

Selectmen's Meeting Minutes

Monday, August 24, 2020

At the Selectmen's meeting held on Monday, August 24, 2020 at 6:30 p.m. the Selectmen participated via Zoom:

Stanley Holz is at his home in Whitefield, maintaining social distancing.

Peter Corey is at his home in Whitefield, maintaining social distancing.

Shawn White is at his home in Whitefield, maintaining social distancing.

Chairman Holz called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

Bruce Brekke, Town Moderator, attended via Zoom to discuss the upcoming elections. We have the two elections coming up, September 8th, which is the day after Labor Day, and we are getting organized for it. He has three good information sources on what the changes are: NH Moderator group which is an email chain with different topics, NHMA that also provides election information and the Secretary of State office. Guidelines are updated daily. There are issues we are facing and several new challenges. The inconvenience of the Covid virus makes another complication. We have all the PPE standards and social distancing requirements. We are breaking in a new town clerk, and she is doing very well. Bruce is confident she will do a good job. She is very busy and seems very competent. One of the other problems is the new polling location. We will be here at the community room so we have to make certain adjustments to that and how we are going to lay everything out and keep everything in accordance with the Covid 19 state guidelines. Bruce thinks we will be in good shape. Nicci reached out to the high school and was able to get some portable standing partitions, which will be used for a break area for the poll workers. We just have to make arrangements to get them picked up. Absentee ballots will be put off another mail day with Labor Day the day before the primary. Most all of our workers are returning to work the polls this year. Bruce thinks we will be ok. He may pick up a couple extra people to accommodate any special needs that may come up that day. No one without a mask can enter the building. Stanley said he just received correspondence that said: Everyone will be required to wear a mask. If someone refuses to wear a mask, we have to have an outdoor polling place, and if they refuse to vote in either of these places the moderator has the right to turn them down and not let them vote. How are we going to resolve this issue should it arise? Chief Samson said the guidelines are there and if it turns into a larger issue the Police Dept. will be around. It is unique. We will just try to get that person removed and come up with a better plan. Ed said traditionally he has tried to be there. It will be easier with it being here. No one should have to deal with that. Bruce said his options will be to have them fill out the ballot in their car. We would need someone to carry the ID back to the check in desk to verify they are who they are and have them fill out the ballot in their car. Bruce said it is an allowed option. It was also suggested that we could have a separate room to have

people go in to fill the ballot out without a mask. If we want to do that, we can do that. The state is not going to pay for that. We will have to cover those costs. Peter was wondering if we could utilize the garage for the PD for that purpose. Ed said there is not much out there so it shouldn't be an issue. The Rec Dept. has several easy-ups that would work as well to set up something outside for people. Stanley said his preference would be a separate, discreet voting area. Bruce hopes it doesn't come to that. If they don't want to come in, just get the absentee ballot.

John Ross, Jr., Fire Chief, asked Bruce to email him the plan with sketch. John also asked if the parking lot will be striped and have one-way directions? Bruce said maybe we can set up cones. Bruce is concerned about parking. Not sure how many cars can park back there.

Rob said they can paint lines. They are adding to the parking lot next week. They are extending the parking lot and making it an actual parking area before the end of next week. The last day of rec is Friday so Melissa said she would imagine that the water line can be removed. It shouldn't be too hard to take that down. Fred said tell him when you are done with it and he will come pick all the materials up.

Melissa wondered about storing her materials? Is it ok for Melissa to store the after school program and rec stuff in the extra bathroom and the maintenance room. Mossy said not much can be stored in the utility room. Bruce said it would be more convenient to have a men's room and women's room. We are not offering public restrooms are we? No, just for the poll workers. Bruce said at the McIntyre they have unisex bathrooms and it works. The bathroom they are using is a full-sized bathroom. It is crowded in there. She is not sure what she is going to do with the materials. Shawn suggested the legion field snack shack. Ed feels it is pretty secure. If we can get some of that stuff out of there, she could put the rec stuff in there and they would still have access to the sink and toilet.

