

**MINUTES**

**SELECTMEN’S MEETING  
TOWN HALL**

**May 15, 2023  
6:30 PM**

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**ATTENDEES:**

Selectman Troy Merner	Selectman Leon Rideout	Selectman Shane Beattie
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 Troy Merner.

**DEPARTMENT HEAD UPDATES –**

**Police Chief Tim Charbonneau** introduced Officer David Walker to the board. The department is gearing up for the summer and all the events. The streets are busy and arrests are being made every day.

**Fire Chief Randy Flynn** reported they responded to 184 EMS calls – 73 911 calls and 111 transfers. They also responded to 11 fire calls.

Their ambulance salesman wanted to know if Lancaster is interested in purchasing a 2022 4-wheel drive ambulance that they have available now because another agency backed out of the purchase. It is not everything they would have ordered however it is in their price range. It doesn’t include the power load for the cot.

In 2022 the town approved purchasing 2 transits and this year a new box truck. The transits will not be delivered now until October and the box truck delivery is 2 years out. So, the idea is to get approval from the board to purchase this available box ambulance with the funds approved this year at town meeting and keep the one that is on order coming pending approval at next year’s town meeting request for a new one in hopes to get that one delivered timely.

Ben is looking to see if the board has the approval to expend from the Fire Capital Reserve Fund to make up the difference in the truck available to what was approved. Leon just wanted to clarify if the funding is not approved at next year’s town meeting we are not obligated to purchase it. Ben and Randy both confirmed the town is not locked to purchasing if not approved.

The additional \$25,000 needed out of the capital reserve is for a cot power load system. The total bottom line is \$325,000.

**Motion made by Leon and seconded by Shane to purchase the ambulance with the power load system. All in favor. Motion carried.**

**Librarian Barbara Robarts** mentioned the summer programs are all in place. Arrangements have been made by the school to have a van deliver kids to the library 2 days a week. She is hoping they will be able to move to a full 5 day schedule this fall.

There were many residents and non-residents present to express their concerns with the upcoming Drag Queen Story Hour being held at the library. There was much discussion regarding the event.

OLD BUSINESS:

- Review and approval of the April 17, 2023 meeting minutes. There were no minutes to be approved for the May 1, 2023 meeting as there was not a quorum.

**Motion made by Shane and seconded by Leon to accept the April 17, 2023 meeting minutes. All in favor. Motion carried.**

- Sign paperwork –
  - Timber warrants –
    - Peter Powell, Tax Map R28, Lot 001A-2 for \$10,261.90
    - Forbes Farm Partnership, Tax Map R02, Lot 026 for \$298.47
    - Michael & Keith Kopp, Tax Map R23, Lot 017 for \$539.17
    - Mitchell Forbes, Tax Map R02, Lot 066 for \$418.65
    - Valerie Griswold, Tax Map R23, Lots 018-3 & 018-4 for \$221.41
  - Intent to Cut –
    - Alan Savage, Tax Map R10, Lot 064, Acres to be cut 30
  - Intent to Excavate –
    - AB Aggregates, Tax Map R01, Lot 006
  - Elderly Exemption – Gary Parks, Tax Map P05, Lot 037

Mt Prospect Road update – Shane, Ben and highway foreman Tim Brown did a site visit to Davidge’s corner with Mr. Davidge to discuss hedges that are on the town right-of-way. Shane mentioned a few years ago Mr. Davidge had an engineer draw up a proposal to relocate the road which they reviewed and Tim was happy with the proposed relocation plan. Shane explained to Mr. Davidge that no town funds would be used to relocate the road, if he wanted the road moved to keep his hedges then he needs to fund the project. They also asked that he trim the hedges on the Prospect Road side back to the other side of ditch line. Mr. Davidge was in agreement and asked if Ben could look into any grants or funding that may be available for projects like that. Ben mentioned there are not for that low level of road reconstruction. It was mentioned that Tim Brown feels it will give better sight distance and it will not affect the grade as you are turning off the corner towards route 3. If the board is good with moving forward then Ben and reach out to legal counsel regarding shifting ownership and rights-of-way of land and will reach out to Mr. Davidge and confirm he is good to move forward and if it doesn’t work for all parties then it will be plan B which is trim the hedges.

Leon mentioned he would like the project completed by the end of the summer. Ben asked Shane if he felt it is reasonable to complete the relocation by the end of the construction season knowing that there are also legal things that need to be worked out. If it can’t be done this construction season then definitely by the end of next year’s construction season.

Alan Savage asked if they are going to allow him to do this to save his hedges what is going to be done with all the other hedges that are an issue in town. He feels he should not be allowed to move the road to save the hedges that are in the town’s right-of-way.

**Motion made by Leon and seconded by Shane to get town counsel involved to find out all the legalities of allowing Mr. Davidge to relocate the road at Davidge corner of Mt. Prospect Road and the project be completed by the end of next year’s construction season. All in favor. Motion carried.**

Rob Christie asked if there was an update on the rest of the road. Shane spoke with Tim Brown and Tim is going to look closer at it and stiffen up the sections that get really muddy and rutted. As far as the driveway entrances the landowners may need to add gravel as well.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Acceptance of Unanticipated Funds – Donations if the amount of \$2,605 have been made to the Main Street Beautification project.

