

MINUTES

**SELECTMEN'S MEETING
TOWN HALL**

**March 6, 2023
6:30 PM**

ATTENDEES:

Selectman Shane Beattie Selectman Troy Merner
Town Manager Benjamin Gaetjens-Oleson Charity Baker Michael Nadeau
Department Heads Members of the Public Phlume Media

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Selectman Shane Beattie.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

DEPARTMENT HEAD UPDATES:

Water/Wastewater Supervisor Timmy Bilodeau reported they have been 7 days without a leak. They are getting all the indoor work done at the Grange. The truck body has been replaced on the old pickup and is ready to be used.

Highway Foreman Tim Brown reported they have had a run of breakdowns, mostly springs. They are going to remove snow on Saturday.

Land Use Coordinator Robin Irving mentioned the planning board will meet on Wednesday to discuss the solar facility. She is submitting 3 projects to Annie Kusters' office and has been working on them for Shaheen for congressionally directed spending. The first one is the completion of Summer Street. The seconded is the water tank installation on the east side and the third is a public works complex. She reviewed the details of each of the projects.

She and Ben had a meeting with Steve Whitman from Resilience Planning. It is the first step in getting the housing provision for all of our regulations updated.

The safety committee did some training and she is working on getting certificates for the participants. They also bought hard hats for everyone so when they are on the job site they need to be worn. Ben mentioned highway and water & sewer already had hard hats but they bought a few more to have available when Randy, Ted and Robin do inspections and for those that may show up on the job site a hat will be available for them. They also bought 2 to keep in the 911 ambulance in case they end up on a construction site call.

Robin passed out to the board the proposed plan from Consolidated that got them the \$40 million in broadband money. She mentioned the 788 exchange was completely omitted from the plan. The only Lancaster properties were by the Groveton town line that have a Groveton exchange. She would like the board to send a letter asking them to clarify the plan because it is not accurate. She feels people should be going to their Stare Representatives and asking why Lancaster was omitted.

Ben asked if this report tied into the broadband committee update in the agenda packet and she mentioned it does.

Shane asked where they would get the answer as to why Lancaster was omitted. She mentioned she sent an email to Joe Kenney however he did not get the email before they voted. He did reach

out to her and mentioned he is meeting with Consolidated this week and wants to follow up with her to get details to find answers. She has also connected with Lancaster’s representatives so hopefully they will be able to get answers.

Troy mentioned he has a bill with Consolidated coming up on the 13th so he will meet with them and ask why Lancaster was omitted.

Kathy Jean Lavoie asked if there was a date for appeal on the announcement that Robin will need to be concerned with. Robin was not sure if there was a specific date but mentioned it is typically 30 days and believes they should be able to meet that if Joe Kenney is able to get some answers.

Transfer Station Supervisor Rusty Scott reported they recently moved glass to Littleton, fixed the loader which is operating normal now and he is trying to get a handle on last year’s budget stuff and will come to the next meeting to discuss with the board how to move forward.

OLD BUSINESS:

- Review and approval of the February 21, 2023 meeting minutes.

Motion made by Troy and seconded by Shane to accept the February 21, 2023 meeting minutes. All in favor. Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS:

Acceptance of Unanticipated Funds – Ben stated it’s funds that Tri County CAP had been awarded to provide assistance to homeless individuals in cases of extreme weather events. Instead of using the funds themselves they distributed it out to HUB regions in the county based on the percentage of the homeless population in those HUBS. Lancaster was offered \$6,450 and these funds would be used to provide shelter to any identified homeless during extreme weather snaps. It is a reimbursable grant.

Motion made by Troy and seconded by Shane to accept the \$6,450 from Tri County CAP and to authorize Town Manager Benjamin Gaetjens-Oleson to sign any and all paperwork pertaining to the funds.

CREESE training – Chief Charbonneau offered to organize training for the board of selectmen and the town office staff along with other boards to participate in the training to learn how to deal with difficult people and techniques to not escalate the situation. The board thought it is a great idea and asked Ben to have the Chief move forward with planning.

INFORMATION:

- Letter from John Davidge responding to the conversations about the hedges. He is reaching out to the engineer that created a plan to help open up the line of site distance for that corner. The plan is to have a meeting in April between Mr. Davidge, Ben, Tim Brown, and Shane.

Alan Savage mentioned if you end up doing something to move those hedges then they should be taking care of the other properties that have hedges in the roadways.

- Mt. Carberry sent a letter stating the landfill tipping fees and asbestos disposal fees are increasing. Ben reviewed the increases with the board.
- Boardband committee update, Robin went over earlier in her report.
- Land Use Permits
 - Margaret Mattison, 7 Fletcher Street – Gutting and renovation of dwelling interior, kitchen renovation w/new cabinets, pine flooring installation, insulation installation.
 - Wayne & Tina Rexford, off Stockwell Road – Construct stick-built 12’x 20’ shed.
- Sign Permit –
 - Ryan & Jennilee Scenna dba PJ Scenna Auto Sales, 24 Wesson Road
- Zoning Board Decision –
 - Special Exception approved with conditions for David & Linda Rexford and Lancaster Main Solar LLC, Tax Map R01, Lot 045.

Ben reminded everyone to turn their clocks ahead over the weekend.

Tuesday is Town Meeting Day and reminded the Selectmen they are expected to be at the polls all day and of course during the meeting in the evening.

The Fire Department has a live fire training at 111 Summer Street on Saturday starting around 8.

The Mechanic Street bridge is open and Ben reviewed the issues with the Mt Orne bridge and let the board know that the company that repaired the Mechanic Street bridge will be making repairs to the Mt. Orne bridge in the coming weeks.

Public input –

Alan Savage asked what the deal was regarding buying and selling electricity to the poor. Ben explained the Town is not involved with anything at this time. He mentioned the company that is doing the outreach for the program has contacted the Town and will be coming to give a more specific presentation about it and if it is something the town is interested in.

Troy mentioned to go into this community powering aggregation you have to go 100% green and it can end up costing a lot. In his discussions with people at the State House it is recommended to hold off a minimum of a year just to see how it is going to work. Alan feels the Town should not be getting involved with it at all. Ben stated it ultimately goes to town meeting for the voters to decide. Troy doesn’t understand how they think the town can go 100% green. Ben doesn’t believe the town has to be 100% green. It’s his understanding the residents have more control over where their power comes from whether they want it to be a certain percent green or renewable, etc. He is not going to give an opinion one way or another because he doesn’t know enough about it and won’t until they have someone come and give more them the information.

Kathy Jean Lavoie asked the board what the process was for applying for the grants that Robin spoke about earlier. Does she go through the process of applying for the money and then the board can vote not to accept it when it has been awarded. Ben mentioned the funds she was talking about during her report are earmarked funds, congressionally designated spending and not really grants. Ben mentioned there isn’t a set policy needing select board approval to apply for grants. Robin or the department heads will identify the grants out there, then research and apply for them and then the board would have to approve or accept the money awarded. There is a risk that the town staff may put the time and effort into applying for a grant that the board isn’t really interested in and that is why the department updates at the board meetings are important. There was a lot of discussion regarding the process of applying for, accepting and moving forward with grants.

Alan Savage asked what the board offered for the Libby property now that the family has had a chance to respond to the offer which Ben reported they turned down. Shane told him they offered \$15,000. It was asked if they would reconsider and offer more. The board did not feel it was in the town’s best interest. Alan feels the offer should have been more to give more parking to the town building.

Motion made by Troy and seconded by Shane to adjourn. All in favor. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted, Board of Selectmen Date: _____

Charity M. Baker

Shane Beattie

Troy Merner

Leon Rideout