MINUTES

SELECT BOARD MEETING **October 7, 2024**
TOWN HALL AUDITORIUM **6:30 PM**

ATTENDEES:

Select board members: Leon Rideout, Shane Beattie, Kathy-Jean Lavoie

Others in Attendance: Town Manager Jessica Cyr, Charity Baker, Michael Nadeau, Department Heads, Members of the Public, Zack D Video

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Selectman Leon Rideout

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

DEPARTMENT HEAD UPDATES:

Highway Foreman Tim Brown reported they are still plugging away at the storm damage. They have come a long way, all the roads are set for winter, they just have some more ditching to do and then next year they will put them completely back together. In their spare time they are getting the plow stuff ready.

Transfer Station Supervisor Rusty Scott reported they are getting things ready for winter and that the tire barn is coming along.

Water/Wastewater Supervisor Timmy Bilodeau they finished installing the chlorine tanks at the lagoons, they have 20 or so hydrants left to paint and will be reading meters soon. After Columbus Day they will be shutting all the fountains in town off.

APPOINTMENT:

Rob Christie as the town representative to the Connecticut River Commission mentioned there has been a lot of discussion and questions regarding the riparian restoration project at the Lancaster Elementary School. He is present to ask for a general summary and clarification of the project and who is doing what, when and how. He mentioned there are some procedural things with regards to permit applications signed by Sam Mayne the Conservation Commission chair however some things involve spending money and his recollection from the select board minutes is the ability to sign and execute documents on behalf of the select board was delegated to former Town Manager Ben Oleson and yet he sees Sam's signatures on the documents for the project and he just wants to make sure that all procedures are done properly especially where they have received almost $400,000 in grant funding.

Rob mentioned he is making a request of the board that at the next meeting he can get some clarification so he can represent the town in permit discussions and mentioned he is not sure what the full scope of the project is now. He stated when hiring is done on behalf of the town there should be requests for proposals and advertising and he is not sure that is being done.

Rob stated his basic request is to find out what is being done from this point forward, who is actually entitled to spend money and sign documents and how it can be done efficiently.

Rob reviewed all the funds that have been applied for and accepted by the town. He is also wondering if the school district has been involved with declining the ARM fund money.

Conservation Commission Chair Sam Mayne was present and gave an overview of the project and the total cost of everything they would like to do could be in the $400,000 range. They are going to pick off what they can with the funding they have at this time. They have used the Moose Plate money to plant trees, some invasive treatment and developing the design for the wetland restoration. The goal is to plant twice as many trees as they have so far and do a fairly intensive heavy machinery wetland restoration.

Selectman Lavoie asked what the Conservancy funded. Sam mentioned that was not through the town at all so he has not tracked those funds. He gave a brief overview of their work.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

Water & Sewer rate changes:

Motion made by Selectman Beattie and seconded by Selectman Lavoie to open a public hearing to discuss water and sewer rates. Roll call vote was taken. Selectman Beattie – aye, Selectman Lavoie – aye and Selectman Rideout – aye. Motion carried.

Town Manger Jessica Cyr reviewed the Rules of Procedure for Public Hearings. She also reviewed the proposed water and sewer rate changes.

Water rates will change from $3.75 per thousand up to one million gallons used to $6.50 per thousand and $0.30 per thousand gallons used over one million gallons to $0.50 per thousand.

Sewer rates will change from $3.45 per thousand gallons used to $6.50 per thousand.

Don Freddette wanted to inform those present that storm water is also being treated by the wastewater system and on days when it rains all of that storm water is going through the system.

Rick Bernier stated, he is very disappointed in the tax payers for the poor turnout to express their concern for the increase.

Reta Ayers of Page Hill Mobile Home Coop mentioned her concern is that it went so long without the Town administration finding the insufficient rates.

Selectman Rideout mentioned, the rate will be looked at again in a year and it may need to go up again.

Town Manager Cyr reviewed RSA 38:29 to make the public aware that water or sewer monies are not used for other departments.

Rob Christie mentioned he has been looking into the funds and stated if you look at the audited financial statements, there is positive cash flow of about $350,000. He went over some ideas he had to take some pressure off the small users.

