

MINUTES

SELECTMEN'S MEETING
TOWN HALL

May 20, 2024
1545H

ATTENDEES:

Selectboard members: Leon Rideout, Shane Beattie, Kathy Jean Lavoie

Others in Attendance: Robin L. Irving, Michael Nadeau, Department Heads, Members of the Public, Zack D Video

Chairman Rideout called the public meeting to order at 1545H.

Selectman Lavoie moved to enter a non-public session pursuant to NHRSA 91-A:3(II)(a), (e), and (l). Selectman Beattie seconded the motion. Each selectman voted to enter non-public session. *Motion passed.*

At 1842H, Selectman Beattie moved to go out of non-public session. Selectman Lavoie seconded the motion. Each selectman voted to go out of non-public session. *Motion passed.*

Selectman Lavoie moved to seal indefinitely the minutes from the May 20, 2024 non-public session. Selectman Beattie seconded the motion. Each selectman voted to seal indefinitely the non-public session minutes. *Motion passed.*

DEPARTMENT HEAD UPDATES:

Fire Chief Randy Flynn/Fire-EMS: There were (61) 9-1-1 calls and 108 transfers in April; this is down from last year in April (73 and 110). To date, there have been 264 9-1-1 (compared to 221 in 2023) and 445 transfers at 445 (compared to 1424 in 2023). There were 6 fire calls in May and the majority were mutual aid calls. The Newest ambulance was delivered. It is having the radio installed. Littleton has the truck that the town donated. Flynn will submit to the Town Clerk the description for the other one to go out to bid. Regarding building maintenance, Justin McMann from Al's Plumbing will overhaul the furnace because it has problems with the blower. A new blower motor will need to be ordered.

Police Chief Jonathan Woodworth/PD

There were 647 calls for service (2299 ytd). Of those, there were 10 arrests 10 (43 ytd), 8 accidents (ytd 44), 296 motor vehicle stops (ytd 923). The department has a person in the hiring process. All requirements are completed except the polygraph scheduled for 5/21. He did not anticipate any issues.

At the last meeting, Chief Woodworth submitted the town ordinance drafts; he asked for status. Selectman Lavoie replied that the ordinances, K9 proposal, 2024 contracts, and maybe water/sewer rates will be addressed at the June 3rd work session.

Northumberland reached out to Lancaster PD regarding the mutual aid agreement. He submitted the version drafted by Northumberland. Both Chief Woodworth and Attorney Roberts have 2 issues 1) cancellation clause has 60-day notice. Cancellation should be immediate upon notification. 2) clause regarding liability “if there is any damage/injury to officer or equipment, the requesting agency are responsible for any fees related to such.” Their insurance should cover that. These clauses were edited in the version being submitted to Northumberland. If they do not sign the agreement as edited, the RSAs control mutual aid anyway.

Chairman Rideout recalled that even the Fire Department’s mutual aid agreement does not hold liable the Town of Lancaster for damages. Chief Flynn confirmed this and said that the Town is responsible only for expendable items i.e. foam, fuel etc. Chairman Rideout agreed that the liability clause should be eliminated.

Selectman Lavoie asked whether the effective date was an evergreen so it would just continue until the parties terminate. Chief Woodworth confirmed. Lavoie asked if there is a difference in cancellation from what they are suggesting and what we have proposed? Chief Woodworth said that it refers to the 60-day notice that he does not feel necessary. Attorney Roberts had reviewed the agreement and drafted the last paragraph in the proposed agreement.

The Selectman agreed to add this mutual aid agreement to the June 3rd work session agenda.

Barbara Roberts/Lancaster Public Library

The summer program is in place. They are waiting for final repairs on the HVAC system. Once the repairs are done, they can submit for insurance. The soffit repair and changeout of lights to LEDs is in process.

APPOINTMENTS: Jeremiah Ward of CDI obo Page Hill Cooperative

Ward works for the non-profit Cooperative Development Institute. He directs a program funded by USDA to help mobile home parks raise capital to upgrade their infrastructure. He presented a brief overview and asked if the town had interest in sponsoring a community development block grant application for the co-op. Ward is working with Page hill to procure an engineer and writing a USDA planning grant application to fund the preliminary engineering report. Review of records indicate that infrastructure needs upgrade. The timeline for engineering report (Step #1) is sometime this summer. Once there is an idea of the cost of the project, Ward will work on a capital stack and apply for USDA construction funding and DWGWT funding; the CDBG, however, requires municipal pass-through and sponsorship. Ward already spoke with CDBG program administration and the consultant (Donna Lane) and she is willing and able to work on an application. Her services would be paid for out of the grant. The program can fund \$500,000 dollars. The most practical funding cycle to apply is in January 2025. There are 3 required public hearings: 1) a notice of the explanation of the project, 2) anti-displacement and relocation act (which would not apply to the project because no residents will be displaced), and 3) housing community development plan that Lancaster would have had to adopt within the past 3 years.

