

MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 7, 2019 SELECT BOARD MEETING

MEMBER'S PRESENT: Board Members Mike Houghton, Joe Lovejoy, Allison Knab and Town Administrator David Moore.

At 7:00 pm Mr. Houghton opened the public meeting of the Select Board and welcomed Allison Knab to the Board.

MINUTES

Mr. Lovejoy made a motion to accept the minutes of 12/17/18 with amendments. Mr. Houghton seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

TREASURER

Town Administrator David Moore reported that the General Fund balance is \$10,223,730.10.

Mr. Lovejoy proposed changing the name of this Board from Board of Selectmen to Select Board. Mr. Houghton supported and seconded the proposal which passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

MRI has been engaged in the search for a Police Chief. They are in the process of gathering candidates to bring to the Select Board. The board discussed the interview process, who would be involved and the timing of it. Resident Mike Cashman asked further questions about the selection process and requested he be a part of it. He listed his credentials. He will provide Mr. Moore with his qualifications. The Board thanked him for volunteering.

Mr. Moore discussed the meeting schedule for the Budget Advisory Committee. He requested the dates of January 22, 24, 29 and 30. Mr. Lovejoy explained how the process has gone in the past. He noted that they will need to send a representative to the School Board Budget meeting on January 9th. Mr. Houghton and Mr. Moore will attend.

Mr. Moore said he has received requests from Department Heads to update their budget submissions. There was an attempt to alter and streamline the budgeting process which was why the budgets were submitted earlier than usual, in October. Unfortunately, that didn't happen this year but the Select Board hope to next year. All agreed that it would be best to have the budget requests updated.

Resident Nancy Hunter asked if the Budget Advisory Committee had been selected. She had requested to be on the Committee. Mr. Houghton replied that Town Moderator David Emanuel has the responsibility of selecting the committee members.

Mr. Houghton announced Public Works Director Colin Laverty's resignation. He expressed regret at Mr. Laverty's decision and appreciation for the outstanding work he's done for the Town. Al Williams will be taking the leadership role for the Highway Department until a new Public Works Director can be found. Ms. Hunter also praised the work Mr. Laverty has done.

Mr. Moore will send a public announcement, revise the job description and draft a job posting. Mr. Houghton made a motion to reluctantly accept the resignation of Public Works Director Colin Laverty. Mr. Lovejoy seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Houghton gave a summary on the sale of 82 Portsmouth Avenue, the Bartlett-Cushman House. In accordance with RSA 41, Public Hearings have been posted for January 14th and 28th. A full price offer has been made and accepted with the preservation easement on the exterior and interior front two rooms to be executed upon closing. Mr. Moore will ensure that the lot line revision and the easements are recorded and he will contact the realtor. Resident Michael Hunter asked about the division of the lot. Ms. Hunter asked what the selling price was. Mr. Houghton responded \$310,000 and noted the Town is retaining 1.4 acres. It was met with positive reactions.

RESERVATIONS

Mr. Moore presented the NHSPCA request to use all the pavilions at Stratham Hill Park on June 9, 2019 and have the fee be waived because they are a non-profit with a 501c3.

New Life Baptist Church requested use of Room A on Sunday's for the entire year. They will shovel/mop/sweep after their service in exchange for a reduced fee.

Collie Rescue League is requesting use of the Front Pavilion on June 8, 2018 and have the fee be waived because they are a non-profit with a 501c3.

Mr. Lovejoy made a motion to approve all three requests. Mr. Houghton seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Mr. Moore said that the Stratham Memorial School is preparing to hold their annual Wellness Walk on May 8, 2019. They are requesting a road closure on that date from 1:30 – 2:30. They are also coordinating with the Police, Fire and Highway Departments. Mr. Lovejoy made a motion to approve the annual Wellness Walk to be held on May 8, 2019 and the related road closure. Ms. Knab seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Ms. Hunter asked if there would be a vote on water/sewer at Town Meeting. Mr. Lovejoy said that although there wouldn't be a vote on obtainment of water/sewer there most likely will be a proposal to encompass the Gateway District and a few other parts of town in a Tax Incremental Finance (TIF) district. There will not be a request for money to purchase anything or to underwrite bonds. The TIF district may be expanded to include the Town Center. The amount of land must be enough to support the potential services. Mr. Lovejoy continued to explain that the results of the survey indicate support for the project. People are realizing that if housing development continues without commercial development, real estate taxes will go up. They will have more information at Town Meeting. Mr. Houghton spoke of missed opportunities with

businesses coming in. Because a TIF hasn't been created, we haven't been able to obtain any benefit from the new businesses.

