

MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 8, 2018 BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING

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

At 7:38 pm Chairman Federico opened the general meeting of the Board of Selectmen.

MINUTES

Mr. Houghton made a motion to approve the 12/18/17 minutes. Mr. Federico seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Town Treasurer Deb Bronson reported that the current general fund balance was \$10,758,311.15.

PLANNING DEPT.

Town Planner Tavis Austin gave a summary of the Dec. 20th and Jan. 3rd Planning Board meetings, noting that the Jan. 3rd meeting was the first public hearing for the zoning amendments for the 2018 Warrant. Nine of the proposed warrant articles received Planning Board support. Review of Telecommunications amendments, i.e., cell tower regulations, have been continued to Jan. 17th. We are waiting for legal review prior to the meeting. Everything appears on track.

Mr. Austin is continuing to work with Director of Public Works Colin Lavery on road bonds in preparation for the spring.

The Master Plan RFP was sent out before the new year began. A Letter of Interest must be submitted before January 16th and there is a February deadline for proposals. The PCAC is moving forward with their grant proposal. Candidates were interviewed for the Land Use Assistant position. A non-public was requested for later in the evening.

POLICE DEPT.

Police Chief John Scippa asked the Board to accept the resignation of Police Officer Mike Oliveira. Mr. Lovejoy motioned to accept the resignation of Officer Oliveira effective January 3, 2018. Mr. Houghton seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Chief Scippa reported that, since the beginning of the year, the heating unit on second floor needed repairs, plumbers were needed to repair the bathroom (septic needs to be emptied), the electrical company came in to repair a number of issues. He also wants to repair the lighting on the sign in front of the building. The solar project will be beginning next week. It will not interfere with police operations.

HIGHWAY DEPT.

Public Works Director Colin Lavery reported cleanups from the winter storms were going well. However, they've used 665 tons of salt already. They typically average 1,000 – 1,300 tons a

year. Truck # 7 needed new fuel injectors, with a cost of \$2,900 and two plow wing hydraulic hoses costing \$600.

Mr. Lavery has noted an increase recently on the sand and salt being taken for residents' home use. He estimates 4 tractor trailer loads have been taken by residents. At 144 tons at \$54/ton with a cost of approximately \$7,776, he feels it is time to start tracking the output from a budgetary standpoint. He passed out a draft policy. He would also like to install a door to the garage to keep water out, to post the policy, to allow them to verify residency, etc. To keep track of the sand and salt, he devised a Material Tracking Sheet. Mr. Houghton offered that perhaps the increase in sand and salt is due to the extremely cold weather we've been having. He suggested they consider implementing a Public Works permit similar to the Transfer Station permit. Mr. Morong described Durham's policy for comparison. Mr. Houghton advised more discussion at a later date.

Mr. Lavery read the Mailbox Policy and described the changes he is proposing. Mr. Lovejoy made a motion to adopt the policy as outlined by Mr. Lavery. Mr. Houghton seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Lastly, Mr. Lavery proposed changes to the Transfer station brush policy. He will be requesting the purchase of equipment to assist, and make safer, loading the wood chipper. Typically, in the summer, they chip approximately 40 – 60 yards of wood chips, taking 9 – 12 hours a week. Additionally, they are budgeting for a part-time person during the peak hours in 2018. Mr. Houghton made a motion to implement the revised Stratham Transfer Station Brush Policy as presented. Mr. Lovejoy seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Granite posts were installed at the Municipal Center to replace the ones that broke. The current sign is being repaired. Mr. Lavery hopes to have it back in place before Town Meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

Keri Vivathana proposed to the Board a 7,500 square foot skate park done in one phase. Among the photos shown was an overview showing the closest occupied homes. She addressed the various concerns the Board had at a prior meeting. Noise level was investigated at other skate parks and found to have the same decibels as a playground. They talked to Mr. Lavery and Civil Engineer Bruce Scamman regarding drainage. Mr. Scamman made some suggestions regarding drainage at the site. Attention was directed to the cost breakdown. The quotes include labor and materials. Mr. Tallone reviewed the breakdown in detail. The total cost would be \$325,000 but they would be asking the residents for \$300,000 which is .25 /\$1,000 so, for a \$400,000 home that would be a onetime cost of \$100. Parks & Recreation Director Seth Hickey said it would be one of the least expensive parks to maintain. Ms. Vivathana said that a survey was done of 10 local communities with skate parks and none had any litigation issues and none had ordinances specific to a skate park. She emphasized that they want it to be beautiful; a place that everyone, not just skateboarders, would enjoy. Local business have offered support and donations. Mr. Houghton wanted to see more detail on the drainage and validation that the cost would be as proposed. Mr. Federico was adamant that the cost not exceed what they are asking for. Mr. Scamman speculated on the drainage issues, saying he felt their estimate of \$14,000 was in the ballpark, although he hasn't done a soil analysis. James Boos of Dover is building a