Chairman Rideout thought that the town had recently completed a housing study. Land Use Coordinator Robin Irving said that a housing survey had been completed and the master plan chapter on housing is still in revision. The town would not have to adopt the entire the whole master plan for this and could just adopt the housing section. LUC Irving has worked with Donna Lane on other MHP projects. LUC Irving would function as a coordinator and Administrator Lane does most of the drafting. An engineer will be on site on 5/21 and Irving intends to inspect the premises with him.

The Board agreed to move forward with this project. Ward will forward the contact info and an information program to LUC Irving.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

Acceptance of Unanticipated Monies over \$100,000—Grant from NH Charitable Foundation Upper Connecticut River Mitigation Enhancement Fund in the amount of \$22,320.00

Selectman Lavoie moved to open the public hearing. Selectman Beattie seconded the motion. All voted to open the public hearing, no objections. *Motion passed.*

There was no discussion from the Board. Chair Rideout OPENED TO THE PUBLIC the public hearing. Rob Christie asked whether this is the project located behind the elementary school that Sam Mayne was managing. Chairman Rideout confirmed that it was. No further discussion from the public.

Selectman Lavoie moved to close the public hearing. Selectman Beattie seconded the motion. All voted to close the public hearing, no objections. *Motion passed.*

Selectman Lavoie moved to accept the grant from NH Charitable Foundation Upper Connecticut River Mitigation Enhancement Fund in the amount of \$22,320.00. Selectman Beattie seconded the motion. All voted to accept the grant from NH Charitable Foundation Upper Connecticut River Mitigation Enhancement Fund in the amount of \$22,320.00, no objections. *Motion passed.*

Acceptance of Unanticipated Monies over \$10,000.00—InvestNH Municipal Demolition Grant in the amount of \$87,000.00

Selectman Beattie moved to open the public hearing. Selectman Lavoie seconded the motion. All voted to open the public hearing, no objections. *Motion passed.*

There was no discussion from the Board. Chair Rideout OPENED TO THE PUBLIC the public hearing. Alan Savage asked if this grant applied to the Chesley Block or the Coos County Democrat building. LUC Irving clarified that it was the Chesley Block. The Democrat building public hearing will be in a couple of weeks. Rob Christie asked if there was a plan associated with the project. LUC Irving explained that the InvestNH Demolition Grant allows reimbursement for expenditures retroactive to May 4, 2022. Chair Rideout said that the grant is

intended to increase the number of rents. Discussion continued about the LRH partnership and different LRH LLCs are associated with different properties.

Selectman Beattie moved to close the public hearing. Selectman Lavoie seconded the motion. All voted to close the public hearing, no objections. *Motion passed.*

Selectman Beattie moved to accept unanticipated monies over \$10,000.00 from the InvestNH Municipal Demolition Grant in the amount of \$87,000.00. Selectman Lavoie seconded the motion. All voted to accept unanticipated monies over \$10,000.00 from Invest NH Municipal Demolition Grant in the amount of \$87,000.00, no objections. *Motion passed.*

Rob Christie asked how the reimbursement process worked when money is awarded to the Town. LUC Irving explained that invoices and pay stubs are submitted to her for review. She verifies demolition-specific expenditures for eligibility and submits a reimbursement request to InvestNH. Once the town gets the reimbursement funds, then the town cuts a check to the developer. Christie asked what local control was over the approval. LUC Irving confirmed that her review of the expenditures and final submission was signed off by the Town Manager. Irving explained as an example how she reviewed the Odd Fellows records. Further discussion ensued regarding roles and responsibilities.

