

Selectmen's Meeting Minutes

Monday, August 10, 2020

At the Selectmen's meeting held on Monday, August 10, 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.

Old Business

Hazen Road Bridge Project

Mr. Larson said if we want to use the Northern Borders Grant we can't touch the bridge until October. The grant application process opens October 1st. Stanley suggested that Rob reach out to Troy Merner and he may be able to assist with some funding. Troy said a lot of projects were scaled back because of Covid. Stanley suggested Troy and Rob get together and see if there are some paths or avenues for funding they can look into. Mr. Bean is proposing to start the bridge project in September or October. Shawn said his recollection is correct when we met a month ago when he wanted to secure the money. The Board said we were going to move along even if we have to take the funds out of the money we have set aside in the road repairs capital reserve fund. Rob said there will be a shortfall, but he thinks he can cover it in highway/bridge budget. Prices keep going up, contractor prices go up, and Shawn believed the Board authorized him to go ahead. Stanley Holz said that we have to go ahead with the project. Hopefully we can get some grant money to defer the costs. We had to do it this year. We don't have a choice. Shawn said we are not assured we will even get a grant if we put it off until spring. We have all those variables. We will keep moving forward and try to find some avenue for funding. Peter Corey said Shawn is right, it was the grant was a hopeful thing, but the commitment was the project was going to get done. We made that commitment and we reaffirmed that a month ago, and the issue now is to figure out where the money is going to come from. Peter asked Rob about the Northern Borders is for the septage receiving station--could a priority be shifted so more work gets done on the septage receiving station so we can pay down or draw down on that grant. What is going on with ensuring that gets paid out with components of the wastewater grant is paying for that? Rob said that we are looking at the last week of September or the first week of October for that 75% benchmark to be met. DES has to approve the job is done to their specifications. Rob said one way or another the bridge will get done, and he will reach out to Troy and Wright Pierce

Troy Merner, State Representative Coos District 7, asked to attend the meeting to try to clear up some misconceptions. Troy said the represents 12 towns, and he said all the towns have opposed the House Bill 1319 that would have basically shut down AVR RD.

Troy said that there was a DOT study done for Whitefield. Troy said false rumors were circulating of 90 trucks a day going through Whitefield. Troy said that when you say 90, it includes pick-up trucks and other smaller vehicles. Troy said the DOT study stated the trucks coming up with garbage will be about 30 trucks a day.

Stephen Walker said that nobody thinks this is a good idea. What is Troy doing to help us fight this, aside from the bill? Aside from the bill, there is nothing Troy can do. Troy said as of now, no application has been submitted. Troy said it is a three year process. There are things that can be done now. Troy said that the towns' main concerns with HB 1319 was all the towns in this area take their trash to AVR RD or Bethlehem. There are only three transfer stations in the state, Rochester, AVR RD and Bethlehem. All our haulers are petrified what it will cost the taxpayers if we have to haul Rochester.

We have talked to Carberry to draft the new bill that exempts Carberry specifically. It is an easy fix. All the towns have to sign off on this, they need to understand the consequences going forward if we shut down Bethlehem and AVR RD. Sara Doucette said it is a very easy fix as long as Carberry will give us the language. It is not that difficult. Troy represents 12 towns. Troy was asked if he would go on record right now if you are for or against the landfill in Dalton. Troy said they have the right to apply for it. There is no application submitted yet. Troy said he feels it will work out. Troy said the process has to be clean, transparent on both sides. People haven't been fair. Sara Doucette said that there are three organizations actively working on this, one being Forest Lake Association, and we do it the right way.

Stanley said this is a Selectmen's Meeting, and Troy asked to be here. If anyone has one other questions for Troy, Stanley suggests they get in touch with Troy at his office. We need to conduct our business. Not too many of us think it is a great idea, but they haven't filed an application yet. Whitefield would only have standing if it is deemed of regional impact. This is a Selectmen's meeting tonight not a hearing on the proposed landfill.

Sara Doucette said that she just wants to point out that there was a lot of challenges to meet the needs of Carberry and the communities. This is a fresh start in the new legislative session. It needs to be inclusive of everyone's needs.

Troy was asked if there is work going on for the net metering for the solar. Troy said that we are going to do the best we can, and we are pretty confident we can sit down and get this hammered out. Went to FERC on metering and they lost their case two weeks ago, which is good news for the Whitefield project going forward.

Sondra Brekke asked if Casella hasn't applied for their permits, what is the status right now? Troy said that Casella right now is reapplying for their final piece in Bethlehem and will work on the Dalton project afterwards. It was noted by one of the Zoom attendees that Casella plans to apply for alteration of terrain and wetlands permit in August. There will be two applications coming in mid-August, probably in the next week or so.

Troy said he wanted to make it brief tonight so please contact him and he can come to any meetings. They will be filing bills the end of September. Anything else we can help with the Town, please let Troy know. Troy said if he gets re-elected he should be a ranking member on the energy committee. He said he is always there for his constituents and he is following the issues.

Stanley said the Town understands the problems with having a landfill in Dalton. We don't get anything from it and it is not what we want at Forest Lake. When the Town has some standing, he doesn't think the Selectmen would be favor of it. It is too early to legally get involved. We have to wait until the public comment period.

Lee Petruk, 9 Tuckaway Lane, said they are digging a new water line in front of their house now. They had a water connection that Bob Stiles put in and basically it ran through the neighbor's yard. In the meantime the field used to be dry and every year when they have it bush-hogged it the area gets less and less every year. Water from a water leak has been filling up their yard for the past 8 years. A few years ago we were going to have a trench dug and it was going to cost \$2,000. It is now going to cost anywhere from \$3,500 to \$7,500 because the land is wet and they can't just bring a small machine to dig it. They pay taxes on this land and it has been unusable. Could the Town do something to assist with the water line hook-up?

Stanley Holz said that it is a private line and it leaks. Stan said it is leaking approximately 20,000 gallons a day. It is not a town line--it is a private line. Fred and Rob had spoken to Lee about this. Rob said he is empathetic with them. We are addressing a lot of these inadequate lines that were done some time ago. We did put in a new curb stop and connection to accommodate them. We tied them into the old line in hopes that field would dry up in August, and hopefully they could dig the trench up in there. They can use that old line until next year, and let that field dry out and next spring or summer dig that trench then. Mr. Larson suggested that they keep that thing mowed so the sun can dry that out.

Lee said we have known for years that it is leaking. Stanley said the town can't go in and fix a private line. Fred showed them it was leaking out of the pipe on the road. Rob said that is your pipe. It was on their side of the curb stop so it is their private water line that is leaking. They can put a curb stop straight out from their home. They are currently on the old water line that is not leaking, and they can stay like this until the field dries up. They are the only ones on the line at this time. Lee said that she is going to wait until it dries out and hook directly to the line. There are currently no leaks on the line. Lee thanked the Board.

Rob wanted permission to seek an easement from the Legion field to run across the parking lot to go to the ball park for the water line. The Legion said it is o.k. The Board was in favor of seeking an easement for the water line across the Legion field.

A motion was made by Shawn White to approve the minutes of the July 27, 2020 Selectmen's Meeting. The motion was seconded by Peter Corey. Roll call vote: Holz: Yes; Corey: Yes; White: Yes. All in favor, 3-0. Motion passed.

A motion was made by Peter Corey to enter into non-public session at 7:15 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 the right to a public meeting, and (2) requests that the meeting be open, in which case the request shall be granted. 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 adjourned from non-public session at 7:40 p.m.

The meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.