

## **MINUTES OF THE APRIL 15, 2019 SELECT BOARD MEETING**

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

At 7:00p.m. Mr. Houghton opened the public meeting of the Select Board.

### **MINUTES**

Mr. Lovejoy made a motion to approve the minutes of 3/20/19 and 4/1/19 as amended. Ms. Knab seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

### **TREASURER**

Mr. Moore stated that the General Fund balance is \$4,702,654.

### **ASSESSING**

Town Assessor Andrea Lewy presented two abatements and gave an explanation of each. In accordance with Ms. Lewy's recommendations, Mr. Lovejoy made a motion to approve a \$44.10 abatement for 25 Spruce Lane and deny the abatement for 71 Portsmouth Avenue. Ms. Knab seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Next Ms. Lewy briefly described a BTLA dispute with Unitil that has been ongoing since 2017. After much discussion, they have reached a settlement of \$8,120. Mr. Lovejoy made a motion to accept the settlement agreement. Ms. Knab seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Ms. Lewy recommended approval of six veteran's tax credits. Ms. Knab made a motion to approve all six veteran's tax credits as recommended. Mr. Lovejoy seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Ms. Lewy explained that a change in the size of a lot at the Whittaker subdivision is resulting in a \$240 credit. Mr. Houghton made a motion to approve the land use change for the Sullivan lot. Ms. Knab seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Ms. Lewy requested the Board sign the contract for Tax Map maintenance. Ms. Knab made a motion to approve the contract. Mr. Lovejoy seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Ms. Lewy gave an update on the revaluation. She has established a base rate for land and building square foot cost and is working on numbers for condominiums. Next week field review of 1,000 parcels will begin. The income/expenses statement have gone out to commercial properties and she is receiving some back. She has had meetings with State; they approve of the direction being taken. Sales questionnaires have gone out. She expects to receive the commercial evaluations at the beginning of October which coincides with receiving the utility values from the DRA. Regarding public outreach, she has written an article for inclusion in the monthly free Stratham magazine mailed to Stratham households and she has Appraisal 101 on the website. The Board, Ms. Lewy and Mr. Moore discussed the importance of pursuing a variety of tactics for sharing information about the revaluation with the public and inviting questions of the staff

At 7:26pm Ms. Knab made a motion to go into a non-public session in accordance with RSA 91 A:3, II(c). Mr. Lovejoy seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

The public session reconvened at 7:32 p.m.

State Senator Tom Sherman, District 24, was recognized by the Chair. The Senator offered assistance and wanted to serve as a resource regarding the water quality issue in Town Center. He also gave an update on the state budget and talked about four crises that need to be addressed: substance use, mental health, water quality and DCYF caseloads. He described the creation of a Housing Appeals Board SB306 that would adjudicate disputes between towns' planning boards and developers. Senator Sherman is opposed to the bill as he feels it takes control from local town governments, but he will advocate for what the towns want. The Board asked what the qualifications of the panel would be. Mr. Houghton expressed similar sentiments about the bill as the Senator. Senator Sherman urged them to read the bill and email him their opinion.

Town Planner Tavis Austin revised the Building/Planning Department's fee schedule as discussed in a previous meeting. The Board discussed the clarity/understandability of the form. The Board and staff discussed the increase in rates overall, which the staff feels better reflects the rates charged in the region. Overall, the fees generated will better assist the Town in capturing revenues that equal the costs of providing the services. Further, Mr. Moore clarified this revision of fees hasn't been done in over a decade. Mr. Lovejoy made a motion to adopt the new fee schedule for Building Alteration Permits as recommended by the Town Planner. Ms. Knab seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

May is Building Safety Month. Ms. Knab made a motion to proclaim May as Building Safety month. Mr. Lovejoy seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

There will be a Business Community Luncheon to discuss the Master Plan on April 17<sup>th</sup>. On May 13<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm the second public forum for the Master Plan will be held. They discussed efforts to get the word out to businesses and the community.

#### OTHER BUSINESS

The Chair recognized, Highway Department member Tim Slager who inquired about the status of a proposed heavy truck purchase. Mr. Moore said that he and Mr. Lovejoy have met with Highway Foreman Al Williams to discuss the matter. Two trucks are slated to be replaced in CIP materials prepared by the Highway Department last year. Although there is money in the Capital Reserve account, the purpose of meeting on the purchase was to confirm the need to move forward at this time and to learn more about the vehicles proposed to be replaced. Mr. Slager provided background on numerous issues with the heavy truck proposed for replacement and explained the lead time to obtain a new truck is lengthy; action would be required soon. He explained that if the truck broke down during a storm, it would have a tremendous impact on clearing the roads in a timely manner. Mr. Houghton asked questions about the repair history. After further discussion and sharing his own impressions of the needs, Mr. Lovejoy made a motion to proceed with the acquisition of the Western Star truck and to authorize the expenditure for the truck within the confines of the previously allocated funds. Ms. Knab seconded the

motion which passed unanimously. Mr. Moore will finalize the details. They discussed selling the truck that will be replaced.

