



BOARD OF SELECTMEN
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MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Monday, December 05, 2022 – 6:30 p.m. – Town Hall Conference Room

Members Present: Randy Bunnell, Jamie Connelly, Vaughan Morgan, Steve Smith, Richard Winsor
Staff Present: Paul Sanderson, Town Administrator

Chair Smith opened the Board of Selectmen meeting at 6:30 p.m. A roll call was taken, and it was announced a quorum was present and the meeting was being live-streamed and recorded.

I. PUBLIC HEARING

1. Acceptance of Donations: Heroes and Helpers – Police Department

Chief Laurent provided a list of expected donations to the Board: \$500 – DD Cook, \$500 – REP, \$1,500 – anonymous citizen for this specific cause. The Police Department will send thank you notes.

S. Smith opened the meeting to public comments. There being no comments, he closed the public hearing and returned to the Board.

MOTION: R. Bunnell moved to accept the donations to the Police Department Heroes and Helpers Program. The Police Department will send thank you notes. Second – R. Winsor; all in favor. MOTION CARRIED

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Kevin Lucey, 62 Meadow Lane, informed the Board that he has used the conservation land at Great Bay Farm, which is managed by Fish and Game as a wildlife management area, for many years. On Saturday, November 26, 2022, his dog was caught in a coyote trap on a trail that K. Lucey has walked many times. A series of traps were set in one of the fields. K. Lucey has contacted Fish and Game, Chief Laurent, and TA Sanderson. He wanted to inform the Board because conservation lands are being managed and considered for acquisition and easements within the Town.

K. Lucey stated that his dog is fine. He was concerned that there was only one person who could navigate that property safely. TA Sanderson, responding to V. Morgan, stated this is private property subject to a conservation easement that is held by Fish and Game. TA Sanderson stated he had read K. Lucey's letter; it was very complete, factual, and helpful to be able to understand the situation.

TA Sanderson, due to his background with Fish and Game, explained that the State manages wildlife management areas. Part of Fish and Game's mission is to allow hunting and trapping where appropriate. Setting traps there was not unlawful. Trapping is a highly regulated part of the Fish and Game experience. TA Sanderson continued it was not unusual to have this type of conflict in areas

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managed for wildlife and taking of wildlife, and not managed for people. It is not a recreational area for people; it is a management area for wildlife.

TA Sanderson assured K. Lucey he was not making light of the situation. The trapper could have done much more to warn people that something was there, and the situation could have been avoided. Responding to a question from R. Bunnell, TA Sanderson stated the individual was a permitted Fish and Game trapper.

S. Smith clarified it was on the bay side. K. Lucey stated that the ownership and management of those properties is not clear. There are maps online that do not indicate there is trapping in that area. S. Smith stated there are orange metal rods with tiny square signs stating Fish and Game. TA Sanderson noted that the adjacent Glen Cove property is full Fish and Game property, not a conservation easement or privately owned.

TA Sanderson stated that K. Lucey's situation should not have happened. By following through, a Conservation officer became involved, and the trapper was contacted.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Monday, November 21, 2022

MOTION: J. Connelly moved to approve the minutes of Monday, November 21, 2022. Second – V. Morgan; all in favor. MOTION CARRIED

IV. OLD BUSINESS

1. Coakley Update

TA Sanderson stated that there has been no further information since the EPA meeting in November.

2. Budget Update

TA Sanderson updated the Board on the day-long Budget Committee meeting held on Saturday, December 03, 2022. The School started the day with their budget presentation. The Town and its various entities finished out the remainder of the day. TA Sanderson thanked Board members for their help and support throughout the day. He felt people thought it was a very good initial meeting.

The School presented their budget with a \$250,000 proposed increase. There will be an additional meeting on Tuesday, December 20, 2022, at 6:30 p.m. Both School and Town will be at that meeting to answer any questions the Budget Committee may have.

TA Sanderson stated that the Budget Committee received a copy of the Town's draft default budget. The increase is approximately \$110,000 over last year's approved budget. The proposed operating budget was higher because one of the philosophical keys in creating the budget was to support the Town's employees. The overall proposal of a 6% wage increase was presented and generally, favorably received. In refining the budget, encumbrances, the unreserved fund balance, special revenue funds and capital reserve funds will be used to allow the expenditures for 2023 to come closer to the default budget. This will be undertaken at the budget meeting on Tuesday, December 20th.

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R. Winsor commented that he was impressed with the effort put into preparing and presenting the budget. TA Sanderson noted that all the department heads were very helpful. V. Morgan thanked the Board for being at the Budget Committee meeting throughout the day. Communication is very important during those meetings. J. Connelly agreed, adding that he got the sense the Budget Committee welcomed input from the Selectmen. V. Morgan noted it was called 'teamwork'.

3. Other Old Business

Audit: R. Bunnell reminded TA Sanderson there should be some options for the auditor next year. TA Sanderson told the Board he has contacted the current auditors to complete the 2021 audit and finish any open items, and if it was their intent to do the 2022 audit. If it is not their intent, TA Sanderson will immediately go out to bid.

