

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN**

**January 25, 2021**

**MEMORIAL BUILDING**

**4:00 P.M.**

*The following are to be considered draft minutes only until approved by the Board at their next meeting.*

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m. and began with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Selectmen present: Tamara Butcher, Chairwoman, Dick Hendl and George McCusker

Others: Whit Smith, B Manning, Pixie Hill, Amy Lewis and Sgt. Beaulieu

Zoom: Wayne Smith, Susan Chiarella and Janet Hendl

**Scheduled Appointments:**

**Town Elections/Town Meeting:**

B stated that yesterday the Governor issued executive order 83, which takes all the elements of senate bill 2 and puts them into place. B said this creates some confusion. The issue they have with this is that it says the governing body has the right to change the dates. RSA 40.4 says it's the moderator that does it. B. said for Springfield it is not an issue. B. is concerned because in section four of the executive order it says if senate bill 2 is a path with amendments in the house and is approved, then that takes effect from what the executive order says. As of right now it is on hold. B. feels this won't be an issue for us because if we make a decision, he thinks the moderator, town clerk and the board of selectmen will talk together and say what is best for the town.

B has spoken with Derrick, who is the moderator of Sutton and the acting moderator for the school. He is not aware of the regulation that required a mask to go into the meeting. Derek and B think alike about it, in that with someone's ability to vote you need to provide them with alternative access, to go to a public meeting he's not so sure you do. They are contemplating upholding their meeting for the voting on Tuesday; but he is meeting with the selectmen this afternoon and they are talking about postponing their business section to May, which many towns are doing. Tamara asked if this was because of population numbers. B. thinks it's the population numbers, and with the roll out of the vaccine people may be thinking more people will be vaccinated in May. B. has spoken with Michael Todd in New London; they are in a holding pattern and considering postponing both meetings until May. B. said if the school is going to do their thing during the election on Tuesday you really can't do that being in a cooperative school district. All the moderators have to get together and figure out what to do, and the majority rules as to when they are going to have it. The executive order that was passed, you can have the town election on Tuesday and an entirely different date to do the school. B said we are still in a bit of a holding pattern on what is going on there.

B did speak with the people at the fire department and measured the useable square footage of the fire department, that is 2584sqft. With 6 feet social distancing being used it comes out to 71 people, one person per six square feet. B asked if we have to put the meeting on zoom. Amy Lewis said yes it must be on zoom and provided information on how Eastman Water Precinct

held their meeting on zoom last year. However, you are not able to vote over zoom. Susan Chiarella asked if they will be able to vote on Tuesday via absentee ballot and will masks be required at the town meeting. She was told yes on both counts. Pixie said she and B had discussed requiring masks. If you do not wear a mask or refuse to wear one for the deliberative session you weren't welcome at the meeting. B encourages that, we are just waiting to hear from the legislature whether that will be allowed.

Pixie also discussed the ballot counting machine. Pixie spoke with New London and they do use their ballot counting machine for the town elections. LHS will program a school ballot card for \$288, the SAU would pay for the ballots. LHS will program a town card for \$500 and we would pay for those ballots, but we have to pay for ballot printing either way. B and Pixie discussed using the ballot counting machine versus getting probably sixteen counters in to do it. They came up with the conclusion that if they can use the counting machine, they should use it. Pixie expects maybe between 180 to 200 people. Dick asked if we have canvased to see how many ballot counters we might be able to get before making this decision. Pixie said she can do that before the next meeting. Dick said we are talking about around \$800 to program those cards. Pixie feels if we can get two tables for town ballots and two for the school ballots we should be done counting within an hour. George brought up the possibility of bad weather, which could make it tough to get counters in. Pixie stated she has never had trouble getting vote counters, even with bad weather. Tamara asked the cost to print ballots that we count. Janet stated last year's printing charges under elections was \$279.60. George feels we should use the counting machine. Tamara feels with the number of ballots we will most likely have we should print the ballots and count them ourselves. B will keep the board posted on anything else that comes up.

#### Zoning Permits:

REPORT from ZONING COORDINATOR. -- Board of Selectmen - Monday, January 25, 2021.

Here is a summary of permit applications and Zoning Coordinator activity.

