM

Respectfully Submitted By

Rayna Leibowitz