



BOARD OF SELECTMEN
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BOARD MEETING MINUTES
February 27, 2020
9:00 A.M.

Selectmen Present: Daniel Baker, Robyn Bates, Charles Kenison

Guests: Ed Atkins, Kim Heald, Dana Pinney

Mr. Baker called the meeting to order at 9 a.m.

PRIMARY:

PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Bates shared that the majority of people she spoke to at George Emerson School were not in favor of the feasibility study. The board discussed that they felt the article should have been broken out for the two schools. Troy, Fitzwilliam and Swanzey – would have been more suitable for the towns – consolidating schools by area. The majority of parents like their small school feel. The health and safety issue at Emerson School is the heating. Pipes are below the ceiling, if one burst this could be a hazard to the children. It isn't apparent that there are major issues. Mr. Baker shared that local schools can't be maintained. It's been that way for so long – he asked if it has come to that that we can't afford local schools.

Ms. Bates would like to put a sign out in the common to make sure people are aware of the meeting to discuss this matter. She (Bates) hoped people vote to what matters to them.

***** APPROVE MANIFESTS**

Ms. Bates made a motion to approve the manifests, Mr. Kenison seconded. Mr. Baker – Yes, Ms. Bates - Yes, Mr. Kenison - Yes. Approved – 3-0

***** REVIEW SIGNATURE FOLDER – The Selectmen reviewed and signed**

9:30 MEET WITH EILEEN ROY

Eileen Roy shared that she no longer has an attorney. Mr. Baker reviewed what had transpired with the five acre property that was taken by the Town for tax deed. Mr. Baker explained the process for the Town to sell property that has been taken by the Town. The Board will try to work with Mrs. Roy. Mrs. Roy shared why the property was subdivided and she thought it would be part of her mother's property and after a turn of events, Mr. & Mrs. Roy were expected to purchase the five acres, which they were not able to do so.

Mr. Baker would try to work with Mrs. Roy by putting the land up for sale at the same time Mrs. Roy would be selling her home. It was hoped that the buyer of Mrs. Roy's home would also bid on the five acre property. Ms. Bates shared that the Town typically tries to sell for the evaluation but it doesn't always happen. Mr. Kenison asked if her attorney was working on her having access to her leach field. Mrs. Roy thought that he was. It is valued at \$26,900. Ms. Bates shared that the Board could write a letter and put out to bid at the same time she was selling her home. Ms. Favreau shared that it was an open bid and someone could bid and purchase the property and not purchase her home. Mr. Baker stated they would try to time it so the opportunity was afforded.

Ms. Favreau noted that Mrs. Roy's deed included an easement for the septic system and the garage. Ms. Bates asked Mrs. Roy if it was an option for her to bid on and win the bid. Mrs. Roy stated that she doesn't have the funds to purchase. Ms. Favreau would determine the back tax amount and the Board will follow-up with Mrs. Roy to determine if she would want to sell her home without the five acres or the Selectmen time the sale and Mrs. Roy bid on the five acres. Ms. Bates thought that it would be more appealing for a potential buyer for her to own both properties. After discussion the Selectmen would get the tax amount to determine the minimum bid and they would write a letter for the Realtor. The Selectmen asked Mrs. Roy to

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keep them informed and they would be willing to listen to any options that her realtor might have. The Selectmen would make it clear that they were willing to work with Mrs. Roy.

Mrs. Roy thanked the Selectmen for their time.

10:00 MEET WITH VOLUNTEER BROADBAND TASK FORCE

- Group structure
- Survey
- Grants
- Nondisclosure agreement – Consolidate Communications

Dana Pinney and Kim Heald met with the Selectmen to get approval for some of the work that has been done by the Volunteer Broadband Task Force in order for them to move forward. Mr. Pinney shared that the newsletter insert was done. Ms. Heald suggested adding to Facebook information noting that they received information and include an active link. Another reminder would be done in two weeks with another link. Ms. Favreau will post on the Town's website. Mr. Pinney shared that the newsletter was a good way to get this information out and also having the Selectmen add a little blurb to their newsletter updates. Ms. Favreau would add the information under the Selectmen's section in next month's newsletter and would post on the website. Ms. Heald would post to Facebook.

The non-disclosure was discussed. The Volunteer Broadband Task Force was getting this information at the request of the Board of Selectmen. The volunteers would need to sign as individuals. Ms. Favreau asked if we should wait to sign the non-disclosure. The Board agreed.

Ms. Bates mentioned that the update from NHMA was received about federal granting of a bond. Mr. Pinney shared they have gone to SWRPC and watched a couple of webinars of previous meetings and the meeting they attended. On the federal level those are proposed laws and he (Pinney) thinks there are issues that if go down the road of SB 170 and accept bonds they come with restrictions, almost like having a lien on your house. Mr. Baker stated that any grant would complicate a clear path. The Board needs to make a decision to keep abreast of the other alternative issues and doesn't mean we would deviate from our path. Ms. Heald shared that it was important to find out what grants are out there. Connecting with the Monadnock Broadband has made it easier.