#### Application for Permit – Acted Upon, APPROVED

None.

#### Open Applications - In Hand, But NOT Acted Upon.

1. David and Elizabeth Erickson, cabin off Morrill Road. No further action pending final plan from applicant. Applicant has been advised accordingly.

#### Other Matters.

- A. Further inquiry (and discussion) from resident regarding use of building, now classified as a shed with water lines cut (that was formerly a commercial kitchen with second floor living

space) to be renovated into a apartment – second dwelling unit on lot. Consultation with Planning Board. Lot may or may not be “non-conforming.”

B. Visit to Philbrick Hill Road – two (2) parcels to review status of projects.

C. Attend Planning Board meeting.

D. Review draft of “friendly letter” from BOS to resident regarding container

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Whit spoke with the individual doing construction on Philbrick Hill road. They added a deck to the house and didn't amend the zoning permit which will be taken care of this week.

George asked Whit to comment on the two planning board cases we had. Whit started with the Josh McGraw case. He recently purchased a house on the end of Old Grafton road which has an outbuilding that's styled as a shed. The shed was decommissioned from being a commercial catering kitchen. There is an apartment on the second floor and it has the remnants of a commercial kitchen on the first floor, all the water piping has been disconnected so it is non-functional. Mr. McGraw would like to use that space as an apartment to support itinerant nursing staff for DHMC, so it would be a rental apartment, and for him and his wife to use from time to time. The lot is 3.6 acres, but according to the zoning ordinance you must have a minimum building space of 1 ½ acres per building unit, so given the slopes and soils it may not be a large enough lot. Mr. McGraw has been referred to the zoning board. That will be coming up in March. Mr. McGraw will be requesting a special exception from the zoning board of adjustment. Janet said he also needs to keep in mind the area of the pond and the stream must be deducted from the useable acreage on that lot. Whit has told him he can do the improvements inside the building that he would like to do, he just can't treat it as a second dwelling unit until he has permission to do so.

Whit asked George the second item he was supposed to talk about. George said it was the subdivision of the Hufault property. Whit cannot speak to that because he is not familiar with the situation. Whit knows there is a lot off the Bowman, Four Corners, Cemetery Road area and it is quite a large lot. The property owner wanted to divide it, but they were advised there is not enough road frontage to divide the lot.

George stated there was then Eastman, which was complicated. Whit said, from his point of view, it simpler. Janet said it was Woodland Heights, but that is not in Eastman. Whit said there is a large tract of property in Springfield that touches the cul-de-sac in Grantham. The property owner would like to sub-divide that property so that he can develop some of it. Whit said there is about 600 feet of road frontage that his property abuts on the private road, which is the cul-de-sac, all in Grantham. The advice to him was to go to Grantham and find the records and the minutes from the meetings where that subdivision was created and perhaps, we can sort through that and possibly allow him to have access to the property from a private roadway. There were

comments in the meeting about some of the other residents on that road, all of whom would be Grantham residents, perhaps objecting to it. But there is 60+ acres of land that is basically in current use over there that could be developed for two or three residential lots. Whit thinks the owner is trying to figure out the best way to have access to that property, which is 95% in Springfield and is currently undeveloped but buildable land. Access is the issue. Whit said the current driveway is all within one of the lots, there is land that he owns that is to the south of the current driveway. Whit looked at the wetlands mapping tool and the non-designated wetlands, which run along the current driveway, don't start for 400 or 500 hundred feet in. So, there is enough room that a creative developer could easily build two residential lots over there without encroaching on any wetlands and having enough frontage on the existing cul-de-sac road. So, it would basically be a Springfield property on a road with a Grantham address. Whit said the property owner is trying to figure out the best way to approach this whole thing.

Whit said there was a fourth item which was the merger of six lots on Woodcrest, Mr. Subramanian. There are five lots in front of the big house that front the waterfront and those five lots are going to be merged into the larger lot, which is number six. There will be assessment implications because of that. However, the merger is straight forward.