**Motion made by Leon and seconded by Shane to accept the \$2,605 in donations made toward the Main Street Beautification project. All in favor. Motion carried.**

Ben mentioned he asked if a couple boxes could go on the Mechanic Street side of the town hall and the committee also has a plan to put a swinging bench in Centennial Park.

Acceptance of Unanticipated Funds – The first donation has been made toward the repair of Kent Fountain in the amount of \$500 from Brad and Valerie Griswold.

**Motion made by Leon and seconded by Shane to accept the \$500 donation toward Kent Fountain. All in favor. Motion carried.**

Water/Sewer abatement request from David Hood for his properties located at 14 Summer Street, 89 Main Street and 29 Bunker Hill Street. His letter explained that 89 Main and 29 Bunker Hill properties had furnace malfunctions causing leaks which have been repaired however he could not confirm what happened at 14 Summer Street to cause the excessive use. Leon mentioned if it can’t be confirmed what happened at 14 Summer then it could possibly be a tenant that caused the excess use.

**Motion made by Leon and seconded by Shane to abate the excess sewer usage over the average usage for 89 Main and 29 Bunker Hill Street properties. All in favor. Motion carried.**

**Motion made by Leon and seconded by Shane to deny the abatement on 14 Summer Street. All in favor. Motion carried.**

Water/Sewer abatement request for Joe Juneau for his property at 44 Elm Street. Charity explained that Joe had a water leak in his basement this spring which has been repaired. She also explained the bill was issued for 909,000 gallons as she thought the meter had rolled past the mechanical limits although on further investigating found that the meter was installed backwards and numbers are running backwards and the usage was actually 91,000 gallons which is still in excess of his average usage.

**Motion made by Leon and seconded by Shane to abate the excess sewer usage over his average usage. All in favor. Motion carried.**

Abatement – Kaylee Heath’s camper was registered and a property tax bill was issued.

**Motion made by Leon and seconded by Shane to abate the property tax for Kaylee Heath at 277 Rogers Campground Road. All in favor. Motion carried.**

Planning board submitted a recommendation to appoint Morgan Hill as an alternate to the board with her term to expire in 2025.

**Motion made by Shane and seconded by Leon to appoint Morgan Hill as an alternate to the Planning Board. All in favor. Motion carried.**

Recycled Percussion – Ben mentioned that Lancaster was chosen as 1 of the 5 towns that Chaos & Kindness would film the television show and Recycled Percussion would play a concert. He reported he has not heard anymore from them at this time and as soon as he knows more he will let the board know.

Town office hours – There was discussion regarding the possibility of closing the town office one afternoon each week to use a time to catch up without the public or answering phone calls. It was proposed closing to the public at noon on Thursdays. Troy feels it is a good idea as it will help get desks cleaned up and allow for work on projects. Leon mentioned he is generally opposed of town offices closing however he is aware of the benefit. He would like to give at least a month notice to the public. The change in hours will begin June 22.

Ben mentioned the highway department is going to 4 10-hour days from Memorial Day to Labor Day.

**INFORMATION:**

Ben read a thank you note from the Weekend Backpack program, thanking the town for the continued funding support.

Letters from citizens regarding the Drag Queen Story Hour at the library.

Land Use permits –

- Zachary Colby/Alan Brasseur, 212 Main Street – Construction of temporary seasonal 10’x20’x8’ metal-frame with plastic/tarp covering greenhouse with no electrical power anchored with tie-downs, intended as retail plant shed/kiosk, includes several unfixed wooden display “bleacher” shelves, electric power to site and NOT to structures.
- Brian Beattie/Mount Orne Enterprises, 246 Stebbins Hill Road – Installation and wiring via conduit of back-up self-contained 30KW Generac diesel generator with auto Tswitch on 4’x10’ concrete pad adjacent to existing steel platform.
- Alexander Kopp, 553 North Road – Construct stick-built 12’x26’x20’ addition to existing SFH with oil heat, shingled roof, on concrete slab, intended use as another bedroom.

- Melissa Hicks, 71 Third Street – Install 2023 16’x76’x14’2” Redman Northwood mobile home
- Tyler & Patrick King, 68 Third Street – Construct 14’x70’x6” concrete pad & install 14’x66” Titan MH Remington mobile home.

Sign permits –

- Jamie Samson dba Bouquet Boutique, 98 Main Street
- Alan Brasseur dba Northern Woods Garden Center, 212 Main Street

Public input – Alan Savage mentioned he has followed the equipment purchases in town and he didn’t see when the bids were opened for the backhoe that was approved to purchase at the April 17<sup>th</sup> meeting. He was told there were competitive bids and he wants to know who else bid and what were the prices. It was explained at that meeting Tim Brown informed the board that there was John Deere and the pricing was a bit more but with a better warranty and service plan which offset the price of the John Deere. Ben explained there were other bids received. Leon mentioned it was also explained that if we don’t lock pricing in we may not get it, the way things are going these days. There was discussion as to the proper procedure for bidding equipment.

Alan also mentioned he is tired of hearing the competitive bidding is being thrown away because of being able to obtain equipment. He feels there that a competitive bid request has not gone out in more than 12 years in this town.

Rob wanted to say he was proud of the board and management on how they handled the sensitive topic that was discussed at this meeting. Thank you for standing up for the staff and the library.

**Motion by Shane and seconded by Leon to adjourn. All in favor. Motion carried.**

Respectfully submitted, Board of Selectmen Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Charity M. Baker

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Shane Beattie

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Troy Merner

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Leon Rideout