

Selectmen's Meeting Minutes  
Monday, September 28, 2020

At the Selectmen's meeting held on Monday, September 28, 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 6:30 p.m.

John Greer who is running for State Representative in Coos District 5 wanted to introduce himself. He said if elected he will be representing Whitefield and will do the best possible job he can do. He is well known in Twin Mountain. He worked on building committee for the new town hall. He knows Josh at the Village Gun Store and knows John Tholl, who had this seat before. He worked 40 years in the aluminum can manufacturing business. They have 5 children and love NH. He said he loves to be outdoors and he is here because of the environment. He moved here 20 years ago. The state motto "live free or die" is part of our history. NH is not like any other state in the country. We don't tell people how to live their lives. Taxes are lower than other states. We have a beautiful environment. He is running for state representative because he sees us losing these freedoms. They have passed a lot of new taxes. NH has low gun crime. He wants to work with the Governor to veto these bills. We must maintain the NH advantage, which is critical for NH and critical for the state. We attract people here because of this. He wants job providers to come here and people to come here. John said his website is: [johngreerfronh.com](http://johngreerfronh.com). Bruce Brekke asked John who now holds the office he is running for. Mr. Greer said that Edith Tucker is the current state representative and she has run two terms now. John Tholl served the office before Edith. Mr. Greer thanked the Board for allowing him to speak and introduce himself tonight.

Bruce Brekke, Town Moderator, wanted to do a quick review of the state primary election. He wanted to thank everyone who participated in the successful event. We met the challenges before us. The challenges he outlined, Covid, a new town clerk and adjusting to new polling place. The citizens were very cooperative with the Covid guidelines. Plexiglass and masks made it difficult to hear and communicate at times. 6 foot separation was violated a few times mostly on check-out. New town clerk did a good job. The parking was adequate, we just barely had enough space, and it was safe and friendly place to vote. Reconciling and counting was a long process, which it can be at times. We had a greeter outside at the door, which worked well. The rules for pre-processing of the ballots changed, which enabled towns to pre-process them one day before, which we did. This sped up processing on election day.



Looking towards the November election:

Presidential Primary in February:

2016: Total Ballots: 903 Absentee Ballots: 59 Registered voters: 1459

2020: Total Ballots: 726 Absentee Ballots: 62 Registered voters: 1493

State Primary in September:

2016: Total Ballots: 337 Absentee Ballots: 24 Registered voters: 1462

2020: Total Ballots: 495 Absentee Ballots: 125 Registered voters: 1531

General Election

2016: Total Ballots: 1,166 Absentee Ballots: 120 Registered voters: 1488

2020: What we do expect is the absentee ballots is going to sky-rocket, already over 125 when Bruce spoke with the Supervisors of the Checklist the other day. We also expect the amount of registered voters to go up and people showing up at the polls will increase. We are going to have large numbers in November. The required number of voting booths will increase to 15-16. RSA 658:9 says we should have one voting booth for every 100 on the checklist. That can be altered with permission from the Secretary of State, but not less than one booth for every 125 voters.

Recommendations: Find a proper venue to safely accommodate our voters, i.e. McIntyre, Mountain View Grand, Whitefield School, WMRHS. As an alternative, consider putting in a second polling location for A-L then another location for M-Z. That would be confusing. If the town building is to be used, we should consider some kind of shelter for the greeter and voters. Bruce expects bad weather. We should purchase portable petitions rather than borrowing them, and they could be used in the future. Recruit more ballot clerks, will lead to shorter shifts and fewer mistakes. We are going to have many absentee ballots and we are going to need more clerks to process the ballots during the day. The N.H. Election Procedure Manual for 2020-2021 has many best practices to run our election, written with Covid changes. We have plenty of time to figure things out. Bruce said he is not sure we can go back to the downstairs.

Stanley asked if any thought has been given to the March meeting? Unlikely McIntyre will have their facility open to the public. March has the town meeting at night. Downstairs with the meeting at night won't work in March. That is a valid problem/issue we have. Stanley asked Bruce if he discussed the option with the Presidential Hall with Mr. Diego. Bruce said he would defer that to the Selectmen.

Peter Corey was wondering if there is a way to use the fire station that day? Fire Chief Ross said that November would be ok but not in March. The schools are in session on those voting days so that would be an issue. It is going to be a challenging road ahead. A lot of things will need to be worked out. Stanley suggested that we could send some letters out and ask the feasibility about using the facilities for voting.

