

MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 6, 2018 BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING

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

At 6:35 pm Mr. Houghton opened the public meeting of the Board of Selectmen, then immediately made a motion to go into a non-public session to discuss a matter that might affect the reputation of another, not on the Board, and potential litigation and an issue of personnel. Mr. Lovejoy seconded the motion which passed unanimously. At 7:31 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.

At 7:34 pm Mr. Houghton reconvened the public meeting of the Board of Selectmen.

MINUTES

Mr. Lovejoy made a motion to approve the minutes of July 30, 2018 as corrected. Mr. Houghton seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

TREASURER

Mr. Deschaine stated that the General Fund balance is \$9,308,691.83.

NEW BUSINESS

Public Works Director Colin Laverty read a letter from a Hills at Crockett Farms subdivision resident, Doug Vandenburg, commending the entire Highway Department on their excellent work. Mr. Laverty expressed appreciation that his crew's hard work was recognized. The Selectmen expressed their gratitude for the department's efforts as well.

Keri Vivathana, on behalf of Cornerstone School, came before the Board requesting use of Stratham Hill Park for cross country practices and a Cross Country meet on September 18th from 3:30 to 5:30 pm. Mr. Lovejoy made a motion to approve the use of the park for the use requested on September 18th and the practices pending submission of the Large Assembly documentation as required for a crowd of this size and to waive the fee. Mr. Houghton seconded the motion which passed unanimously. Mr. Lovejoy amended his motion to include coordination with the Parks & Recreation, Fire and Police Depts and EMS. Mr. Houghton seconded the motion as amended.

Pedestrian and Cyclist Advocacy Committee Co-Chair Melissa Gahr discussed the need of signs warning drivers of bicyclists and pedestrians. The committee had previously discussed with Mr. Laverty the best locations for the signs. Ms. Gahr and the Board discussed the law regarding bicyclists and motorists and whether it was clear what the signs were trying to convey. Mr. Laverty said the cost of the signs and poles would be \$2,375. The PCAC and Mr. Laverty have scheduled a meeting for Nov. 8th to review projects and budgets for the coming year. There are no funds currently; therefore Ms. Gahr suggested finalizing the project next year. Town Planner Tavis Austin said that there was money in a special fund that he thought could be used for the project. It would be evidence that the Safe Routes to School project is moving forward. How to communicate what the signs mean was discussed. The discussion digressed to repainting the

crosswalk on Rt 108, which is a state maintained road. To summarize regarding the signs, Mr. Houghton suggested the PCAC develop a communication and rollout plan and identify a source of funding. Regarding the crosswalk discussion, it was noted that Exeter's crosswalks are clearly marked and ours are not. Mr. Deschaine said this is because the Exeter side is designated as an Urban Compact District. Where Rt 108 goes through Exeter, the state has turned over maintenance of that portion of the road to Exeter; the State maintains our portion of Rt 108. State Representative Pat Abrami has been trying to get NH DOT to paint the lines under the overpass for quite some time. NH DOT is currently short-staffed. Mr. Lavery said he would reach out to NH DOT to inquire if our Highway Dept. could re-stripe the crosswalk.

Ms. Kersten asked for re-appointment of the Pedestrian and Cyclist Advocacy Committee with the addition of two new members. Ms. Gahr stated the committee's mission and reviewed their accomplishments. She emphasized that they want to be involved in the town's master plan steering committee. Mr. Lovejoy made a motion to renew the Pedestrian and Cyclist Advocacy Committee for one more year. Mr. Houghton seconded the motion which passed unanimously. The Selectmen congratulated them on their many accomplishments thus far and voiced support for the group's endeavors.

Mr. Deschaine wanted to make everyone aware for planning purposes that the Selectmen hoped to start the budget process earlier this year, perhaps in October.

PLANNING

Town Planner Tavis Austin reported that the Rockingham Planning Commission's 10 year plan update is coming due. He plans to make various groups aware of the deadline so they may submit their projects to him and he will incorporate them into Stratham's submission.

Mr. Austin received a 79E application for 151 Portsmouth Ave (old Town Hall). The Planning Dept. will review the project, and it will simultaneously go to Assessing Dept. for their review regarding taxes. Mr. Austin is requesting the Board authorize Mr. Deschaine to advertise the public hearing once Planning and Assessing deem the application complete. The applications purpose is to make sure the 79E is consistent with what the Planning Board approved and is recorded and on file. Town Meeting voted to appropriate funds for the preservation easement. The Preservation Easement was largely contingent on the 79E being granted. The 79E tax relief went towards the purchase price for the permanent easement; it is the incentive for the preservation easement. Mr. Houghton made a motion to authorize Mr. Deschaine to set the public hearing when appropriate. Mr. Lovejoy seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Mr. Austin passed along the Planning Board's endorsement of the PCAC, noting their impressive work thus far. He reported the Town has received Notice to Proceed with The Safe Routes to Schools travel plan grant and the non-infrastructure grant. The end date for the grant has been extended until Oct. 2019. The Safe Routes To School Task Force will meet on August 15th. The Task Force, representatives of RPC and TEC will meet to observe traffic on Sept 10 at CMS and Sept 14 at SMS. Mr. Austin believes public support would be beneficial in putting the travel plan in place. It would then be relayed to the Master Plan Steering Committee.

Mr. Austin asked for clarification on what his dashboard should contain. The Board said it should be a financial snapshot of where you are from budgetary perspective, including operating and payroll items. They reviewed the details and will meet at another time to discuss further.