Mr. Moore noted that some appointments are open. Ms. Knab suggested an email blast letting the public know that some committees are looking for volunteers. Conversation ensued about Select Board e-newsletters.

Town Planner Tavis Austin and Public Works Director Colin Lavery recommended reducing the bond for Betty Lane, as some of the work has been satisfactorily completed. Mr. Houghton made a motion to accept the recommendation to reduce the performance bond for Betty Lane to \$47,077.01. Mr. Lovejoy seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Resident Deb Hodgson contacted Mr. Houghton requesting to come before the board and speak about wireless technologies and how it impacts people's health. Ms. Knab agreed that wireless technologies are a concern. Mr. Houghton acknowledged that it was a much bigger discussion. They speculated taking action may be difficult; much telecommunication falls under federal guidelines. They will study the issue further and decide what actions the Town will take. Mr. Moore will follow up with Ms. Hodgson.

Mr. Moore announced that we received the reimbursement from FEMA.

Mr. Moore passed along a list of open positions for the March 12th election that Town Clerk/Tax Collector Joyce Charbonneau gave him.

Mr. Moore met with former Town Administrator Paul Deschaine and Town Attorney Abby Karoutas regarding open legal issues. Mr. Lavery submitted a cost sharing agreement for the road at the Foss property. Mr. Houghton explained that the Foss's believe the Town has not maintained their share of the driveway which impacts their home as well as our property. Mr. Lavery worked with Larry Foss and came up with a proposal which should result in a Memorandum of Understanding between the parties.

Mr. Moore stated that a letter was received in December regarding the Parker Cabin. Mr. Houghton forwarded the letter to Heritage Commission Chair Dave Canada who felt no action needed to be taken.

Mr. Moore is meeting with IT consultant Lee Todis on Wednesday to address ongoing IT issues across departments.

Mr. Moore spoke about the solar panels at the Police Station being a priority issue. There is high level of concern of both the DPW and police regarding safety. They are assessing the viability of the resolution. Mr. Moore will follow up.

The Select Board discussed their meeting schedule, noting that they will meet on the 28th for a Public Hearing.

Mr. Moore thanked the Board for their assistance thus far. He said he has enjoyed meeting the department heads and others from Town. He has many thoughts and is excited to continue.

Mr. Houghton wanted to raise awareness of future items including: Town meeting, annual report, wages, budgets, the dedication of the Town Report, CIP, warrant regarding polling hours, and the Moody Report. Other open/future items include addressing the use of the Smyk property (perhaps creating a vision committee for its future use), Route 108 Corridor Study Committee, TIF district, next steps regarding recycling, skate park, changes to the elderly exemption, unresolved Town Center infrastructure issues that Public Works has identified, IT support, legal complaints, Ranger house water issues, Town Clerks' issues regarding holiday pay, appointments, office layout, Park Association wanting to merge with other committees. Ms. Knab clarified that the Park Association wants to hold joint meetings with other committees, not merge. She believes they are looking to increase their membership. Roles need to be clarified. As a Board, Mr. Houghton said they should constantly strive to do better, to communicate better, to continually challenge themselves. Continuing the list of open items, Mr. Moore said the Police Dept. is in the process of hiring a new officer who will be starting in a few weeks. There was recommendation by Seth Hickey to create a new position, Parks & Recreation Assistant Director. Mr. Houghton advocated taking a look at the roles and responsibilities in the department. In addition, a clear account of what's changed must be provided in order to move in this direction. A possible new HR position will be addressed in the future. Many employees lack job descriptions which must be addressed. Competitive benefits analysis, payment in lieu of vacation has been an ongoing issue; they need to discuss policy. This list is not meant to be all-inclusive. Mr. Houghton wants to ensure they stay on track to make sure each issue is addressed.

At 9:21 Mr. Lovejoy made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Knab seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Richard,
Recording Secretary