Department Head Meeting:



John Ross, Jr., Fire Chief/Health Officer said in reference to Halloween, the state has some guidelines, which don't say a lot. Wednesday at noon there is a meeting with health officers throughout the state with New Hampshire Municipal Association to discuss halloween. John thought we should wait until after that meeting to make a decision. CDC considers this a high risk. Not looking good.

Chief Samson is not in attendance tonight, but Stanley said that he submitted a report on the prosecutor position.

Fred - Water Department:

Construction is coming along. Elm Street will be finishing up. New employee started today. Fred introduced him around today. Stan asked if we have any water conservation plans? Fred said that we have not yet. So far we are good. Chief Ross said that we have been getting a lot of calls with people's wells running dry. We are filling tanks and keeping track of it and people are paying for it.

Peter Corey asked about the plan for cleaning up Union Street, the fire hydrant by Dunkin Donuts looks like it raised up. Fred said that they have a crew on Jefferson Road doing clean-up then they will go back on Union Street for clean-up. We will have to wait until they do the services before completing the clean-up. We are still waiting from DOT if the hydrant will be accepted or not. Railroad is fine with it waiting to hear on DOT. Stanley asked if they are leaving Jefferson Road as a turnip farm? Fred said they used those due to the drought and lack of water. Shawn White asked what came with Park Construction and the issues Shawn and others have observed. Rob said he went down and spoke with them. Rob spoke with them and put their flaggers on notice and spoke with the lead person who called the company president of the flagger group and talked to them while he was there. They were reprimanded on it and Rob is keeping an eye on it and it is better. Shawn said today on the way home on Elm Street at Otis Street there was a piece of equipment and a Park pick-up truck and a personal truck in the middle of the road with no traffic control. Shawn went up to the person and he explained he couldn't block the road, and the response Shawn got was we have been doing it all day. Shawn said that it doesn't look like it is getting taken care of. Fred said this morning he noticed the same thing when the crew was working on the drainage. Fred did mention it to the Bob Erickson and he did speak to them about that. Fred is not sure where it went from there. Fred said maybe Horizons should be contacted as to why they didn't take care of the issue. Shawn said he saw it at 4pm so it wasn't taken care of. We need to write a letter and put our foot down. Rob said he will take care of it in the morning.

Melissa was not in attendance but asked if the After School Activities Program could be open on early release days. The Board felt that there is no reason not to.

Courtney Vashaw - Whitefield Public Library



She is trying to partner with the remote teachers at the school to get books into kid's hands. Resource acquisition as some students don't do well with digital materials. Trying to brainstorm some ideas to help with that. Will be doing the book mobile at the ASAP once it is organized. Courtney said the building has been aired out with the nice weather. Coming into colder weather, the older libraries and lack of HAVC is an issue to try to keep them safe and properly air handled during the winter season. What may we need to do or not do? The windows are open as much as possible and it has been successful. That is not going to work in a couple of weeks. Rob and Chief Ross might have some input on this. Courtney said it is a conversation, but she is not aware of any requirements. A lot of these buildings are very old and ventilation is important. Chief Ross said that the schools got portable units to make the air better. He will reach out to them and see what they got. It is a huge open space. It probably would be an eligible item through the CARES act grant, but it needs to be done by 10/15.

Courtney said she got an estimate from Servpro to deal with the basement, and they can do it pretty quickly. Any way to get some guys for a couple of hours to help with that final cleanout in the basement. They took away a lot of equipment a couple of years ago and she needs help with lifting. Give her a day or time and she will be there. Rob will get it scheduled.

Peter said thanks to Courtney and Bruce with dealing with difficult situations.

Rob Larson, Public Works Department

Bridge is 99% complete. Paving will be done Friday morning. He would like the Selectmen available at lunch time or shortly after for a photo. Stanley can't make it that day. Peter said why don't we do it when we all can be there. It will be rescheduled. Chief Ross said if the bridge won't be open until Friday, has he let everybody know? It was dated for tomorrow to be open. Rob said that he will let people know.

Water project - Fred gave us an update. The sidewalk on Elm Street where it used to rise up by 29-31 Elm Street DOT and sidewalk compliance is going to be an issue. Horizons recommended to stop the sidewalk at 29 Elm Street and go across by Otis Street and go down Elm Street and back over by Cross Street. Rob doesn't like that idea. He wants to speak with the landowners to see about 18 inches to make it ADA compliant. Is it something we can get a waiver on or possibly move that retaining wall back?

