

Selectmen's Meeting Minutes
Monday, March 22, 2021

At the Selectmen's meeting held on Monday, March 22, 2021 at 6:30 p.m. the Selectmen participated via Zoom:

Peter Corey is at his home in Whitefield, maintaining social distancing.
Shawn White is at this home in Whitefield, maintaining social distancing.
John Tholl is at his home in Whitefield, maintaining social distancing.

Chairman Corey called the Meeting to order at 6:31 p.m.

Committee Assignments: Planning Board, Economic Development and Airport. Shawn is currently on the airport, and Peter is on the planning board. There is an opening for the economic development. Shawn said he would like to stay on the airport, as they are working on getting machinery for the airport and he is heavily involved with that and would like to stay on the. John says he doesn't have a lot of interest in the WEDC. Peter said he has been on the planning board plenty of times. John said he is comfortable with serving on the planning board, and he has been on it in the past. Shawn said that he is fine with that. Peter will move to WEDC, and John will go to the Planning Board.

Review Rules of Procedure: Peter wanted to make sure that everyone is comfortable with the rule regarding who serves as chair, the senior member of the board. John and Shawn are fine with that. John said he feels it is the appropriate move. The senior member is usually the more experienced one to do that. Is there anything in there we might want to consider modifying and changing? Judy had thought maybe we want to incorporate something re: zoom. Peter is fine with the way they are. Shawn said he looked them over and because this is all going to go away once the pandemic is under control, he feels they are fine for now. John agrees. Judy will fix the meetings are held on the second and fourth Mondays, not first and third.

Revenues and Fee Schedules: Peter said in years past we seem to be looking at the revenues and fees haphazardly, as things come up. It is probably something we should look at on an annual basis. When we have increases in the various departments then we can maybe look at an increase in some of the user fees to cover the fees for the activities in those departments. The Board agreed that we will ask the Department Heads to compile a list of their fees and what they feel the fees should be, which they can review with the Board. Should we increase some of the user fees to cover the user fees for the activities in those departments? Shawn said that he doesn't have a problem with it. Shawn if we could ask them to put data in there, why this feel should be raised or lowered for those types of fees. He would like to see justification. John says it makes sense to look at them at one time rather than peace meal. It is better to have one public hearing. Judy will ask the department managers to compile the information for their fees with justification to be reviewed at the April 22nd meeting.

Rob Larson said he was looking for approval for \$7,989 related to the heating system to put in the highway garage. He would like to take this out of the town buildings capital reserve fund. This is for the plumbing materials we need to connect to the heating system. He would like to get this purchased before the increases coming for April. Prices are going to go up in April for materials. Peter said he heard that PVC plumbing pipe went up 22% in one week. Shawn said his concern is a while ago, it was October or November, the Board asked Rob to try to buy that with the money he had in his budget last year, as there was an excess amount that wasn't being spent. Why wasn't it done last year? Rob said we didn't have the specs on the unit itself from the vendor. It was going through an EPA upgrade. We didn't have details until December, and didn't receive the unit until about two weeks ago. Shawn was wondering what is in the operating budget for the highway garage. Shawn said he doesn't want to take it out of the capital reserve fund so early in the year. The Board agreed to take it out of the highway budget rather than the capital reserve funds. Rob needs authorization to pay the bill for \$7,989. Shawn would like to get back to doing the pre-approvals, anything over \$2,000 that there is a purchase order and pre-approval for the board to sign that. The board agrees we should follow the procurement policy. Rob said that all he has now is a quote. Shawn said write up a purchase order with pre-approval written at the top, and then you can get the materials. It doesn't have to come to a meeting, as long as it is signed. Mr. Larson will do up a pre-approval for the board's review and approval.

Sondra Brekke wanted to ask Rob a question about recycling. Is there a chance we can get back to recycling junk mail? Rob would love to except it costs us now to get rid of it. The market is so bad we can't even get rid of the plastics. That is an issue we need to talk about how to get rid of items we have now. Is there a way to hold it at the transfer station? Rob said no. Cardboard and paper cannot get wet. We just don't have the space for a large amount of paper. We do have space for corrugated cardboard.