Whit did speak with Ken Jacques and he is planning to make a presentation to the planning board which would be consistent with all the requirements of a site plan review with the exception that there would not be a public hearing and he would not be seeking approval of a site plan. It is consistent with the approach that the attorney for Kennebec Lumber suggested, which was creating a record of all the structures and activities and all the other details that are associated with the site plan requirements in the case of Twin Lake Villa. Whit endorses this stating what we need is a standard process and a template to use as we begin to look at other businesses that may have been in town for a long time and should be subjected to the same requirements, not making up a new set of rules each time. Janet made one correction to Whit's comment. This wasn't based on Kennebec's lawyer's recommendation; it was based on town counsel's recommendation that it be a site map.

Minutes of January 11, 2021:

Dick made a motion to accept the minutes of January 11<sup>th</sup> as written. The motion was seconded by George and unanimously approved.

Unfinished Business:

Continued Budget Discussion:

Tamara asked if Dick and George saw the changes in the engineer's opinion for construction of the sand shed. Tamara wanted to point out the price has dropped some because he took off retaining walls and some catch basins. The price went from \$243,900 to \$211,890.

The selectboard has decided to put the Gove Brook culvert in the budget for 2021.

Tamara said the budget committee brought up the possibility of paving half of Hogg Hill road, the hill portion, and that would hopefully split the bill in half to be roughly \$80,000 instead of

\$159,120 for the full road. Dick feels it makes sense to cut the paving on Hogg Hill in half for two reasons. First, we are spending \$86,000 on the culvert repair. Second, there seems to be very little planned for paving in 2022. Dick supports paving half of Hogg Hill and the culvert repair. This is Tamara's recommendation as well, and George agrees.

George stated after the budget meeting, and being cornered by Justin and Sarge on used trucks, he met with Peter. Peter called the dealership in Vermont that has the used truck that Sarge was excited about. George said this is an unsuitable truck. The only thing that it had was a stainless-steel body, which was too small. The truck has a smaller rear end, and it has a one angle plow and no piping to change it. The dealer admitted this would not be a suitable truck for the town.

The dealer started talking about a new International and how he could deliver one, like Pete was looking at, for \$160,000. The dealer is coming up with numbers on an International that could be bought from that dealer or Reed in Claremont. Those numbers aren't available yet, but Peter will try to have those numbers for the budget meeting. George brought Peter over to Sarge's Garage to have a conference with Justin and Sarge. Pete had a good talk with Justin and Sarge, explaining to them the truck in Vermont was totally unsuitable and if they had looked it up online like Peter did, they would have seen that it was. After a discussion about that, they are all on the same page about that truck not being suitable. Peter also told them about this possible offer from International at \$160,000. However, we have not seen anything yet. Pete is hoping to have it tomorrow to bring to budget. George looks at this very doubtfully, that they are going to supply a truck for \$26,000 less than what we have bid for. However, it is a very suitable international truck and according to Peter it's about the same as the Freightliner, except for the cab. Dick asked if this was a used truck. George said this would be a new truck, it would have to be built just like the other one. George said the dealer is saying this truck could be ready in June. Janet added that what Peter said earlier was these particular International trucks are all part of the state bid, which might make a difference. Dick concern with that approach is seems like it's another one of these pulling a rabbit out of a hat at the eleventh hour without a plan for the future. It also seems to him that there has not been a very broad look at what used trucks are available that we might be able to get. Dick can't believe that there aren't used trucks out there that would fit the bill that would last for the eight or so years that it would take to fill the gap until we get a new truck. George doesn't believe there are any.

Tamara said last year when Pete came, we decided \$75,000 was going to get us a good used truck between March and now. What happened to all those trucks that were out there that we were going to buy with that money? George said they've all been sold, and Pete has been looking. George was in the office with Pete and they looked extensively online and there really wasn't anything that suited the town's bill. Tamara wants to see the numbers Pete comes with tomorrow. Janet said Pete is going through SG Reed to get the specs together for pricing. Dick asked George if these two trucks have all the attributes that Pete wants, stainless steel body and automatic transmission. George said Pete won't even consider anything else. George stated that this new truck would come with the same warranty and is coming in at half the price, around \$5,000. Tamara would also like to see a write up on what the extended warranty would include

on the first truck Peter was looking at. Dick asked aren't we just a little suspicious that we've got an extended warranty that is identical for half the price. George stated he has not seen it; he is only going on what he's been told; he has not reviewed the warranty.

