

## **MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 29, 2018 BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING**

MEMBER'S PRESENT: Board Members Bruno Federico, Michael Houghton, Joe Lovejoy and Town Administrator Paul Deschaine.

At 7:36 pm Chairman Federico opened the general meeting of the Board of Selectmen.

### **MINUTES**

Mr. Houghton made a motion to approve the minutes of 1/22/18. Mr. Lovejoy seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

### **TREASURER'S REPORT**

Town Treasurer Deb Bronson stated that the General Fund balance is \$10,411,115.08

### **OLD BUSINESS**

Mr. Deschaine reported that he hasn't received the TIF District report back from ADG with the corrections. The Board decided to wait until they receive the report before approving it.

### **BUILDING INSPECTION / CODE ENFORCEMENT**

Code Enforcement Officer / Building Inspector Mark Morong reported that things have been slowing down so they have been tying up loose ends and getting caught up. Two homes with solar panels are the only new items. He reported on several active zoning violations. One has been ongoing since Nov.11. Discussion centered on steps that have been and will be taken.

### **ASSESSING**

Town Assessor Andrea Lewy presented an abatement for 151 Portsmouth Ave., from \$542,200 to \$329,400. Mr. Lovejoy motioned to approve the requested adjustment on the valuation of the Perlowski Property at 151 Portsmouth Ave. Mr. Houghton seconded the motion which passed unanimously. Ms. Lewy presented another abatement, Betty Lane, a four lot subdivision. She explained this was a result of changing the neighborhood code for two of the lots. Refund would be \$493.23 for one and \$521.71 on the other. Mr. Lovejoy motioned to grant the abatement request Mr. Reiss has made with respect to Lots 37 and 135 on Betty Lane. Mr. Federico seconded the motion which passed unanimously. Lastly, regarding 6 Haywick Drive, a mistake was made on the valuation of the land requiring an adjustment. It was explained to the owner that the entire bill must be paid and any credits would be issued at a later time. As a result, the owner is requesting interest totaling approximately \$160 be waived along with any possible penalties. Mr. Federico made a motion that the request for abatement of interest be denied for Rollins Hill Stratham 1, LLC. Mr. Houghton seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Ms. Lewy presented three requests for Veteran's credits, all of which meet the criteria. Mr. Houghton made a motion to approve the Veteran's credits for Donald Bolduc, John O'Brien and Matthew Orcutt for 2018. Mr. Federico seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Ms. Lewy requested the Board approve the Timber Tax Warrant for the Michael Daley subdivision. Mr. Lovejoy motioned to approve the request. Mr. Houghton seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Ms. Lewy reviewed the 2018 Tax Map Maintenance Contract from Cartographic Associates, Inc. and requested the Board approve renewal. Mr. Federico motioned to approve the request. Mr. Lovejoy seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Lastly, Ms. Lewy said that we received the 2017 ratio today. It is 88.5%. The State said the Town's median home sale price is \$352,500. Mr. Deschaine noted that these were just statistical abstract measurements of accuracy, coefficient and dispersion and price related differentials. Ms. Lewy reported that the numbers are tight, which is a good thing.

## HIGHWAY

Public Works Director Colin Lavery noted that there has been an increase in street signs being stolen.

Mr. Lavery reported that they will begin the bathroom renovation project at the Municipal Center. The main reason for the project is that the plumbing underneath the building has rotted. The budget for the project was approved last year. Mr. Lavery reviewed the details of the project.

Mr. Lavery requested time off around March 16<sup>th</sup> for paternity leave. The request was granted.

## MEETINGS

Mr. Federico reviewed the upcoming and past meetings for the week.

## RESERVATIONS

Collie Rescue League of New England is requesting the fee be waived for their annual meeting on June 16, 2018 being held at the Front Pavilion because they are a 501c3. Mr. Lovejoy motioned to grant the request. Mr. Houghton seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Chris Carbonneau requested the fee be waived for his use of the Front Pavilion on August 12, 2018, because he is a member of the Fire Dept. Mr. Lovejoy motioned to grant the request. Mr. Houghton seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

## OLD BUSINESS

Colleen Lake submitted to the banner company a rendition of Olympian Eric Flaim's skating style. The goal is to have it displayed in the Town Center before this year's Olympics begin.

The Board signed Mr. Deschaine's letter of support for Senate Bill 450.

