



BOARD OF SELECTMEN
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MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Monday, February 13, 2023 – 6:30 p.m. – Town Hall Conference Room

Members Present: Jamie Connelly, Vaughan Morgan, Steve Smith, Richard Winsor

Members Absent: Randy Bunnell

Staff Present: Paul Sanderson, Town Administrator

Also Present: Susan Parker – Greenland/Newington PDA Representative; Marcia McLaughlin – Library Trustee; NH State Representative – Dennis Malloy

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. APPOINTMENT

1. Greenland/Newington PDA Representative: Susan Parker

Susan Parker, Greenland/Newington PDA Representative, provided an update on recent Board action. The Board had requested that S. Parker report back to them after informing Peggy Lamson, her PDA colleague, that Greenland would be filing a Motion for Reconsideration with the Newington Planning Board. S. Parker told P. Lamson the intent was to capture the Newington Planning Board's attention and that Greenland should have been advised of the decision they were going to make regarding Sig Sauer's project at 165 Arboretum Drive. P. Lamson's comment was: 'Well, you know the location of 165 Arboretum Drive is 50 yards from the turnpike' and had no more questions.

S. Parker contacted Chairman Connors on Sunday, February 05th. Chairman Connors had no questions but was going to contact members of the Newington Planning Board. S. Parker has not heard from anyone.

V. Morgan stated that the 'ball was in their court'. TA Sanderson informed the Board that Mark Fougere, Planning Board Consultant, has contacted Attorney Biron Bedard, Ransmeier & Spellman in Concord. A lawsuit had to be filed last week; R. Winsor signed the complaint. The lawsuit has been filed seeking a review. M. Fougere also attended the Portsmouth Technical Advisory Committee meeting. That review was continued to March. An updated traffic study is available. M. Fougere questioned if the Selectmen would like to have Vanasse and Associates review the traffic study for possible comments to the City of Portsmouth.

R. Winsor noted that Vanasse and Associates had done a peer review on the original Lonza study. Vanasse and Associates found significant flaws in the Lonza study. S. Parker clarified it was the 2018 study. R. Winsor strongly recommended that Vanasse and Associates review the traffic study again and present their findings to the Town and Portsmouth TAC. It would make a statement there was a problem. If not addressed, it could be the next lawsuit.

DRAFT: SUBJECT TO CHANGE

S. Parker noted that businesses are looking at changes in the labor force after COVID and what needs to be done to attain estimated profits. It was an investment in today's future, not five years ago.

MOTION: R. Winsor moved to authorize an expenditure to Vanasse and Associates for a review of the traffic study for 80 Rochester Avenue, Pease Tradeport. Second – J. Connelly; all in favor. MOTION CARRIED

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Monday, January 30, 2023

MOTION: V. Morgan moved to approve the minutes of Monday, January 30, 2023. Second – R. Winsor; all in favor. MOTION CARRIED

2. Saturday, February 04, 2023

MOTION: MOTION: V. Morgan moved to approve the minutes of Saturday, February 04, 2023. Second – J. Connelly; all in favor. MOTION CARRIED

IV. OLD BUSINESS

1. Coakley Update

No new information was available.

2. Deliberative Session Review

Deliberative Session was held on Saturday, February 04, 2023. All warrant article language remained unchanged with the exception of the Operating Budget, which was increased by \$1,200 in the Trustees of the Trust Funds line. The official ballot is in process for voting on Tuesday, March 14, 2023. S. Smith reminded Board members they will need to be present during voting hours.

3. 2021 Audit Status; Audit Representation Letter

The Board received a copy of the Audit Representation Letter from Plodzik & Sanderson to complete the 2021 audit. Once the representation letter is signed, the audit will be finalized.

MOTION: R. Winsor moved to authorize the Town Administrator to sign the Audit Representation Letter from Plodzik & Sanderson acknowledging the findings in the 2021 audit report. Second – J. Connelly; all in favor. MOTION CARRIED

4. Other Old Business

Dissolution of Library CRF: TA Sanderson is working with the Weeks Library Trustees for a report on how the money was spent. The fund cannot be dissolved until the 2024 Town Meeting.