Discussion was held on gathering information to be able to compare apples to oranges in order to know what would be comparable. Mr. Pinney stated that once we have WiValley, Argent and Consolidated Communication having a coverage map, keeping the company identify private it shows served and unserved with Broadband. Ms. Heald shared that they needed to keep an eye on what information can be shared.

Mr. Pinney contacted Carol Miller, Department of Business and Economic Affairs, Economic Development Administrator to Broadband technology. She would be happy to come and visit with any town to explain funding. Ms. Miller was also willing to come to any Board meeting. Mr. Baker stated he felt that the sooner the better. Ms. Miller would help to show the path. Mr. Pinney also spoke with Tammy Gelais, Executive Director at NH Bond Bank and she offered to come and present information to any town. Both Ms. Miller and Ms. Gelais shared that the Broadband Attorney should be brought in now to get on a retainer and not billed until after Town meeting next year. The Town could chose to pay that bill or have it incorporated into the bond, if approved at the Town meeting.

Mr. Pinney shared they have copies of RFPs from four towns and they could get more. The Task Force has read some of them and they are not vastly different. The proposal for Fitzwilliam would be similar. Ms. Bates would like to see the RFI's when they come back and would like to see two of the RFPs that would relate to Fitzwilliam. Mr. Baker shared that the Task Force would know better than the Board, the Board's role is to make sure the box was open, to understand the financial impact, and to know what to evaluate to the residents. Mr. Baker felt that the Selectmen want to be part of Broadband on an oversight basis. The Board would go through the final contract. The Board needs to know enough about the process for them to know that the Volunteer Task Force has gotten the information that was needed. Mr. Pinney shared that if the work of the Volunteer Task Force was completed early, that a special Town meeting could be held.

Mr. Kenison shared that he wanted to see the RFP that the Volunteer Task Force thought was best and why they think its best. The next step is to work on the RFI information and the RFP. The RFI information is necessary for the bonding process to show underserved and qualify for the bond. Mr. Pinney shared the next priority was to do the RFP. Ms. Heald would work on the RFP which needs to gather data specific to Fitzwilliam and model after the other towns. Evaluating the proposals once they come back will be one of the larger projects. Ms. Heald thinks the RFP would be ready for the Board to look at after Town meeting.

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10:30 MEET WITH ED ATKINS

At 10:35 a.m. Ms. Bates made a motion to go into non-public session under RSA 91-A:3 II(e). Mr. Baker seconded and the motion passed 3-0. Roll Call vote: Mr. Baker – Yes, Ms. Bates - Yes, Mr. Kenison - Yes.

At 10:46 a.m. Ms. Bates made a motion to leave non-public session and seal the minutes as disclosure would adversely affect the reputation of the person other than a member of the board. Ms. Bates seconded and the motion passed 3-0. Roll Call vote: Mr. Baker – Yes, Ms. Bates - Yes, Mr. Kenison - Yes.

***** REVIEW MEMO FROM MARION WHEELER, TAX COLLECTOR**

The Selectmen reviewed the information submitted by Marion Wheeler regarding the review of mortgage deeds for properties that are approaching tax lien status. Ms. Wheeler has shared with the Selectmen in a prior meeting that she didn't feel that she has the experience to review the deeds as was done in the past by Jane Wright. The Selectmen asked Ms. Wheeler to get information on hiring a company to do this work.

Mr. Baker stated it made sense. Ms. Bates stated it sounded that it doesn't make sense for us to do any longer. The cost is \$15.00 per title research before June. Ms. Wheeler would do the notice of them and the savings would be \$5 per title research.

Mr. Baker made a motion to hire an outside service – Total Notice LLC - \$15 per title research before June 15. Ms. Bates seconded. Mr. Baker – Yes, Ms. Bates - Yes, Mr. Kenison - Yes. Approved – 3-0

***** DISCUSS VEGETATION MANAGEMENT TREE REMOVAL - EVERSOURCE**

The Selectmen reviewed the notice from Eversource. Mr. Baker asked if we had any complaints about them leaving stumps and leaving logs that are hazardous. Mr. Baker noted that the Highway Department has picked up some of the logs. The Town is having to pick up the logs that have been left in the drains. Mr. Baker asked if we should send a letter asking for stump removal and tree removal.

Mr. Pinney noted that landowners are asked if they want the wood, some do and that could be why the wood is left. Mr. Baker reviewed the letter from Eversource. Wood disposal and stump grinding was not included in there vegetation management.

Mr. Baker asked that Eversource be contacted and asking about the junk wood being left and being left in dangerous situations and in our drainage ditches. Mr. Baker shared that if the landowners want it, could it be left there and out of the right-of-way and if not wanted, Eversource take away. Ms. Bates shared that they should notify the abutter and let the Town know. Mr. Kenison stated the wood belongs to the landowner and we are asking Eversource to take away. He (Kenison) mentioned that it was the landowners and didn't belong to Eversource. Ms. Favreau agreed that a letter should be sent. Mr. Baker asked that Eversource be called. Mr. Baker shared that in some cases the Road Agent, Gene Cuomo has stated that the Highway Department has had to move the wood. The Selectmen agreed that if Eversource doesn't trim the trees, then the Highway Department would have to take care of. Ms. Bates suggested that we ask that logs not be left in dangerous situations or in ditches. After discussion, the Board agreed to have Ms. Favreau draft a letter asking that Eversource not leave logs in the right-of-way or in any ditches on all property.