Mr. Deschaine told the abutter that is interested in the Doe Run Lane tax deeded property that the Board was open to a discussion regarding it. He promised he would not put a house on the land.

Mr. Deschaine asked Mr. Federico how he wanted to begin the Smyk Committee. A tentative meeting was set for Thursday, February 8, 2018 at 6:30pm. Mr. Lovejoy and Mr. Houghton expressed interest in attending the walk through of the building and grounds. A tentative date of Saturday, February 10<sup>th</sup> was set for the walk through. Mr. Houghton suggested giving the committee a list of decision points to consider. Mr. Federico suggested the committee accept the offer of the Attorney General's office to come before the committee to answer questions.

Mr. Deschaine presented the draft of the Public Hearing Notice on the Warrant and briefly reviewed each item. On item 10 regarding the skate park, he asked the Board if they wanted the initial request as a separate warrant article. The Board thought that would be beneficial noting the skate park group could make a presentation at town meeting for the second amount. Mr. Houghton and Mr. Lovejoy were concerned that the amount requested wasn't enough to cover a civil engineer or get a complete site plan which is essential, especially to address the possible drainage issues at the proposed site. Mr. Deschaine noted that there are no dollar amounts on the Public Hearing. The Board was supportive of the project and discussed the potentiality of providing additional funding to cover site evaluation.

The Board discussed the possibility of offering Keno in Stratham. Mr. Deschaine sent a letter to the qualifying establishments with a response deadline of today. One establishment expressed interest. In light of the fact that it is a source of funding kindergarten, the Board felt there was no reason not to support it. Some surrounding towns have decided not to put it as a warrant article. The Board felt the town should vote on it.

In separate discussions, Mr. Deschaine and Mr. Houghton spoke with Chair of the Heritage Commission Nate Merrill who expressed dismay that the old town hall article was taken out of the CIP and placed as a separate warrant article. Mr. Houghton allayed his fears, assuring him that the Board continued to be supportive of their efforts, but felt it should be a warrant article because the CIP was meant to be for ongoing capital requirements from an operational point of view for the town. This preservation easement was separate and distinct. Mr. Deschaine discussed the numbers with Mr. Merrill, explaining that, the monies requested at town meeting would depend on the purchase price of the building. The Board felt strongly that the town should vote on it. Discussion continued about how other conservation and preservation easements were funded.

Mr. Houghton issued a challenge to the Board to reduce the CIP. Staggering the purchase of vehicles and leasing were talked about. Mr. Deschaine went into detail regarding financing and

municipal legalities. They agreed that tomorrow's Budget Advisory Committee meeting would be the place to delve into this matter further. Mr. Houghton wanted confirmation that wages wouldn't be a topic at the Budget meeting. Mr. Deschaine affirmed that typically they wouldn't be. Whether or not to distribute documents containing a new system regarding Police Dept. wages and other personal information to the Budget Committee was debated, as they would not be making the ultimate decision. Concern was expressed for distributing such personal and confidential materials. Finalizing the Operating Budget and the CIP should be the main objectives of the Committee. The Board will meet on Tuesday, February 6<sup>th</sup> to discuss wages.

The Safe Routes to Schools subcommittee received a grant, however, the amounts aren't clear. They are awaiting a third grant. Once they are notified of a decision on the third grant, we will do a public hearing to accept the funds. Mr. Houghton made a motion to authorize the Town Administrator to execute the Safe Routes to Schools grant upon clarification of the awarded amounts. Mr. Lovejoy seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

The Parks and Recreation Dept. is requesting a table at Town Meeting to distribute handouts about upcoming programs. Mr. Houghton motioned to allow the request. Mr. Lovejoy seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Mr. Lovejoy asked if they were doing evaluations this year as they have in the past. Mr. Lovejoy advocated reviewing the files to determine potential merit increases as opposed to giving a flat cost of living increase. He also wanted to make comparisons with other towns for individuals doing similar work so that adjustments could be made. There was discussion that COLA was somewhat merit based, as individuals not performing adequately would not receive it. The data comes from the Dept. of Labor so it is an accurate base for calculations.

Mr. Deschaine noted that the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) project would require another Public Hearing. There were changes made to it that would make it more competitive at the federal level. It's already been posted.

Mr. Houghton said that the Board owes Cantrece Forest a response regarding her question about IT. Mr. Deschaine is presenting options at the Budget meeting tomorrow.

At 10:15 pm Mr. Houghton made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Lovejoy seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Richard, Recording Secretary