

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

JANUARY 11, 2016

MEMORIAL BUILDING

7:00 P.M.

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

Selectmen present: Don Hill, Chairman; Leigh Callaway and George McCusker.

Others present: Road Agent, Peter Abair, Bryan O'Day, David Brown, and Paul and Amy Hoffman.

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

Village District Permit: Don reported the Village District had been to the Planning Board several months ago. The Selectmen were all set to sign the building permit two weeks ago, but tabled the decision due to Mr. Downes concerns. At that meeting, the Selectmen alluded they would not adjudicate a dispute between landowners, but wanted to be sure there was no legal risk to the Town before signing the permit. Subsequently, an e-mail from Mr. Downes prompted Don to telephone him. The ECA granted an easement to the Village District giving total rights for the VDE to do what they want with the land. The Village District has the right to occupy and build there. Leigh noted, from the Town's perspective, the Selectmen have no legal grounds to deny the building permit. The building permit was approved and signed.

Zaleskas Property: David Brown inquired as to the status of the building permit application he left two weeks ago for the Zaleskas property. Janet called Tom Duling and he hasn't made a site visit. The Board reviewed the application and everything appears to be in order. Leigh will confirm the measurements tomorrow with David. The Board agreed the permit could be signed if everything at the site appears to be in order.

Minutes of December 28, 2016: Leigh moved to approve the minutes as written, seconded by George and unanimously approved.

Personnel Manual: Leigh provided the updated language in a January 11, 2016 version. The change has previously been approved. The Board signed the updated version.

Budget Meeting Update: Leigh reported the Budget Committee challenged the \$15,000 appropriation for a code enforcement person. The BC would like more information as to what that person is going to do and how the position is going to be managed. Leigh asked if the Board could come up with a position description. Don stated there has been reluctance to delve too deep into this when currently there is an outstanding person handling the process in a casual, non-confrontational manner; sometimes dealing with difficult situations. Leigh noted "we" are venturing into a new area with more complex zoning being proposed. There has been a need for ongoing inspection and more frequent monitoring visits. Tom will still continue to be part of the operation for as long as he wishes to be. Leigh stated there needs to be more "boots on the

ground” inspections without it being a Selectman. He does not see this person needing to have specific office hours for now, and is viewing this as someone who will keep watch of construction, and also creating a procedure for the new wetland policies, if they are approved at Town Meeting. Leigh provided the Board with copies of a position description he created 4 years ago. George noted, in the past, set office hours were tried with the Zoning Assistant and that hasn’t worked out, people want service anytime they come in. The way it is handled now, Sue Abair is contacted if someone needs additional assistance, and she gets back in touch with them. George stated the Budget Committee is not likely to just approve 15K without knowing more of what the Selectmen are going to do with it. They will want a position description. Don suggested possibly taking a look at the # of applications and figuring out the # of hours involved in the process. Leigh stated the Selectmen would not be surrendering their responsibility of enforcement. This person would be the “eyes and ears” for the Selectmen. The Selectmen should not be spending their time measuring and monitoring.

Leigh presented the Board with a copy of the position description draft. George clarified that this position would not be someone going retroactively back to things that have happened in the past. Leigh noted the person would review and monitor new applications and would be following the direction of the Board of Selectmen. Tom Duling will still be involved to assist with the process, and the office staff will continue as at present.

Sand Shed: George asked if money had been appropriated in the budget to buy more blocks and put a roof on the sand storage area already started when the septic was redone? Leigh stated that with the money in the budget to have Charlie Hirshberg do more “boots on the ground” assessment of the property up back, there still could be the chance that the sand shed might move. Pete does not agree that sand storage should be back up in that area. It makes more sense to have it down closer to the garage. Don noted it will be nice to know what is available for options up there. There could be increased storage, keeping the area near the facility looking sharper and providing more adequate parking, especially since the building serves as the emergency shelter. Pete will get some prices on 18 more blocks and costs to build a roof over them. Leigh will add the amount to the non-recurring line in the budget. The Board was in agreement.