The truck bed for Fred's GMC , Rob said that he wanted to sell it. He has a buyer at P&L in Berlin who offered \$750. He has tried selling it before and didn't get any response. Shawn said that the truck body at one time had \$1800 offers. Those trucks are starting to deteriorate. Shawn thinks \$750 is too low. Shawn will make some phone calls to insurance places. \$750 is too low for that. If Shawn can find a buyer then that would be good for Rob. Stan and Peter were ok with that.



Took an oil tank out of the Highland Street property and Rob would take it if the Board would allow it. We have two from North Street demolition at the town garage. Shawn said he believes it is a conflict of interest--it is a slippery slope and it doesn't look good. That is his opinion on it. Peter said if it is a public elected official then it has to go out to bid. In terms of an employee, doesn't believe the rules are the same. If the town has to pay to mitigate the removal or disposition of that item and nobody else in the department is interested in it Peter is ok for Mr. Larson taking it for his personal use. Stanley would like to see a hold harmless agreement before he takes it. Shawn said he is not in favor of it.

Rob said he is asking the Board to agree to allow Rob to put a non-potable faucet on the common. Past policy it is not allowed on the common. Need it to water the grass and plants. Shawn said that we used to have a faucet on the common. That faucet has been abandoned. We need to know what we want installed there for the use of the water. What happened to that faucet? It was hit in the winter and was not labeled so it had to be labeled or removed so it was removed. Can Rob put another self-draining faucet there labeled non-potable and will be under lock and key? Does it require a back flow preventer? It has a back flow preventer. It still has the contamination issue and it will have a meter. Peter is fine with it. He thought we had a lockable faucet on the common. Shawn feels there needs to be one.

Highland Street demo is done. The mobile home owner on Old East Road was notified giving them 30 days to move the campers so the mobile home can be removed.

Rob is working on the emergency water plan, which is due in March.

Rob said in reference to the Water Department pay scale, Rob would like the Board to approve the wage scale that he gave them. He feels it is justifiable with all the requirements required. Shawn said at the last meeting he told the Board he is working on a pay scale schedule and waiting for people to get back to him, and he doesn't see why it has to be approved tonight. We have a new hire, Fred, and a budget moving forward. It will have to wait until town meeting. Is there a need to approve it tonight? Rob said he just needs the scale to prepare the budget coming up. He doesn't like waiting until the last minute and if he knows the scale he can move forward. Peter suggested that Rob prepares his budget with what he thinks he needs, and we will go from there.

A tenant purchased Bob Stiles property on Maple Street. He is looking for an easement for that sewer line on Maple Street. They are willing to give us an utility easement for the benefit of the They are contacting a lawyer to draw something up.

Rob said that we have finalized the water user rate and would like to present it to the Board. He will send it via email in preparation to discuss at the next Board meeting.

Wastewater Facility sealed bid opening. We have received one bid. It is up to the board to open that and we have 30 days to respond. Rob said that the Welch's decided not to bid due to Terry's



health issues. The bid was from H2O Innovation, Inc. Part A - Price Proposal Whitefield WWTP Operations & Maintenance: \$196,813 a year. Part B - Price Proposal Whitefield Wastewater Collection Operations & Maintenance: \$86,176/year.

Shawn said he has a couple of things for Rob:

There used to be a timer switch in the downstairs community room so the fresh air ventilation could be turned on. The switch is gone. Rob said that was gone when he got here. It was a timer switch you turned for 30 minutes so we could get fresh air ventilation. Shawn suggested that Rob call VHV so they could sell us one or guide us in the direction to get one. It would be nice to put back in for fresh air.

Shawn said that there is a bunch of jugs with water in them on Brown Street across from the town garage. The Police Chief got those tested and there is nothing hazardous in them. It is just old, dirty water. Rob said that we weren't sure and technically they are on the Brown Street property. They are not on town property. It looks like it is dirty water. Rob said we are not sure how we want to handle this. Shawn said it is easy for us to pick them up. and it is in the town ROW to the old roadway. They have been there for a couple of weeks. Shawn thinks we should get rid of them. Ed had them tested nothing hazardous or dangerous. Rob said he will get rid of them.

Stanley said he was driving on Kimball Hill Road, and there were hundreds of beer cans in the road and off to the side of the road. Rob said he will look into that.

A motion was made by Peter Corey to approve the minutes of the September 14, 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 meeting adjourned at 7:40 p. m.