



**Board of Selectmen Meeting  
Town Office  
Wednesday, 1/08/2020  
6:00 p.m.**

## **MINUTES**

**Present:** Selectmen: Bob Hamilton, Roberta Oeser, Karl Pruter, Town Administrator Sara Gravell, Finance Director Laurie May, Executive Secretary Michele Christian  
Members of the community.

### **CALL TO ORDER / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The Chair opened the meeting at 6:00 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **GENERAL BUSINESS**

**Selectmen's Announcements** – Bob made an announcement regarding the Wellington Road Bridge regarding the condition of the bridge and that the Town has received approval from the NH DOT to move forward with engineering studies. Karl said that the busing company for the schools has been notified that they can no longer cross the bridge and have changed the bus routes. Roberta mentioned the warrant article for \$1.25 million to fund the replacement and that this will not have a tax impact. Bob also announced that the NH DOT will be doing paving on the section of Rt 202 north of South Woodbound Rd.

**Changes to the Consent Agenda:** None

- 1. Consent Agenda**
- 2. Approval of:**
  - **Payroll 1/2/2020, 1/9/2020**
  - **Accounts payable 1/2/2020, 1/9/2020**
  - **Minutes 12/17/2019, 12/31/2019**

Karl made a motion to approve the consent agenda as posted. Second by Bob. Roberta asked if the minutes of 12/31/2019 should be amended regarding the amount of the grant carried forward. Motion by Roberta to change the amount carried forward from \$27,500 to \$26,500. Second by Karl. Approved 3-0. Consent Agenda approved 3-0.

**Citizens Forum:** Deni Dickler wanted to remind everyone of the ConCom event , the Wolf Moon Hike this Saturday evening at 6:30pm at Tetrault Park. She also announced that Cheshire County Conservation District has funds to improve wildlife habitat. Richard Mellor also spoke about the availability of funds for agriculture from the Cheshire County Conservation District. Judy Unger Clark also mentioned the plant sale by the County Conservation District and that the quality of the plants is very good.

### **6:15 Public Hearing: Conservation Commission**

The Chair opened the public hearing regarding the possible purchase of a large tract of land by the ConCom. David Drouin of the ConCom explained that the ConCom has the authority to purchase but needs the BOS to approve a binding contract. David started the presentation with a slide show. The owner of the property approached the ConCom some years ago about the possibility of purchasing the approximately 360 acre tract to keep it in its present state. The property is located on Old New Ipswich Road and is known as Rindge Stone and Gravel. It is adjacent to other large conserved tracts and contains two stratified drift aquifers. The ConCom has been pursuing funds through grants and has applied for several: the LCHIP, the Moose Plater and the Drinking Water, Ground Water Trust Fund. ConCom has had several studies done regarding the gravel, a natural resource analysis and an appraisal. The ConCom is pursuing other grants and private donations. The easement would be held by the Monadnock Conservancy. The ConCom will be working on trails to make the property more accessible to the public. Joe Desruisseaux presented the financial needs to purchase the property. The total acquisition cost is \$726,000. Grants pledged at this time are the LCHIP - \$175,000, Moose Plate - \$10,000, Drinking Water - \$173,600. The ConCom has \$200,000 in funding from LUCT. They are pursuing a grant from Aquatic Resource Management fund which was not available in 2019.

The Chair opened the hearing to public comment. All that spoke were generally in favor of the acquisition. The ConCom answered questions regarding the different uses that would be allowed under the terms of the grants and easement. The power line easement is presently being used as an ATV trail.

The Chair asked for comments from the BOS: Karl said that due to the fact that it would create a large corridor for wildlife movement he was in favor of the acquisition. Roberta said that this parcel has been of concern to her for years due to potential development and that she is thankful for the ConCom coming up with this plan. Bob thanked the ConCom for all their work obtaining the grants. The ConCom asked if the BOS was going to accept the grants. Roberta said that there was paperwork that needed to be returned but acceptance of the grants need to be posted as they are all over \$10,000.