skate park too and offered their support and possible coordination of efforts. Mr. Federico said they will get the Budget Advisory Committee's recommendation. Mr. Deschaine said that depending on how it is structured, it could be part of the CIP, it could be a warrant article, it could be a petition warrant article, etc. February 6th is the deadline for a citizen's petition. Mr. Lovejoy advised the group to continue to plead their case to as many people on the Budget Advisory Committee as possible. He recognized the tremendous turnout in support of the project.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Lovejoy was approached by Seacoast Family Promise requesting to utilize the Decker barn for a fundraiser to take place on May 31st. Mr. Deschaine wanted it to be clear that whatever the Board discusses this evening, it is not reflective on the Seacoast Family Promise organization, which is a very worthwhile organization. The focus this evening is strictly on the use of the property. Mr. Austin discussed why, from a zoning perspective, the use of this property for this event is not clear cut. It is not commercial nor is it residential. Code Enforcement Officer/Building Inspector Mark Morong agreed, saying there is no zoning ordinance to cover events such as this. Chief Scippa thought this might be a good time to address a large gathering ordinance to protect the safety and welfare of the people, as there are many such gatherings in the town. References were made to the North Hampton Large Gathering Ordinance and the intention of what such an ordinance would be. Mr. Deschaine reported that Fire Chief Matt Larrabee's position is that the Decker barn is a place of assembly and must meet certain standards. Mr. Morong noted that the proposed gathering didn't meet the minimum number of people to be considered a place of assembly. Chief Scippa commented that a police detail has been scheduled. General discussions regarding instituting a Large Gathering ordinance have taken place. Mr. Austin asked if an ordinance could be put into place before May 31st. Discussions ensued regarding frequency of use and commercial vs residential use. A need for parameters was expressed. Mr. Federico was in favor of using the barn and establishing an ordinance. Chief Scippa offered to establish a committee to devise a large gathering ordinance. Mr. Morong will work with Chief Larrabee and identify any safety concerns for this event. Mr. Lovejoy made a motion to allow Seacoast Family Promise to conduct an event at the Decker property on May 31st as they have requested. Police and Fire Chiefs will determine the number and type of people to be on premise to ensure the life safety of the participants. Mr. Houghton seconded the motion which passed unanimously. Vice President of Seacoast Family Promise Board of Directors Judy George detailed last year's fundraiser and what they hope to do at this fundraiser. Mr. Lovejoy made a motion to form a committee to create an ordinance governing large gatherings in the town of Stratham. Mr. Houghton seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

At 9:48 pm Mr. Houghton made a motion to go into a non-public session to discuss a hiring decision. Mr. Lovejoy seconded the motion which passed unanimously. At 9:57 pm Mr. Houghton made a motion to come out of the non-public session and seal the minutes. Mr. Lovejoy seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Discussion continued around owners of structures, especially barns, who want to invest money in their buildings and have them be open to the public for gatherings and/or commercial ventures. There is a great deal of issues to be considered in those situations.

OLD BUSINESS continued

Names representing a cross section of the community were gathered into a list to serve on the Smyk Property Study Committee. Mr. Houghton made a motion to proceed with the selection process based on the results of the study committee analysis and authorize the Town Assistant to make contact and proceed down the list until we reach number 46 to fill nine positions. Mr. Lovejoy seconded the motion which passed unanimously. The committee is expected to meet through February. What information the committee will need, as well as when to view the property, was discussed. Mr. Federico volunteered to be the Selectmen representative on the Committee.

Regarding the Bartlett Cushman House, Mr. Deschaine spoke with Colleen Lake who withdrew her most recent proposal and requested her original Brick & Barn proposal be considered. The proposals were compared. All had a flat fee and a term of one year. Mr. Federico made a motion to accept Ms. Lake's original proposal. Although he had reservations, in the interest of moving this forward, Mr. Lovejoy seconded the motion which passed unanimously. The agreement was signed.

ADMINISTRATION

Mr. Deschaine gave the Board the Departmental submittals for budget requests. He felt that this would be the proper time to bring forth an issue he has been concerned with. Upon reflection of our practices, he feels that communication with the residents, as well as internal communication, needs to be improved. He continued to say that he had asked Accounting Supervisor Valerie Kemp to detail the HR duties she has been assigned which are beyond what she was hired to do. From Mr. Deschaine's perspective, HR duties have been steadily increasing. In order to improve our practices, he proposed establishing an Assistant Town Administrator position to focus on HR elements and communication.

Mr. Houghton asked about the IT person. Mr. Deschaine said that one person has been identified as a possible replacement. He has also been drafting a RFP and has included it in his budget.

Mr. Lovejoy informed the group that at tomorrow's Energy Commission meeting, they expect to have a discussion on installing solar panels on the ground behind the Bartlett Cushman house. He questioned whether that would be something they would want to do or not. Mr. Houghton said that he would be opposed, as that is not why the Town purchased the property. Until they have a defined use for the house, he would not support installing solar panels there.

Mr. Lovejoy asked if the elementary school had considered installing solar panels. Mr. Deschaine said it was suggested at one point, but nothing ever came of it.

In a previous meeting, Colleen Lake suggested displaying an Olympic banner. Mr. Houghton made a motion to authorize moving forward with the banner of the Olympian Eric Flaim to be posted in Town Center with the cost to be allocated to the Town Center budget. Mr. Lovejoy seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Mr. Deschaine requested Karen Richard be added to the cell phone reimbursement list. Mr. Lovejoy motioned to approve the request. Mr. Federico seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Ribbon cutting ceremonies will be at 110 Grill on Jan. 11th and at Kennebunk Savings on Jan. 17th. Mr. Houghton and Mr. Federico will attend the 110 Grill and Mr. Lovejoy will attend the Kennebunk Savings ribbon cuttings.

Mr. Federico asked about Keno. Mr. Deschaine said he will be giving Mr. Morong a letter to hand deliver to the restaurants to determine interest.

Mr. Houghton mentioned that the Heritage Commission meeting would be looking for the Board's support of a preservation easement for the old town hall. They will be asking for \$200,000 of Town money. The owner has a plan for the property and needs the money for renovations. If he doesn't get the money, he will most likely demolish the building. The Heritage Commission has \$90,000 in their account. Possible ways of appropriating the money was discussed, such as appropriating \$100,000 this year and nothing next year. It wouldn't be an appropriation to buy the old town hall; it would be appropriating the money to the Heritage Preservation Fund.

At 11:00pm Mr. Houghton made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Lovejoy seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Richard
Recording Secretary