Bruce said that the Secretary of State has allowed Covid 19 to qualify for absentee ballots. Hopefully we won't have a lot of people on election day. We are getting a huge amount of absentee ballots. The Secretary of State has suspended a rule about when the absentee ballots are to be processed. They are going to allow the ballots to start being pre-processed on the Thursday before. They can get the paperwork out of the envelope, alphabetize it, and on Labor Day at 1 pm. we are going to pre-process the absentee ballots, which is something the Town Clerk does before election day. We will have everything sorted to be sure they are complete. The moderator takes them and announces the voter's name, checks them in and checks them out and puts them in the ballot box. The election officials can be there on Labor Day. All the Supervisors will be there, the Town Clerk will be there and Bruce will be there. The Selectmen are more than welcome to attend. He needs at least one selectman be in attendance at the polls. The Board is aware of that rule and can work it out when they can be there. Bruce said it would be nice to have law enforcement in attendance. Is there any kind of budget for incidentals that may not already be covered? There is \$6076 left in the election line item. Minor expenses are up

to their discretion. If there is a money crunch, we will know before the November election. The Secretary of State has sent a lot of the items for us. These are for both elections. There may be other things that may come up. Ed said he got the list of missing PPE items, and if any other items are needed let him know and he will reach out to our State Emergency Management Coordinator.

Bruce does he have a list of things he needs from the highway department that needs to be set up. Booths will need to be set up and partitions will need to be moved down. We may need highway cones out front, etc. Stanley said it would be a good idea to have a sign at McIntyre saying the voting is at the town office. If the highway could set up some type of sandwich board sign that would be good. We just need to get permission from McIntyre to place it. Bruce thinks he has it under control. We are having the state primary first so it will be a good break-in for the general election. This will be a good dry run for the General Election in November. A lot of this is brand new. Bruce thanked everyone for their time tonight.

There has been a vacancy in the Trustee of Trust Funds since town meeting. RSA 31:22 states that the Board of Selectmen shall fill all vacancies for the remainder of the term. Peter suggested a financial background would be helpful. We will put something on our website and in the newspaper to see if we can get any volunteers.

Department Head Meeting

John Ross, Jr. - Fire Chief

--The tanker was sold today for \$16,000 to the Town of Dalton.

--Would there be a selectman available to go to a meeting on Thursday night at the Lancaster Fire Station to sign an MOU with the State DOT for the dispatch services. Stanley will attend with John.

--In reference to the GOFERR Cares Act first responder payroll is something we can submit for reimbursement. There is about \$50,000 left in our allotment, and we would like to submit for payroll reimbursement. We have to have a public hearing to accept the funds, but we can get that scheduled. The Board was fine with this.

Ed Samson - Police Chief

--Ed said on the EMD side of things, we have been good with PPE for the Town. The state has been forthcoming with items we need. If there are any other departments that need something, Ed said to let him know. There are currently no active cases in Coos County, even with the constant flow of out of state vehicles.

--Steady summer PD wise with influx of traffic through town. We are going to transition the SRO's back in the school. School district is still 100% in support of these positions. The speed

patrols sign came in last week. Ed touched base with Rob and they are shooting for October to get those installed. Ed said we added money for speed enforcement and with everything going on it was overlooked. Ed will implement additional patrols for the speed patrols for the end of summer and when school starts. Shawn thanked Ed for taking care of the campers parked in the municipal lot. Ed said that there are some more unregistered cars that will be coming out of there as well.

--Peter asked what if someone parks a bunch of campers on a piece of property and they are not registered? Do they become taxed as real property? John Ross said we had one on West Forest Lake and the registration expired so Jason went down and will tax them. Peter said there is a guy who has started a collection of campers and he doesn't know if they are considered real property or junk on his property. You can have two unregistered vehicles, but campers don't count as vehicles. Ed said that issue has come up statewide especially with the influx of people coming in and placing campers on property.