#### APPOINTMENTS

The Chair then moved on to a request of the Chair of the Library Trustees, to appoint Susan Wilbur (a current alternate) as regular member of the Library Trustees (in accordance with NH RSAs 202-A:6 and 10. The letter notes the resignation of Nate Clinard whose term expires in 2021. Ms. Knab made a motion to approve the appointment. Mr. Lovejoy seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

#### OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Moore reported that the Bartlett-Cushman house closing is scheduled for April 17<sup>th</sup>. The lot line revision mylar was recorded today; the Preservation Easement is ready.

The Police Chief will be starting April 22<sup>nd</sup>. Mr. Moore will discuss next steps regarding the Public Works Director position at a later time.

Repairs to the light poles in Town Center have been delayed because they are custom made. We will be ordering a spare to have on hand.

Mr. Moore will be attending the 76er's meeting to discuss the needs of the seniors in town.

Mr. Houghton asked about the response we've received to Master Plan events. The Master Plan Committee has been sending representatives to speak at various other committee meetings. Mr. Houghton suggested having something in the newspaper. He wants to give the public every opportunity to participate.

#### NEW BUSINESS

As recommended by the Energy Commission, Stratham is entering into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Rockingham Planning Commission to obtain a lower the rate for our electricity. There are no costs to participate and the MOU simply advises of our interest in including our electrical load in the Commission's effort to aggregate demand for the purposes of leveraging more favorable pricing. The MOU indicates a contract (should the Town choose to participate further) should be available to sign for next year. There are no costs to participate. Ms. Knab made a motion to sign the MOU. Mr. Lovejoy seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Mr. Moore reported that he met with the Skate Park Committee who requested input on strategies for fundraising. In addition, he reminded the Board he is working with staff on the status and next step recommendations for the initiative.

The Barker Easement is moving forward. The Conservation Commission will be doing a site walk of the trails on Friday along with SELT representative, Towns staff and the owner. Mr. Moore emphasized the importance of developing a baseline of trails, as they will be frozen in time at closing and permission will be needed to make any changes to them in the future. There was a discussion of motorized bikes on the trails. Ms. Knab brought up the accessibility of the

trails to people with disabilities. They discussed issue of the use of electrical-assisted bikes on the trails in the park and other types of motorized vehicles. Mr. Moore indicated he was supportive of efforts to arrive at an acceptable definition in the easement that helped ensure the terms of use of the trails in the future were able to be consistent. Mr. Houghton stated he agreed preserving flexibility in the terms of use of trails will help from a management perspective in the future and hopefully prevent conflicts in policies for use of Town trails and those trail segments under easement. The Select Board as a whole agreed this was a good goal.

Mr. Moore visited the park with Parks & Recreation Director Seth Hickey to review what work needs to be done there. Mr. Hickey is working with Kramer Electric who is also working with the Fair's electrical person to address the electrical issues. Mr. Houghton wants to examine if the Town could be more efficient in the way we go about repairs and maintenance across town owned properties.

Mr. Moore received a recommendation by Public Works Foreman Al Williams to take to auction an electric sander. Ms. Knab made a motion to move forward with taking the sander to auction. Mr. Lovejoy seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Spring cleaning on the Smyk property has been completed. An Arbor Day volunteer group may do some pruning of the trees on the property.

Regarding the health insurance buyout and overtime Department of Labor audit, Mr. Houghton made a motion to approve the staff's recommendation to apply for the DOL self-audit program related for 2017 and 2018 overtime calculations. Mr. Lovejoy seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Swearing in of the new Police Chief will be May 6<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Moore indicated he was working on a start time.

At Mr. Moore's suggestion, Ms. Knab motioned at 8:49 pm to enter a non-public session to discuss personnel matters in accordance with RSA 91-A:3, II (c). Mr. Lovejoy seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

The public portion of the meeting resumed at 9:25 p.m.

#### RESERVATIONS

Jen Hubbell requested use of Rooms A & B for a new coach training for Girls on the Run. Ms. Knab motioned to approve the request and waive the fee. Mr. Lovejoy seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

At 9:37 pm Ms. Knab made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Lovejoy seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Richard, Recording Secretary