The Chair closed the Public Hearing at 7:10 pm. The Chair announced a 5 minute recess.

Meeting resumed at 7:15 pm.

Roberta motioned to have the Town Administrator sign the grant agreement paperwork necessary for the LCHIP, the Moose Plate and Drinking Water Ground Water Trust Fund grants. Second by Karl. Approved 3-0.

### **Old Business:**

Dog Licenses: Bob said that there are many that have not licensed their dogs. Notices have been sent, calls made and notices left at the residences. Roberta said that some of the houses have sold and may not be accurate. Roberta motioned to move forward with summons for violation of the dog licensing requirement. Second by Karl. Bob asked Michele to get this to the police department. Passed 3-0.

Finalization Budget/BAC recommendation: Sharon Rasku announced that the BAC has unanimously recommended a budget of \$4,175,000. Roberta queried the board if they were unanimous in using the unanticipated revenue from the State to offset the pay plan. Bob explained that the town received \$64,000 in 2019 that was carried forward. She also said that she had about \$25,000 in suggested reductions to the budget. She went over them. There was discussion about the Code Enforcement Line. She suggested calling Fitzwilliam about who they are using. Carla is handling the receipts for the sign ordinances. Also discussed if it is necessary for Building permits to be signed by CEO which is redundant.

Roberta said that other than the increase in paving and the pay plan, the budget is flat from last year. Bob said that it is necessary to get our employees pay to where it should be. Bob mentioned that a mini-split will be installed in the meeting room so we will not be listening to the air conditioners or sweltering next summer. The board discussed using the unanticipated money to offset the budget or to remove the increase from the paving. The wording for the budget article is complicated if the unanticipated money is used to offset the budget. The bottom line number is \$4,175,000. The possibility of switching to bi-weekly pay periods was discussed and working with the employees to do the change. Also discussed using Carla to do some of the data entry for assessing instead of KRT as she should have some free time when we do the bi-weekly change.

Discussion about whether to reduce the budget number to the BAC suggested amount and to use the unanticipated revenue for paving. Roberta said she wanted to be transparent about the budget but it will be less confusing if the budget number is less. She wanted to make sure the board was in agreement to use some of the \$64,000 for paving. Tom Coneys asked if there was budget management to keep the department heads from spending their budgets so they keep the funding. Roberta said that the department heads were told not to spend on anything discretionary earlier in the year.

There was discussion about the costs of benefits and how costly they have become and the employees total package includes the benefits. Cheryl McCabe Charron said she had a chart that breaks down the benefits and she would share it with Sara.

Discussion about the default budget and how it is adjusted for increases. Roberta said that increases in health benefits should be considered contractual as the Town voted to provide the employees with benefits without specific cost. Bob said he is good with the default number as it is. The board agreed on the default as presented with the purposed budget.

**New Business:**

Suggested Warrant Articles: Discussed the two big articles: the bond for broadband and funding the Wellington Bridge replacement which will come from the unassigned fund balance and not from a bond. Corrections were made regarding the positions open. Also discussed the petition article on acceptance of roads as needing to be reviewed by town counsel. Bob also said that the Consolidated contract needed to be reviewed. Sara will send to town counsel.

Route 119/202 DOT notification; announced during Selectmen's Announcements

KRT Addendum for Assessing: Discussed the terms of the addendum to have KRT cover the assessing office 1 day a week. Roberta thought that we might not need them that much. KRT will be here on Monday to meet with the board.

**Any other business to come before the Board:** Roberta just reiterated her thoughts on not needing another signature on building permits. By the CEO. Tom Coneys asked about the paving item of Rt119/202 as he walked in and missed it. Bob clarified that it is paving from South Woodbound Road north.

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Motion to adjourn at 8:15 p.m. by Karl, Second by Bob. Passed 3-0

Roberta Oeser