Library - Courtney Vashaw

Courtney said the library has been low key. Library patrons are glad to be back in the building. They are fine with coming by appointment and wearing masks. A volunteer made some masks for the patrons and they have the paper masks available as well. It has been great. Circulation has been great. Courtney said that she is continuing to go to Rec. They did a get a shipment of books with a grant they won so the kids can take library books home this week. We will work with Weathervane as our community partner. We hope to expand our hours after Labor Day. They might have a web site within the next couple of months and we will keep everyone posted if that happens.

Melissa Farrow - Recreation

The last week of Rec is this week. It went pretty well. Patchwork Players came a couple of times, which the kids really enjoyed. We went to the Col. Town Pool and the Rialto following the guidelines. She is working on getting soccer up and running. It is out there so more people should sign up.

Melissa would like to hold the After-School Program. She feels the families need the stability and a place for their kids to go. She has spoken with the Superintendent and WW Berry. Having the program is contingent upon the bus company. Melissa said we will keep our number at a maximum of 20. The bus company can only take 24 kids per trip. They were going to charge us \$90 a trip for transportation, and Melissa was not comfortable with that.

Melissa said that she was proposing to be open Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, 3pm to 6pm and Wednesday, 7:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. The majority of the kids would be in grades 1-4. What does the Board think about this?

Stanley said it is hard to have an informed decision without knowing what the schools are doing. Here we don't have any actual cases and have withstood the cases. Stanley doesn't know how he feels about 20 kids on a bus though.

Courtney said she will continue to come visit and offer whatever services she can. She will be as helpful as she can.

Melissa said WW Berry has been very clear on the rules and regulations they have in place. Masks required at all times. Same kids in the same bus every day, and that is why she is throwing out the \$90 price because we may just need one bus for the after-school kids. The superintendent is on board with the rec program, but their priority is home to school and school to home. The Rec Program is considered a day care. The superintendent was waiting on her surveys to come back in. Melissa was hoping we might be able to pull some strings as we are a small community and we hate not to have this available for the families. We don't have an answer at this time. Shawn said that we have never had to charge for transportation in the past. She was thinking of not having the program if we have to pay the \$90 a day for the transportation. Peter said quick figuring it would cost us \$7,000-\$8,000 until the end of the year. How do you pick the 20 kids? Melissa said Whitefield residents only. If we have room after that we could open it up to other towns. Courtney said this is a public health issue. Young kids can't go home without adult supervision. Melissa is working on it. We won't know anything until everyone has their numbers. Melissa just wanted to be sure we were on board with four days and maybe five days. Melissa felt the school is on board, and this is important to our community. Shawn wondered about reaching out to the bus company and Shawn said he will look into this. The Board is ok with four days after school and on Wednesdays if we can work it out. Peter suggested charging some \$ amount per child for transportation. We could try it until the end of the year and see where we are at. Melissa wants to be sure she has her ducks in a row with staffing.

The last day of summer program is Friday.

Fred Ingerson - Water Department

--Lots going on with the construction company. Finished Jefferson Road as far as the main line. They have started around the common area. They did some cuts and taps to start the water main work and then they will be heading down Elm Street. Fred has been with them most of the time finding service lines, etc. They have started some of the clean-up work. They are definitely not done with any of that--they will go back with a punch list so they will go back and repair driveways or lawns that didn't get seeded properly.

--John Ross, Jr. asked if there is going to be a new hydrant at the end of the new line on Jefferson Road. There is a hydrant not too far from there. It will be connected to the old line by Shirlaw Drive. If there is money left over, there is plans to go further. That was a bid alternate to do the rest. The new line goes to Shirlaw Drive. There is another hydrant just beyond that if we go

ahead with that work. Fred thought that the DOT restrictions for the wetlands permit impacted that work.

Josh Welch - Wastewater Treatment Plant

--Everything is going ok. Everything is running. The new plant is making good progress. The wipes and plastics continue to be a problem in the UV unit. It has flooded the building a few times when we get big downpours. Shawn said those wipes are making it all the way to the UV? Josh said that they get wrapped in the cage in the UV unit and stop the flow and boil out the hatch before it and floods out the building. There are some getting through that shouldn't be. Rob asked about wipes and rags? Is it actually rags? There are wipes, plastics, and it seems like anything that will float up with the air that is in the lagoons. No, it is not rags. Rob wanted to clarify that.