DRAFT: SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Drainage Problems on Portsmouth Avenue: TA Sanderson reported it was his understanding that District 6 has looked at the problem. There were additional drainage issues at the Newington Road intersection; Jim Jones repaired some of those. S. Smith added that some of the backup of water at Sanderson Road may be a beaver issue as it has been in the past and should be looked into.

V. NEW BUSINESS AND ADMINISTRATIVE

1. Easter Egg Hunt

The annual Easter Egg Hunt on the Green has been scheduled for Saturday, April 01, 2023, at 10:00 am. The Community Congregational Church has requested permission to use the Green beginning at 8:00 am.

MOTION: R. Winsor moved to approve the Easter Egg Hunt on the Green on Saturday, April 01, 2023, beginning at 8:00 am. Second – V. Morgan; all in favor. MOTION CARRIED

2. Other New Business

Rail Upgrade: TA Sanderson has spoken to the Rail Safety Inspector, DOT Rail and Transit, regarding the new rail along the edges of the Portsmouth branch line. They were unaware of the project. DOT contacted CSX; there is a project, but a timeline was not available. The primary motivation for going to welded rail is to reduce the possibility of derailment due to the cargo being transported. There will be an impact on crossings: the Town is responsible for seven of the 11 crossings in Greenland. The State is responsible for the remaining four. There has not been any discussion on increasing speed. The track is currently rated as Class 1, 10 miles per hour. Welded rail must be in place before speed can increase and crossings must also be improved.

TA Sanderson noted that crossing improvements are very difficult. Currently, the crossings in Town are only protected by a stop sign. The welded rail will make a difference in the crossing. It will have to be dug up and reconstructed. There is normally a contribution from the town for crossing improvements. Improvements are a highway and railroad problem.

The Planning Board will receive a CIP project for the crossing improvements. A placeholder of \$250,000 per crossing will be used. There are federal funds available for DOT and the municipality (Section 130 – Rail-Highway Crossings Program). The Town's existing crossings were updated at least 20 years ago.

S. Parker noted that CSX is going to be doing 1,500 miles of improvement on this spur line. A cost estimate is not available due to the number of unknowns that may be encountered. The DOT Bureau of Rail and Transit in Concord is the better source for local information.

Server: The server should be delivered and installed on Wednesday, February 15, 2023. TA Sanderson hoped to transform the old equipment from a server into NAS (network attached storage). TA Sanderson explained that paper would be scanned and stored on NAS. This would increase the efficiency of storage space and the ability to locate information. R. Winsor suggested it would be a great summer intern project.

VI. CONSENT AGENDA

1. Exemptions Veteran Credits and Abatements: The assessor has recommended a **Veterans Tax Credit** for the resident at Map R13, 15 in the amount of \$750.

The assessor has recommended **Solar Exemptions** for the resident at Map R7, 10 in the amount of \$15,000 and Map R15, 11 in the amount of \$17,500.

The assessor has approved the following **Abatements** for Stillwater Drive (Land Use Change Tax approved by the BOS at an earlier date then discovered the LUCT was paid in 2015): Lots R10, 12-A2; R10, 12-A4; R10, 12-A5; R10, 12-A6; R10, 12-A8 (Total: \$ 136,670).

2. Payroll Manifest: \$57,800.67
3. General Fund Manifest: Total: \$240,439.38 (Town: \$ 144,719.63; Library: \$95,719.75)

MOTION: R. Winsor moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Second – V. Morgan; all in favor. MOTION CARRIED

VII. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: R. Winsor moved to adjourn at 7:00 p.m. Second – J. Connelly; all in favor. MOTION CARRIED

NEXT MEETING

Monday, February 27, 2023 – 6:30 p.m., Town Hall Conference Room

Submitted By – Charlotte Hussey, Administrative Assistant