***** APPROVE CONSTRUCTION PERMIT APPLICATION
- Map 10, Lot 72**

Ms. Bates made a motion to approve the Construction Permit Application conditional upon there being no more than two bedrooms and an office only for Map 10, Lot 72. The motion was seconded by Mr. Kenison, Mr. Baker – Yes, Ms. Bates - Yes, Mr. Kenison - Yes. Approved – 3-0

The Selectmen agreed that an Occupancy Permit was needed.

***** NON-PUBLIC SESSION - RSA 91-A:3 II(e) – Exemption Application**

At 11:11 a.m. Ms. Bates made a motion to go into non-public session under RSA 91-A:3 II(e). Mr. Kenison seconded and the motion passed 3-0. Roll Call vote: Mr. Baker – Yes, Ms. Bates - Yes, Mr. Kenison - Yes.

At 11:12 a.m. Mr. Kenison made a motion to leave non-public session and seal the minutes as disclosure would adversely affect the reputation of the person other than a member of the board. Ms. Bates seconded and the motion passed 3-0. Roll Call vote: Mr. Baker – Yes, Ms. Bates - Yes, Mr. Kenison - Yes.

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INFORMATION:

Mr. Baker asked if the Board needed to do anything for Town Meeting. Pictures of the town hall will be shown on a loop. Mr. Kenison shared that he picked up slate in the parking lot. Mr. Baker asked Ms. Favreau to get a quote for repairs from A. L. Johnson roofing.

SAVE the DATE – George Emerson – Spaghetti Dinner

Ms. Bates discussed the additional information requested and received from Rich Macomber regarding backup solution and window upgrade, computer for cemetery and voting – limited specs. Ms. Bates would draft an e-mail to send out. Ms. Favreau asked about using the Recreation Department computer for voting. This could also be used by the Treasurer.

Ms. Favreau discussed the posting of the Treasurer position and the Road Agent position. Mr. Kenison asked if we posted with NH Employment Security. Ms. Favreau shared that we didn't and she would look into.

ON-GOING BUSINESS:

*** **STEEPLE PROJECT**

*** **PRIME WETLANDS PROJECT**

*** **AMBULANCE SERVICE**

*** **SOLAR** – Ms. Bates asked if Lori Nolan, Land Use Coordinator could contact the Town of Ludlow to find out whether there was anything we needed to know about them dealing with NextEra. Ms. Favreau thought there were minutes posted from Ludlow regarding their experience with NextEra. Ms. Favreau would give the minutes to Ms. Nolan to review and ask additional questions. Mr. Baker thought that she should meet with the Board for background information on the solar project and to identify questions to ask the Town of Ludlow.

- **Notice of Public Meeting**

*** **TOWN-WIDE ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED AND THEIR ENFORCEMENT**

- **Unregistered vehicles**

- **Debris and junk in yards** - Mr. Baker suggested starting discussion of a plan and start to think about what that means.

Mr. Baker shared that he and Gene Cuomo went and looked at a couple of roads. One road was ground and paved and now they can grade it – only a few houses on the road. (McAlister Road) looked like a resident was plowing his driveway and was plowing across the road to the other side into the wetlands. Mr. Baker shared that Gary Morin's has been written to in the past and Mr. Baker stated that there were at least 15 cars and along the road off of McAllister Road there looks like a house sitting on a trailer and they saw a number of unregistered vehicles. Mr. Baker shared that the Board needed to know what they were getting into. This is a problem on the back roads. The process would be extremely contentious with sending out letters. Ms. Bates asked if we should reach out to NHMA. Ms. Favreau shared that NHMA has a book on dealing with junk vehicles. Mr. Baker suggested contacting another Town that has gone through this. Ms. Favreau will ask at her Town Administrator meeting. It was noted that an inventory was needed, that it can't be done all at once, and that it would be prioritized by the most egregious violations and split that way. Mr. Kenison asked if we had a Town regulation. Ms. Favreau shared that it was the State RSA. Mr. Baker was trying to come up with an enticement to help get rid of the junk. Ms. Bates mentioned having a starting point and go out into the Town.

Ms. Bates asked if the Land Use Coordinator could assist with the research – local ordinances, and State RSAs. Mr. Baker thought about checking with Chief DiSalvo regarding the inventory.

Meeting Schedule:

9:00 A.m. - Thursday, February 27, 2020

9:00 a.m. - Tuesday, March 3, 2020

11:00 a.m. - Tuesday, March 10, 2020

7:00 p.m. - Wednesday, March 18, 2020

9:00 a.m. - Thursday, March 26, 2020

Ms. Bates made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:20 a.m. Mr. Kenison seconded and the motion passed. 3-0

Submitted by:

Sheryl White

Secretary to the Board of Selectmen

Daniel Baker, Chairman

Robyn Bates

Charles Kenison
Board of Selectmen