--Josh said we had talked last year about putting in an extension pipe on the lagoon, which by the time the parts all came in the lagoon was froze over and Josh hasn't done it because he is skeptical if it will even work and he doesn't want to spend the money because it will be a lot of money to have it done and to have it not work. Do they want to try that? It will probably be \$15,000 to do it. He is not sure it is going to help. He wouldn't guarantee it would help.

Rob said can we get by until the new start-up in May from where we are now? It will be a short-term fix. If we can get something to keep us going until May that would be better. If a screen is a known-fix at a much lesser cost we would be better to go with that. Shawn would suggest a screen. Shawn said that would be a good first step. Let's get the screen done and see if it will help enough. Josh agreed.

Rob Larson - DPW

--Wastewater treatment project is coming along well. Put out an RFP and two companies have solicited. Utility Partners and Welch's. They are preparing their RFPs and questions. Deadline for questions is Friday.

--Atty. Frizzell in Lancaster is doing an easement for the ballfield—may or may not get this done this year.

--Started the Hazen Bridge project today. That road is officially closed. All parties effected have been notified.

--The trailer removal on Old East Road. Rob hasn't done anything with that because he is trying to figure out how he is going to do it. There are two campers in front of the trailer to be removed, and he doesn't want to remove the campers and violate any laws with personal property issues. The trailer itself was what was taken by tax lien. He can't remove the trailer without moving the campers. Peter said send the property owner a letter stating they have a certain amount of time to move the campers so we can get to and remove the trailer and see how they

respond. That is Peter's recommendation. Rob said to clarify the trailer was taken by tax deed but not the land. We can legally move the trailer, but we can't do anything with the land. Rob said he will work on getting a letter out.

--Rob said we did purchase a baler for the transfer station, which Shawn found in Maine. We have a second baler that we desperately needed. Rob said we also bought a compactor as well to replace our failing compactor. Both of these units are going to be professionally removed and transported to the transfer station.

--Rob has a list that he is going to send to the Board that the Department of Public Works is working on.

--Rob said he did purchase a GPS unit, which comes under the grant for the water project and will help with the asset management plan.

--We had a very successful Household Hazardous Waste Day on Saturday. We were able to get rid of some materials we have had for a long time.

--We want to finish up the sidewalks, but we need to finish up some of these projects.

--Shawn said a couple of months ago we spoke about documentation for overtime. Rob said it has not been done. Rob said there has been very little overtime. Shawn said if we can switch back to the omni forms time sheets, there is a place on there to list the reasons for overtime. Rob is currently using the time card machine. Shawn said when he is on vacation in September he would be willing to come in and spend time with Rob and go over the Omni forms for time sheets.

--Shawn asked Rob about the syphon. Rob said he is familiar with it.

--Melissa said we may want to get that alarm for the pump down back fixed before election day. It may scare people. The pump is on order so once it comes in it will be replaced. Shawn said it was a special company that came up and installed that system and hopefully there would be some documentation of what that pump would be. Rob will follow-up with Doug on that. Josh offered to take a look at it as well.

--Shawn had an issue with the \$9000 bill for the sidewalk paving. He thought Ed Stanley was going to lower that price if he got the Parker Road paving job. Peter said he does not remember that discussion. Rob said he will speak with Ed Stanley about that issue.

A motion was made by Peter Corey to approve the minutes of the August 10, 2020 Selectmen's Meeting. The motion was seconded by Shawn White. Roll call vote: Holz: Yes; Corey: Yes; White: Yes. All in favor, 3-0. Motion passed.

The Board worked on personnel policy revisions.

The Board asked Judy to ask the Department Heads to submit their completed employee evaluations and to check with Police Chief Samson on the quarterly prosecutor report.

The meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.