REVIEW OF MINUTES:

Selectman Beattie moved to accept the minutes as written for May 6, 2024. Selectman Lavoie seconded the motion. Chairman Rideout recused because he was not present at the May 6th meeting. Both selectmen voted to accept the minutes as written for May 6, 2024, no objections. *Motion passed.*

Selectman Lavoie moved to accept as written the May 13, 2024 public session minutes. Selectman Beattie seconded the motion. All voted to accept as written the May 13, 2024 public session minutes, no objections. *Motion passed.*

Selectman Beattie moved to accept as written the May 13, 2024, non-public session minutes. Selectman Lavoie seconded the motion. All voted to accept as written the May 13, 2024 non-public session minutes, no objections. *Motion passed.*

Sign Various Paperwork: The Board signed 1) Timber Tax Warrant for Brad Griswold, 2) Timber Tax Warrant for Valerie Griswold, 3) Intent to Cut for Bright Hospitality (behind the Cabot) along Rte 2 for Tax Map R17 Lots 35-39, 4) Fireworks Permit on Mechanic St signed by both the Police Chief and Fire Chief

NEW BUSINESS:

- A) ARPA Grant Extension Request for Project AM-143 Asset Management Grant.
LUC Irving explained that the contract ends June 30, 2024. This project includes the rates analysis. The rationale for the request for extension is because they want to complete the

service line inventory. This extension will not affect the rates analysis as the tool that has been provided to the Town is completed. The signatory certifying official has been changed to the Chairman.

B) Loan Request—79 Main Street Affordable Housing Project

This is the \$80,000 that, at town meeting, was voted to be rolled over into the town's investment fund. Ben Southworth is requesting to borrow from that fund. The Board was not sure of the correct procedure for borrowing from the fund. LUC Irving said that historically, applicants requested from the Board. Ben Gaetjens-Oleson formalized it more by creating an application from a CEDC template. Ben Southworth submitted the completed application. The Board agreed that a decision could not be made tonight but the narrative creates a time-mark for the request. Chair Rideout thought that the Board had previously requested a loan agreement or promissory note. Selectman Beattie confirmed that no loan agreement had been drafted by the town attorney. Ben Southworth suggested that Sarah Desrochers might be able to help with a promissory; CEDC will also help. Southworth wants to close on August 1st, so the town has time to research options.

C) 79-E Community Revitalization Tax Relief Program Application—79 Main Street aka Democrat building

The application describes one commercial unit (bottom floor), one residential unit (2nd and 3rd floors, 4-1BR apartments). Chair Rideout checked that the project met all of the requirements. LUC Irving said that the applicant has completed the Review for Completeness portion of the site plan. The merits hearing will be in June. No major issues were flagged. The period of relief will be 5 years. The relief relates only to the new construction. The moment he breaks ground/starts the demo starts the clock for the term.

Selectman Lavoie moved to approve the 79-E application from Ben Southworth for 5 years. Selectman Beattie seconded the motion. All voted to approve the 79-E Tax Relief for 5 years for Ben Southworth on 79 Main Street building fka the Democrat building, no objections. *Motion passed.*

D) Attorney Frizzell replacement recommendation

Attorney Frizzell has been confirmed as a Superior Court judge for the State of NH. His anticipated end date at the firm is May 31st, 2024. The remaining attorneys in his firm are not able to assume responsibility for his caseload. He made a recommendation for transition. Although the Board has not bid legal services in the past, primarily because they were not on retainer, the Board needs to research options and proper procedure. Attorney Riff would have a conflict as the moderator for the Town. There are very few attorneys in the North Country that practice municipal law.

- E) Gary Sinise Foundation First Responder Grant Application—request to submit and vote for authorized representative

This grant request is for \$19,992 for a Lucas CPR device.

Selectman Beattie moved to approve submission of the grant application and authorize Robin Irving as signatory. Selectman Lavoie seconded the motion. All voted to approve submission of the grant application to the Gary Sinise Foundation for the Lucas device and authorize Robin Irving as authorized representative to sign documentation for the Town of Lancaster, no objections. *Motion passed.*

INFORMATION:

- 1) NHDES Notice of Past Violation for Pak Solutions LLC 16 Page Hill Road
- 2) Zoning Board meeting notice—variance for Thomas and Karen Anderson will be heard May 29th, 2024 at 6:30 pm
- 3) Land Use Permit for Robert & Patricia Cotter at 13 Wolcott Street for construction of stick-built 12'x14' open deck on piers
- 4) Land Use Permit for Peter & Linda Bornstein at 185 Mt. Prospect Rd for demolition and removal of existing inactive stone fireplace and chimney, repair and reconstruction of interior and exterior finish work, installation of a window
- 5) Land Use Permit for Rhodes Colossus LLC at 281 Summer St for construction of temporary seasonal 10'x20'x8' metal frame with plastic-tarp-covered greenhouse with no electricity and anchored to the ground, and an 8'x16' stick-built produce shed with electricity and anchored to the ground, intended as retail plant/produce shed/kiosk. This is next to the Lancaster House of Pizza and is operational (Northern Woods Garden Center)
- 6) Land Use Permit for Lori Summa and David Awwiller at 92 Rowell Road for demolition of an existing 10'x20' shed and construction of a stick-built 2-bay detached garage on a concrete slab, no heat
- 7) Sign Permit for Town of Lancaster Transfer Station for a 4'x8'x14" free-standing, pole-mounted, printed polycarb, outside the right-of-way