Revised Water & Sewer Rates – public hearing on April 12, 2021. The Board does not see that as a problem. The Board asked Rob to speak to how this was derived. Rob said that Joyce worked on this. We will start paying the bond this year, and it is a fixed cost, which we need that income to go up for that fixed cost rate to go up. It is a fixed cost expense for that. We have to guarantee that we collect the money for the bond payment. We knew this was coming. Joyce did her best to keep it realistic. Is there enough money in those rates to provide for any capital expenses repairs? Shawn said it appears that the sewer rate is more than doubling. Rob said the increase in the treatment plant budget is \$117,779, and the bond payment for the year is \$176,329 so we did what we could to keep that increase down. It is a lot of money to ask people for. Peter pointed out that at the start of the process our water/sewer rates were unrealistically low and we needed to bring them into line with what they should be. We are somewhere in the middle of the pack, certainly not the highest. Pete said he doesn't know how else to soften that blow. Shawn said he figures that he has paid \$600 a year for water and sewer and with these increases he will go to \$1,700. Rob said he can restructure a tier type rate so that manufacturing and commercial users pay different rates. He can look into that, but he doesn't want to drive out

businesses. Presby Plastics is a good example of that, but they pay the same meter rate as a residence. Shawn said we don't have time to do it that way for this billing. Rob said he can look into that and work out a plan. Peter said it is worth looking at, but we don't have a tremendous amount of manufacturing or businesses to swing that too much. The hearing will be in April 12th at 6:45 p.m. This new rate structure will be in effect with the bills we are sending out in April. We are doing this rate so we can get the bills out. Joyce had done up a preliminary rate for the water and sewer. The water rates may need to be tweaked a bit to cover the budget. April 12th Joyce had said she is ready to go with quarterly billing. The board is fine with this. This next bill will be for ½ a year, last fall to now, then the quarterly billing cycle will start on the next bills.

The Cemetery Trustees were asking who will be making the arrangements for the survey? Rob said that he will take care of that, and he will coordinate with Mrs. Pinkham. Once it is complete, she wants to make sure there are clearly identifiable boundaries. Rob said that they typically do that. Rob said he knows for a fact that one survey we did have done last year for that one boundary line for the homeowners on Pine Street part of those residences, 4 or 6 of them have encroached upon the town property by extending their lawns and putting up fences and sheds. Is there anything we want to do about that? Peter said let's see where the boundary line is first then we can address that issue. Rob said four of them are pretty significant. Shawn said he thinks he knows where the boundary lines lie, and there are some sheds and other items on town property. We will figure it out when the survey is done professionally. She asked about the cemetery trustees meeting at the town hall, and the Board is fine with that until the weather warms up and they can meet up at the cemetery again.

Sewer Treatment Plant boundary line - Mr. Chase came up to Peter and Scott Burns during the polling and expressed his displeasure that some of the fencing at the sewer treatment plant was on his property. Peter asked Mr. Larson to check, and he provided a map. We knew the boundary lines had been surveyed. That is apparently the case for about 100 feet. It is over about 10 feet on Mr. Chase's property. Mr. Chase did not ask us to remove it. It was an open-ended complaint. Not sure why the fence was put there. Could the fence be moved by the public works department back on to our property? Shawn doesn't think it will be a small feat to do this. There are trees on both side of that fence. When the plant was done in the 1980's it was a federal loan back then and not sure how this happened. It was suggested acknowledging to Mr. Chase that a portion of the fence is on his property and see what he would like the town to do about it. Rob said those trees have been cut already so they are not in the way. The fence is in bad need of repairs because of trees falling on it over the years. He was going to see if we could get a new fence through the grant and if we could squeeze some money out of the grant. If that is the case, we can lower the location of the fence by the 10 feet we need. He can pursue that as well. Shawn said he doesn't have an issue with it. Shawn thought it looked the boundary line went through the middle of the parking lot, up by the original sewer building. It is a green line and goes right through the parking lot. If that is the boundary line, it does appear that way. We may

need to look into this a little further. Rob will get with Peter. Who has that plan? Rob said it is in Chief Ross's office. Peter will stop by and take a look at it and we will go from there.

A motion was made by Shawn White to approve the minutes of the March 8, 2021 Selectmen's Meeting Minutes. The motion was seconded by Peter Corey. Roll Call Vote: Peter-Yes, Shawn-Yes, John abstained. Motion passes, 2-0, with one abstention.

Shawn asked if we could move the meeting of April 26th to April 19th. The Board was fine with this.

A motion was made by Shawn White to enter non-public session at 7:01 p.m. pursuant to NH RSA 91-A:3, II(a) the dismissal, promotion, or compensation of any public employee or the disciplining of such employee, or the investigation of any charges against him or her, unless the employee affected (1) has a right to a public meeting, and (2) requests that the meeting be open, in which case the request shall be granted.

The Board adjourned from non-public session at 7:31 p.m.

The meeting adjourned at 7:31 p.m.