R. Bunnell noted that the Town has had the same auditor for several years. He was concerned about any entity keeping the same auditor year after year. Sometimes it is nice to bring fresh eyes into a situation. Based on the current situation, R. Bunnell strongly encouraged bringing in fresh eyes. TA Sanderson asked the Board if they wanted him to obtain different proposals. R. Winsor stated he would support that. Responding to a question from J. Connelly, TA Sanderson stated the current auditors appear to be retained on an annual basis. He will immediately advise the Board if it is different.

V. NEW BUSINESS AND ADMINISTRATIVE

1. Assessing Contract

The current General Assessing Contract expires at the end of 2022. As a constitutional requirement in the State, there will be a Town-wide revaluation next year. That type of contract is not optional. The revaluation contract will add approximately \$50,000 to the annual general assessing contract.

The Board received proposals from the current assessor for both general assessing and the revaluation. The new contracts total \$85,000 rather than the annual fee of approximately \$35,000. The services for a Town-wide revaluation are entirely different. Rather than doing 20% of the Town per year plus transfers from the Registry, it will be a Town-wide revaluation. The Town's equalization rate is disproportionate. When the revaluation is done, the assessed value should be between 90% and 110% of the market value. Greenland is down to approximately 60% due to fluctuations in the market.

Responding to a question from R. Bunnell, TA Sanderson stated that we have used this company for 17 years. TA Sanderson stated that they have worked in other municipalities and are reputable. He further explained that before assessing can be done, individuals must be certified by DRA. GraniteHill is certified and has been for many years. They have provided good service to the Town: appeals to BTLA, questioned abatements, etc. The Town has received good, creditable results over a long period of time. TA Sanderson reviewed other municipalities GraniteHill has worked with. GraniteHill has all the necessary certifications and did the Town's revaluation in past years.

S. Smith questioned how data entry would be done going forward; it had been done by a previous Town Administrator. TA Sanderson stated he would be happy to work with the assessors; however, they have requested that the Town does not do data entry.

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MOTION: R. Winsor moved to authorize the Town Administrator to sign the General Assessing and Statistical Update Contracts. Second – V. Morgan; all in favor. MOTION CARRIED

2. Holiday Luncheon

The Annual Holiday Luncheon will be held on Tuesday, December 20th. Board of Selectmen, Fire and Police, and Town Hall employees are invited to attend. Staff would like to close the Town Hall from noon to 1:00 pm on December 20th.

MOTION: R. Winsor moved to close the Town Hall from noon to 1:00 p.m. on Tuesday, December 20th for the Holiday Luncheon. Second – J. Connelly; all in favor. MOTION CARRIED

3. Other New Business

TA Sanderson informed the Board that there is one additional manifest this year. Over the next two weeks, encumbrances, remaining balances, and what amount may be moved to the unreserved fund balance will be determined. TA Sanderson added that would give the Board a good idea of what will be transferred to the new year. The Budget Committee can also be given that information at their meeting on December 20th. TA Sanderson would like to give the Budget Committee as much accurate information as possible regarding the year-end and what is available to start the new year.

VI. CONSENT AGENDA

1. Elderly Deferrals: The assessor has approved elderly deferrals for:

- 342 Bayside Road (Map R16, 21) in the amount of \$5,282
- 36 Waters Edge (Map R13, 22) in the amount of \$10,317

2. Abatements: The assessor has approved abatements for:

- 21 Stone Meadow Way (Map R1, 2G) in the amount of \$132.06 plus interest
- 96 Boxwood Path (Map U7, 10Y) in the amount of \$821.29 plus interest

3. Payroll Manifest - Regular: \$67,154.91

4. Payroll Manifest – Stipends, Longevity, Vacation, Earned Time: \$84,537.18

5. General Fund Manifest: Total - \$848,151.82 (Town: \$848,151.82; School: \$0.00)

6. Police Special Detail Manifest: \$6,899

MOTION: R. Winsor moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented and with any additional language TA Sanderson would like to add. Second – R. Bunnell; all in favor. MOTION CARRIED

TA Sanderson noted that the General Fund Manifest includes the Town's annual payment of the County tax (\$815,000), which is required.

R. Bunnell questioned Elderly Deferrals. TA Sanderson explained there are several programs available for tax relief for the elderly: one program offers a small reduction in taxes based on income. The Elderly

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Deferral allows the entire tax bill to be deferred and paid by the Town. The Elderly Deferral is like a reverse mortgage. If the criteria is met, residents can apply for an Elderly Deferral. The Town will put a lien on the property for those taxes plus interest. If the resident leaves the home, the total amount of the Elderly Deferral is due and must be paid.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: R. Winsor moved to adjourn at 7:55 p.m. Second – J. Connelly; all in favor. MOTION CARRIED

NEXT MEETING

Monday, February 14, 2022 – 6:30 p.m., Town Hall Conference Room

Submitted By – Charlotte Hussey, Administrative Assistant