CREDITS & EXEMPTIONS:

- 1) Alvin Gross, 24 Burnside Street for a Veteran's Credit under RSA 72-28:B—meets the requirements

Selectman Lavoie moved to approve Alvin Gross for a Veteran's Credit. Selectman Beattie seconded the motion. All voted to approved Alvin Gross for a Veteran's Credit, no objections. *Motion passed.*

- 2) Brian Matson , 65 Stebbins Hill Rd for a Veteran's Credit under RSA 72:28, 72:35—meets the requirements

Selectman Beattie moved to approve Brian Matson for a Veteran's Credit. Selectman Lavoie seconded the motion. All voted to approve Brian Matson for a Veteran's Credit, no objections. *Motion passed.*

- 3) Kyler Kenison, 405 Elm St for a Veteran's Credit under RSA 72:28, 72:28-B—meets the requirements

Selectman Beattie moved to approve Kyler Kenison for a Veteran's Credit. Selectman Lavoie seconded the motion. All voted to approve Kyler Kenison for a Veteran's Credit, no objections. *Motion passed.*

- 4) Jeffrey & Amalia Carty, 20 Hodge Rd for Veteran's Credit under RSA 72:28 and 72:28-B—meets the requirements

Selectman Lavoie moved to approve Jeffrey and Amalia Carty for Veteran's Credit. Selectman Beattie seconded the motion. All voted to approve Jeffrey and Amalia Carty for Veteran's Credit, no objections. *Motion passed.*

- 5) Joyce Bean , 25 Mechanic Street for Elderly Exemption under RSA 72:39-A—meets the requirements

Selectman Lavoie moved to approve Joyce Bean for an Elderly Exemption. Selectman Beattie seconded the motion, All voted to approve Joyce Bean for an Elderly Exemption, no objections. *Motion passed.*

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Rob Christie asked about the K9 proposal that will be discussed at the June 3rd work session. He offered help to make the application more effective based on conversations he has had with the State Police. He felt that the application that was submitted to the town had room for improvement—e.g. 1) it is asking for a dog with multiple talents when they come only with one talent, 2) significant underestimations/overestimations of some areas of the expenses, 3) the justification was cited as deficiency of coverage with at least a 2-hour wait for a K9 to be on site when there are 2 dogs stationed within 10 minutes arrival. These things need clarification. His concern is: if the town is already having trouble staying staffed, and the town approves a K9 officer that requires significant parting from Lancaster for training etc., it further impairs the department's capacity. Chairman Ridout responded that this is a discussion for the June 3rd work session.

Christie also asked whether there is a particular schedule for exemptions because he submitted his elderly exemption application on April 13th. The Board acknowledged that, as they get reviewed and completed, they are submitted to the Board and there were many applications. They do not know its status.

Alan Savage said that ever since the Town and DES shut down Benoit's junkyard, the Summer Street property has been growing and looks terrible. He suggested that the Board issue a cease and desist on the Summer Street property. Before the building burned, the site plan review was for a used car lot with a specified number of inspectable vehicles, not a junkyard; the vehicles on the lot are certainly not inspectable. Selectman Beattie responded that the Board is aware of this and going through the process.

Alan Savage also reported that the sign for 'no trucks' on Stebbins Hill has had no effect as trucks are still following GPS and trying to get over the hill to Lufkin's.

Rob Christie asked for status of the town manager search. Chair Rideout responded that the screening committee has submitted their feedback and interviews have been done. The Board is still in the review process and anticipating results in the next couple of weeks.

Jeff Feller announced that he recently attended an Eagle Scout commencement. Eagle Scout is the highest rank and only about 4% of all Scouts reach that rank. There was one known to be a Lancaster resident (Eric Young) and maybe a second (Gavin Gardner). He thought that their achievement was impressive and asked if the Town would recognize them. The Town will look into ways to honor them.

Chief Randy Flynn asked if the Catholic Church was entertaining plans to address the riverbank stabilization near the cemetery. Selectman Beattie met with an engineer last Friday to discuss plans.

Selectman Beattie moved to adjourn at 1958H. Selectman Lavoie seconded the motion. All voted to adjourn at 1958H. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Robin L. Irving

Approved:

Chairman Leon Rideout

Selectman Shane Beattie

Selectman Kathy-Jean Lavoie