Mr. Austin gave brief updates on various projects: he's anticipating bonding info for 15-17 Union Rd; the performance agreement and bonding info for revised Rollins Hill Phase III has been received but is not ready for presentation. Mr. Austin is requesting the Board release the bond that was put in place by Mark Perlowski of Persimmon Homes for the required extension of electric utilities under Wiggin Way. The road has been repaved; Public Works Director Colin Lavery sees no issues, therefore Mr. Austin is seeking Board approval to release \$5,000 plus any accrued interest to close out this cash bond item. Mr. Houghton made a motion to release the \$5,000 cash bond for 14-16 Wiggin Way to Persimmon Homes. Mr. Lovejoy seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Mr. Austin made the Board aware that as of July 1st, the MS4 Permit became active. He attends monthly Seacoast Stormwater Coalition and subcommittee meetings. The Coalition is looking to coordinate their efforts, so that everyone is submitting information to the EPA the same way. The project is almost complete. He will put together a complete Stratham Notice of Intent and send it to the Board for review and approval.

Mr. Austin said he would accept the duties of the Code Enforcement Officer but is requesting a timely modification to his job description. Mr. Austin is also requesting that the Board authorize a provisional six month probationary extension for the Land Use Administrative Assistant. Mr. Deschaine reported that the CEO/BI open position closed today, August 6th and has approximately 20 applicants. He and Mr. Austin will rate the candidates and whittle down the list. Mr. Lovejoy made a motion to extend the probationary period for another six months for the Land Use Administrative Assistant position. Mr. Houghton seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Mr. Austin reported that the Master Plan Steering Committee put together basic elements, including open spaces, conservation land, and historic resources. They generally meet on the second Monday of the month; the meetings are open to the public. The Selectmen expressed interest in attending.

Mr. Austin was disheartened that the survey regarding the Rt 108 project hasn't gone out yet. Mr. Lovejoy agreed, saying that it was on the agenda for the Rt 108 Corridor Study Committee meeting on Thursday. Weston & Sampson are proceeding per the contract.

OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Deschaine reviewed the updates Georgiana Law made to 45 and 61 Frying Pan Lane barns in the attempt to have her Discretionary Preservation Easement renewed. At 9:17pm Mr. Houghton made a motion to reopen the public hearing for the Discretionary Preservation Easement request for 45 and 61 Frying Pan Lane. Mr. Lovejoy seconded the motion which passed unanimously. Mr. Houghton felt strongly that the Heritage Commission should be involved in these preservation easements going forward. Mr. Houghton said that 45 Frying Pan Lane meets the requirements, but 61 does not. There was discussion that 61 Frying Pan Lane's

exterior needs to be cleaned up and enhanced in accordance with the premise of 79D. Mr. Houghton called for clear expectations that need to be achieved in order for this grant to be in effect. Mr. Lovejoy made a motion to renew for an additional 10 years 79D treatment of 45 Frying Pan Lane. Mr. Houghton seconded the motion which passed unanimously. Mr. Houghton made a motion to continue the public hearing for 61 Frying Pan Lane until August 20, 2018 and have Town staff work with the applicant and the Heritage Commission to define improvement initiatives with a timetable. Mr. Lovejoy seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Tate & Foss real estate agent Colleen Lake requested discussion of the Bartlett-Cushman House be postponed as they do not have the detailed report as the Selectmen requested.

Regarding recruitment of the new Town Administrator, the ad has been prepared and is only awaiting a salary range. MRI provided current competitive salary ranges. Salary range was discussed. Mr. Houghton made a motion to move forward with posting of the ad for a Town Administrator at a salary level up to \$105,000. Mr. Lovejoy seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

ADMINISTRATION

Mr. Deschaine asked the Board if they would want to purchase title insurance for the preservation easement at the old town hall. The Town has purchased the insurance for other preservation easements, but their monetary value was significantly higher than the old town hall. The risks and benefits were debated. Because the risks were extremely low, it was decided not to purchase the title insurance.

Mr. Deschaine received an Intent to Cut on Al Carbonneau's property, off of Ruby Jewel Lane. His reason for cutting is that the trees are shading his greenhouses.

Tyler Blood Eagle Scout requested the Selectmen purchase a brick for \$85 to support his project of commemorating Stratham Fair volunteers. Mr. Houghton made a motion to authorize payment for a brick for the Eagle Scout project for Tyler Blood. Mr. Lovejoy seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Mr. Deschaine made the Board aware that the deadline to submit issues to the Municipal Association for their potential support is fast approaching. The Board had no issues at this time.

Transitioning to the new Town Administrator was next on the agenda. The board expressed concern regarding the timing of Mr. Deschaine's retirement, noting it is during budget season and just prior to Town Meeting. In order to have a seamless transition, the Board hopes that Mr. Deschaine will be available in some capacity to guide the new administrator through the first quarter, if needed. It was agreed to have a contingency planning meeting on Tuesday, August 28th.

Mr. Deschaine noticed a discrepancy with the Chisholm Farm easement deeds. He presented the corrected deeds to the Board for their signature. The road deed was also re-executed.

Mr. Houghton made some changes to his Task List. As discussed at the last Board meeting, he'd like a selectman to be the "champion" of a task, and a town staff member to be the "owner". They reviewed some of the tasks and possible owners.

Mr. Houghton said that he and Mr. Deschaine need to work with some of the department heads on their monthly reporting process.

Mr. Houghton talked about succession planning, not only in regards to the town administrator position, but other positions within the town.

Mr. Deschaine briefly reviewed the items on the Meeting Outline.

At 10:36 pm Mr. Houghton made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Lovejoy seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Richard
Recording Secretary