

MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 16, 2019 SELECT BOARD MEETING

MEMBER'S PRESENT: Board Members Chair Mike Houghton, Vice Chair Joe Lovejoy, Board member Allison Knab were in attendance along with Town Administrator David Moore and Finance Administrator Dawna Duhamel.

At 7:00 p.m. Mr. Houghton opened the meeting.

MINUTES

Mr. Houghton noted that the minutes of 12/2/19 were unavailable.

TREASURER

In the absence of Town Treasurer Deb Bronson, Mr. Moore reported a general fund balance \$13,502,597.57 he had been provided by the Treasurer.

PLANNING

Town Planner Tavis Austin presented his department report. He gave an update on Planning Board activities. He briefly reviewed proposed changes to zoning amendments, solar panel regulations, and how to address proposed decks in wetland buffers. He also briefly reviewed noise ordinance and zoning regulations in industrial areas. Planning Board is forming an Ad hoc subcommittee to look at zoning issues and opportunities along NH Route and Town Center as addressed in the Master Plan. He provided a brief introduction to a potential capital plan project related to software acquisition for electronic permitting and records management in the planning and inspection areas. The request is for software, which would enable the Planning Dept. to make digital files accessible online. Mr. Austin recommended Sanctuary Drive performance and escrow agreement and related letter of credit for Taylor Court (15-17 Union Road). Mr. Houghton made a motion to release the site performance bond for Sanctuary Drive. Mr. Lovejoy seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. Mr. Houghton made a motion to accept the performance escrow agreement satisfied the Planning Board requirements for Taylor Court Development LLC. Ms. Knab seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

ASSESSING

Town Assessor Andrea Lewy recommended 11 abatements. Ms. Knab made a motion to approve Ms. Lewy's abatement recommendations. Mr. Lovejoy seconded the motion which passed unanimously. Next, Ms. Lewy recommended three veterans credits. Ms. Knab made a motion to accept the three veterans' credits as recommended. Mr. Lovejoy seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

The State has once again modified the Veterans Credit limits. Ms. Lewy explained that a warrant article would be required for the Town to adjust the current veterans credit.

At the Board's request, Ms. Lewy is gathering information regarding elderly exemptions for their review at a later time.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Houghton recognized Heritage Commission member Rebecca Mitchell. Ms. Mitchell wanted to make the Board aware that the Heritage Commission is proposing to move forward with a historic marker project at Stratham Hill Park. The funding for the project comes from a payment from Varsity Wireless to mitigate impacts of their cell tower on historical resources. The Commission

proposes to move forward with the project as a Commission and consult with other interested parties (including the Conservation Commission and Park Association). The purposes of appearing before the Select Board this evening is to project out planned steps in order to gain support for the way forward; final details will be brought back to the Board prior to committing funds for fabrication. Ms. Knab expressed a concern that the Board needs to be aware there may be too much signage in the park. Mr. Moore indicated that is helpful input from the Board, which he and the Commission can use to shape the project prior to presenting a final approach. The Board thanked Ms. Mitchell for her work on the project and the Commission's willingness to move it forward.

RAFFLE PERMIT / RESERVATIONS

The Cara Rince Dance Competition requested permission to hold a raffle. Mr. Lovejoy made a motion to approve the raffle permit request. Mr. Houghton seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Rockingham Planning Commission requested to use Room A for a meeting and Acorn School requested use of the Scamman Pavilion for their annual Earth Day celebration. Both requested a fee waiver based on their non-profit status. Ms. Knab made a motion to approve the requests. Mr. Lovejoy seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS (continued)

They reviewed the proposed Select Board meeting schedule presented by Mr. Moore. When a scheduled board meeting falls on a holiday, he proposed the Board meet on Tuesday. Additions to the proposed schedule include the Library and the Legislative delegation. Ms. Knab made a motion to adopt the proposed 2020 schedule. Mr. Moore indicated he plans to tighten up dates with the Legislative delegation. Mr. Lovejoy seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Mr. Houghton directed attention to the NH DOT letter regarding street light discontinuation. After checking with the Police Chief, Director of Public Works and Town Planner, Mr. Moore confirmed there would be no safety issues with removing the lights. Mr. Lovejoy described past discussions regarding streetlights. Mr. Austin described the locations at which DOT would like to remove the poles. They discussed the aesthetic value of the lights on the bridge to Newfields, which are proposed by NHDOT to be removed due to their deteriorating condition (and the fact they are no longer lit). After some discussion, the Board chose not to request any objection be filed with the State by the deadline.

Mr. Moore highlighted the letter from Piscataqua Region Estuaries Partnership (PREP) concerning the Piscataqua Region Monitoring Collaborative and its request for a continuation of the Town's support in 2020. Mr. Austin explained that PREP performs research, which is likely to be very useful to the Town, especially since the MS4 permit is in place. In addition, given the Town's support of the Seacoast Stormwater Coalition, he recommends continuing to participate. PREP is not a regulatory agency; they are not advocating for anything he clarified. They collect data in a standardized way that is useful in monitoring environmental impacts, which the Town may need to rely on in the future.

In accordance with the Master Plan, the Conservation Commission is beginning an effort to revisit past efforts to establish a set of priorities and principles to be used in determining the Town's interest or need for acquiring additional properties or easements to support conservation, environmental protection and recreation. Ms. Knab reported out on the recent Conservation Commission discussion and Mr. Austin provided additional perspective. Ms. Knab noted she agreed it was time to revisit the

effort that underpinned the expenditure of the \$5 million Conservation Bond from 2005. The Board discussed open space in general and the need for these types of conversations to assist in evaluating opportunities as they arise, noting that several opportunities have come forward recently. In addition, the question was raised how much open space is needed.

Mr. Moore provided a brief update on budget development taking place and reviewed projects staff had prepared for the Capital Improvement Plan. The Board discussed strategies for meeting the Town's needs. Next steps for the draft CIP materials is to discuss with the Planning Board as well as the Budget Advisory Committee.

Mr. Houghton inquired about the letter from NH Lottery regarding Keno, an informational item listed on the agenda. Mr. Lovejoy recalled that not many establishments met the qualifications to sell the tickets and the warrant article was voted down in the recent past. The Board also observed no individuals or entities had come forward to request Keno in Stratham. Mr. Moore indicated if that changed, he would advise the Board.

TOWN ADMINISTRATION

Mr. Moore said that he added items to the "Open Issues" list and distributed as part of the meeting materials. He reviewed the potential warrant articles. They discussed dates to reschedule the all staff meeting due to holidays and Board availability, dates of January 22, 23, and 24 were discussed. Mr. Moore indicated he would follow-up.

OLD BUSINESS

Ms. Knab made a motion to appoint Joe von Gombis to be an alternate on the Energy Commission. Mr. Houghton seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

At 9:45 pm Mr. Houghton made a motion to go into a non-public session to discuss personnel matters. Ms. Knab seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. At 10:00pm, Ms. Knab made a motion to come out of the non-public session and seal the minutes noting that failure to do so would render any action ineffective. Mr. Lovejoy seconded the motion.

At 10:02 pm Mr. Houghton made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Lovejoy seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Richard
Recording Secretary