Nothing further from the public.

Motion made by Selectman Beattie and seconded by Selectman Lavoie to close the public hearing regarding water and sewer rate changes. Roll call vote was taken. Selectman Beattie – aye, Selectman Lavoie – aye, and Selectman Rideout – aye. Motion carried.

Acceptance of Unanticipated Monies over $10,000.00 – to accept an InvestNH Municipal per Unit Grant from the NH Department of Business & Economic Affairs in the amount of $40,000.00.

Motion made by Selectman Beattie and seconded by Selectman Lavoie to open a public hearing to discuss the Municipal per Unit Grant. Roll call vote taken. Selectman Beattie – aye, Selectman Lavoie – aye and Selectman Rideout – aye. Motion carried.

Town Manger Cyr gave brief description of the funds letting the public know that the BEA Affordable Units program grants $10,000 per unit and there are four units in the Democrat building and funds will be placed in the land use account to be used for planning and zoning purposes.

Leo Rideout Jr, expressed his thoughts on the owners of the property getting a reduced rate on property taxes for the work being done.

Nothing further from the public.

Motion made by Selectman Beattie and seconded by Selectman Lavoie to close the public hearing regarding the Municipal per Unit Grant. Roll call vote taken. Selectman Beattie – aye, Selectman Lavoie – aye, and Selectman Rideout – aye. Motion carried.

Motion made by Selectman Beattie and seconded by Selectman Lavoie to accept the InvestNH Municipal per Unit Grant in the amount of $40,000. All in favor. Motion carried.

Acceptance of Unanticipated Monies over $10,000.00 – to accept a Highway Safety Grant from NH Office of Highway Safety in the amount of $21,369.32

Motion made by Selectman Beattie and seconded by Selectman Lavoie to open a public hearing to discuss the Highway Safety Grant. Roll call vote taken. Selectman Beattie – aye, Selectman Lavoie – aye and Selectman Rideout – aye. Motion carried.

This grant was to cover all overtime police salaries for increased enforcement.

Motion made by Selectman Beattie and seconded by Selectman Lavoie to close the public hearing regarding the Highway Safety Grant. Roll call vote taken. Selectman Beattie – aye, Selectman Lavoie – aye, and Selectman Rideout – aye. Motion carried.

Motion made by Selectman Beattie and seconded by Selectman Lavoie to accept the NH Office of Highway Safety in the amount of $21,369.32.

REVIEW OF MINUTES: September 16, 2024

Motion made by Selectman Beattie and seconded by Selectman Lavoie to accept the September 16, 2024, meeting minutes. All in favor. Motion carried.

SIGN VARIOUS PAPERWORK:

Petition & Pole License – The board signed a Petition and Pole license for Eversource for a pole to installed on Middle Street.

NEW BUSINESS:

79 Main Street/Southworth – Inter-Lender Subordination Agreement – Mr. Southworth is redoing the Democrat building. The building means a lot to the community and the town has provided him $80k from the revolving loan fund. The $80k is a bridge amount to get started on the project. He intends to pay it back much sooner with a balloon payment in the near future. He had to seek funding from other sources and the bank is requiring us to sign off on a subordination contract, which means they receive first priority payment in the instance of a default. CEDC has conducted a risk analysis to find additional funding for Mr. Southworth and they concluded that Mr. Southworth was considered to be low risk.

Motion made by Selectman Beattie and seconded by Selectman Lavoie to sign the subordination agreement. All in favor. Motion carried.

Paving Bid Opening – Bid requests were sent to Ammonoosuc Asphalt, Blacktop Paving and Central Asphalt Paving. Selectman Rideout opened the only bid received from Central Asphalt Paving. The bid was for $58,348 for various roads that received storm damage. Selectman Lavoie asked if it would be reimbursed by FEMA and Town Manager Cyr responded that it would be. Selectman Lavoie also asked if the work would be completed this season and Cyr replied it would be and the paver was made aware the work needed to be done this season.