Janet said tomorrow night's budget committee meeting is the last one until their first hearing, and they could have a second hearing. We will have to be more prepared with what we are doing about the truck and financing before we get into the budget committee's final hearing. The selectboard might want to have a meeting next week to put together what it is you're going to recommend to the budget committee.

Dick asked B his opinion on the truck. B stated he was advocating not buying a truck but buying three trucks, sort of laying out what our game plan is for trucks. B. is advocating taking the \$75,000 to buy a good used truck, if we can find one, and get rid of big red. Then next year purchase a new truck for the highway department because we were told it was going to take a year to get it. So, we would buy it in 2022 and receive it in 2023. If you take the information that we were given, the used truck will last eight to ten years and the new truck would last thirteen to fifteen years; that puts us in a relatively decent position. If there are no used trucks B's theory falls apart. Sgt. Beaulieu said you could take that \$75,000 and put it towards the new truck and finance the rest, about \$100,00 at very a low interest rate, you can't invest that money to make the money that you're paying on your interest rate. Janet is not sure we can take that \$75,000. Janet spoke briefly to someone at the DRA, that money doesn't lapse until 2022 and do you want to leave that there for this year and next year in case big green decides to give up. Also, it doesn't mean that there is \$75,000 sitting in a bank it just means there is \$75,000 someone that the state says we haven't spent that we can spend.

Janet said with the discussion we just had with Pixie about the ballots, we have only appropriated \$300 dollars for printing charges for elections. The selectboard agrees that the ballots should be hand counted, so there is no reason to increase the line for election printing charges.

Dick discussed legal fees with Janet last week and looking down the road he feels that \$70,000 will not be enough. Dick proposes to bump that amount up to \$80,000 because if you look at the summary that he put together for last year, the items that are still ongoing are not going away. Tamara agrees with Dick's proposal. George disagrees, he feels that amount is too high. George stated before you people came into office our legal fees were \$10,000. Dick objects to George's comment. Dick stated the selectboard is are dealing with situations prior boards never had to deal with. George stated that Dick and Tamara chose to deal with them and go to court. Dick said we don't go out and pick someone to take to court unless there is a complaint. Dick and Tamara stand by the \$80,000 proposal.

Tamara stated the agricultural commission has requested \$500, there is no one present to provide an explanation as to why they are requesting that amount. The selectboard agrees they need to find out what the money is for before approving. The email states \$400 for programs and \$100 for miscellaneous. Tamara will contact someone from the agricultural commission to determine what the funds are going to be used for before the budget committee meeting.

Janet stated the other item, where she just put a number in, was the recreation department. They've asked for \$1000 the last couple of years, and generally only spent around \$300. With Covid, it's not likely there will be much activity, unless it's virtual. Considering all that, Janet put the amount in at \$300. Tamara has no problem reducing activities and programs to \$300.

**Board and Department Updates:**

George rode around with Troy this morning. The roads are looking good. They are putting springs in the little truck again. There was sand delivered today; they seem to be going through that faster than they can get it in.

George stated that the chairman of the planning board will not be running again. That will be a big loss. The planning board handed out their surveys at their meeting, which Janet said was preliminary.

Janet stated we had two slots open on the planning board, and as of right now we have two people running for office.

George brought up the concern about bob houses with the planning board. There was some discussion, and although nothing will get done in writing this year, they will continue to discuss the subject. Janet said the planning board has asked Alex, the circuit rider at the upper valley, to do some research on bob houses.

George mentioned that there is another petition concerning the Kennebec Mill going around town. George read it this afternoon and commented to the person that handed it to him there was nothing in there that had not already been dealt with. George just wanted to bring this to the selectboard's attention since he saw it.

**Correspondence/Signatures:**

- 1 Intent to cut.
- 2 Requests to carry over some unused vacation time for two employees.

At 5:46 p.m. Dick made a motion to enter into non-public session for personnel per RSA 91-A:3, seconded by George and unanimously approved.

The Board moved back into public session at 5:53 p.m. Tamara moved to seal the minutes of the non-public session, seconded by Dick. Tamara, Dick and George all voted in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 5:54 p.m.

Jill Hastings  
Deputy Administrative Assistant