Highway Paving Budget: Leigh stated the Budget Committee was surprised by amount appropriated this year. The long range plan was something they had not expected. There was nothing suggested in the CIP to support this. Peter stated he could knock Hogg Hill off the list for this year. He feels strongly that Bowman and Stoney Brook Roads should still get done. To keep up with maintenance, he needs to make up for some years when paving wasn’t done. George stated Budget Committee would like to have more information as to what the plan is moving forward, and what has changed in the way paving has been done. Leigh stated he will sit down with Pete after Town Meeting and come up with a clearer plan for paving going forward. The Board agreed to remove Hogg Hill paving from the Unreserved Fund Balance. \$180K for Stoney Brook and Bowman Road will remain in the operating budget.

SCBA: Don reported on the January 5th meeting at the fire department regarding SCBA equipment. 10 units is the absolute minimum that the department needs. The equipment company does not do leasing. Leasing or financing would have to be found in the commercial lending market. Some Budget Committee members pointed out that money is relatively cheap to borrow right now and it may make more sense to finance rather than to pull funds from the fund balance. The age and acquisition date of the current equipment is still somewhat unclear. There may have another year or two of life left, but as noted on the CIP, a tanker is due to be replaced in the next year or two.

Cruiser: George noted replacement of the Police Cruiser has not come up in any of the discussions with the Budget Committee yet. A quote to purchase and equip a new cruiser is \$34,094 with a 5 year lease. Tim reported his current cruiser is 6 years old. The Board agreed a 5 year lease made sense.

Town Hall Opening: Leigh has spoken to Mason to open the Town Hall for the Primary on February 9th. Mason will decide whether to close it for a month before Town Meeting. A request to rent the Town Hall was received for March 5th. Town Elections are March 8th. Pete stated he likes to get the hall all set prior to the weekend before. The Board agreed not to rent the hall on the 5th as it will be set up for elections.

Board and Department Updates: Zoning: George reported the ZBA denied the appeal by Chris Fisher to rehear the Hazelton case.

Conservation: George reported, Jake Patten has started cutting at the Cemetery. The Conservation Commission will be hosting a presentation through the Audubon Society regarding eagles, and loons, etc. The CC received a decision from the DES regarding the disturbance at the Pratt property.

Don asked Leigh to sit in for him at the January 21st meeting of the Planning Board. Planning and Zoning will hold a joint hearing for Sue-Ann Connary. A Hearing on the proposed amendments to the Zoning Ordinance will also be held at the Planning Board meeting on the 21st.

School Board Meeting report: Leigh reported he attended the January 9th School Board Hearing. The budget is increased by 2% which does not include any of the Collective Bargaining Agreements which add an additional 300K to 400K per year over the next three years. The total budget is 40 Million, 780K. The State is downshifting a lot of the costs to the schools through unfunded mandates.

Correspondence: DES notices regarding on-site compliance evaluation for Durgin & Crowell and DES notice regarding inspection of the Pratt property.

Signatures: The Board reviewed and approved the Contract with George Sansoucy for 2016 assessment of Springfield Power.

Building permits approved: Eastern Communications to add an antenna on Oak Hill Tower, and Demarest, for a shed on Old Boston Road.

Intent to Cut for Haley on Bowman Road. Pete Abair stated they are planning on widening the driveway to get a tractor trailer in and off the road. Kevin Roberts met with him about the driveway opening. Pete has recommended lengthening the culvert.

Miscellaneous Business:

Leigh reported he traveled Old Grafton Road this morning and everything is hard and dry. Pete stated logging is to begin. Some areas have been widened and he will plow and maintain for safety. He spoke with Matt from CCM and they purchased an AWD truck to haul the boxes in and out and will transfer trailers at Route 4A.

The Board voted to adjourn at 8:45 p.m.

Submitted by,

Janet Roberts,
Administrative Assistant