Motion made Selectman Beattie and seconded by Selectman Lavoie to accept the bid from Central Asphalt Paving in the amount of $58,348.00. All in favor. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS:

Storm update – Town Manager Cyr updated on the work that has been done for repairs and filing paperwork to FEMA.

SELECT BOARD MEMBERS' REPORTS: Nothing to report from any other the board members.

Rob Christie reported as representative to the Airport Commission that there will be an air show the last weekend of June 2025 and in the past it has been oriented toward planes and for the upcoming event they are working on making it community oriented event.

Rob Christie also mentioned there is still an opening for a second representative on the Connecticut Riverbend Commission.

TOWN MANAGER REPORT:

- Public smoking- the state's regulation of air emissions preempts local regulation through zoning ordinances.

- She and Chief Flynn are gathering information from surrounding EMS providers to have a conversation about 2025 rates. They will be using this information along with considerations from the June 3, 2024 work session to provide a holistic view of rates to the select board during November's work session.
- Kicked off work with NCC for a Road Surface Management System (RSMS) program with Land Use Coordinator Irving and Highway Director Brown. NCC may be waiving the match for us as we are the second community to move forward. This program will provide an inventory of roads, with condition, and will note culvert locations and conditions in order to help prioritize and be a consideration for a capital improvement plan.
- The federal Lead and Copper Rule Revisions (LCRR) and proposed Lead and Copper Rule Improvements (LCRI) require public water systems (PWS) to inventory all lead service lines (LSL) and galvanized requiring replacement (GRR) downstream of lead by October 16, 2024.

  Notification will be made to lead service line unknowns - deadline to submit this information to the state is October 16th, 2026, and funding is available through 2028.

  There is an admin portion of the notification aspect (customer service) in notifying the unknown 1097 users.
- Approached by three students from SAU 36 that are taking a US & the Cold War History class and they are interested in cleaning the Centennial memorial this week.
- Four welfare requests, one approval.
- The Parade of Lights will be held on October 11th at 7 p.m.
- Trail work in the Town Forest started today. They are still working for volunteers on their work days on October 12th & 26th.

INFORMATION:

Planning Board meeting notice for October 9, 2024 at 6:30 p.m.

Land Use permits were also included for the board to review.

Town Manager Cyr requested the board enter into non-public session due to RSA 95-A:3, II(j) consideration of confidential, commercial, or financial information that is exempt from public disclosure under RSA 91-A:5.

Motion made by Selectman Beattie and seconded by Selectman Lavoie to enter into non-public session according to RSA 95-A:3, II (j) to discuss a contract. Roll call vote taken. Selectman Beattie – aye, Selectman Lavoie – aye and Selectman Rideout – aye. Motion carried.

The Select Board entered Non-Public Session at 7:35 p.m.

The Select Board exited Non-Public Session at 7:46 p.m.

Motion made by Selectman Beattie and seconded by Selectman Lavoie to return to public session. Roll call vote taken. Selectman Beattie – aye, Selectman Lavoie – aye, Selectman Rideout – aye. Motion carried.

Motion made by Selectman Lavoie and seconded by Selectman Beattie to seal the non-public session minutes until April 1, 2025. Roll call vote taken. Selectman Beattie – aye, Selectman Lavoie – aye, Selectman Rideout - aye. Motion carried.

Motion made by Selectman Lavoie and seconded by Selectman Beattie to authorize Town Manager Jessica Cyr to sign any and all paperwork associated with the NH Office of Highway Safety Grant in the amount of $21,369.32.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Rob Christie wanted to remind the board that the authorized representative on the Conservation grant funding is former Town Manager Ben Oleson and they may want to look into changing the authorized signer. The board is going to look at any others as well.

Rob also wanted to revisit recovering fees paid to Troy Merner and would like the board to look into small claims court to recover the money paid to him. He feels it will be easier now to recover the fees where he entered guilty pleas.

Motion made by Selectman Beattie and seconded by Selectman Lavoie to adjourn. All in favor. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted, Board of Selectmen Date: _____

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Leon Rideout

Charity M. Baker

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Shane Beattie

_____
Kathy-Jean Lavoie