



NORTHFIELD BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING

Minutes of the meeting of July 23, 2019

Present: Chairman Wayne Crowley, Sel. Brown, Sel. Haskins

Also Present: Dr. Tracey Hutton, Town Administrator, Police Chief John Raffaelly, and Andy Buteau, Road Agent

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 pm by Chairman Crowley.

- **General Business**
 - **Review accounts payable, payroll manifests and general correspondence**
- **Public Input**

Sheena Duncan addressed the Board regarding a straw bale community garden. The technique entails watering and fertilizing the bales of straw and then planting in them. It is a raised bed method without construction or expense; bales run about \$8.00 each. The composted bales are the only waste product.

Surette Park was her first thought for a location, but understands that may be difficult. Selectman Haskins suggested the use of the horse track area if it would be possible to plant after Old Home Day.

While Ms. Duncan does not currently have a following, she is hoping once she starts the community will want to participate. Perhaps down the road she may set up a 501.c.3 non-profit organization. The Selectmen suggested Ms. Duncan do additional research and make a plan to present this winter for a planting next spring.

- **Public Works Department**
 - **Excavation (Street Opening) Rules**

Chairman Crowley began the discussion by emphasizing the fact that the reason behind these rules is protecting the Town's investment in road infrastructure. Representatives from Eversource, the water utility, and the sewer utility were present at the meeting. The utilities were all concerned that the language, as proposed, required the Town to repair the road after opening and seek repayment from the utilities. Mr. Buteau stated that the intent was to have the utility make the repair and the Town would only participate if the work was either not done or not done properly.

Dr. Hutton was directed to examine the language and make adjustment to address the concerns. Once complete the new language must be forwarded to the utilities. This will be discussed further at the August 6, 2019, meeting.

- **Bay Hill Road**

With the Commissioners from the Tilton & Northfield Aqueduct Company at the meeting, Mr. Buteau looked for direction from the Board on when to proceed with the Bay Hill Road project. Chairman Crowley explained that the Town is trying to pave Bay Hill Road, but is aware that the water lines in the road will need to be replaced at some point. The concern is

when that will occur. The contractor that the Aqueduct usually uses is busy on Tilton related projects this season. Scott Davis explained that the Aqueduct has looked for an alternative contractor at no avail. Options were discussed including leaving the portion of the project that has water line (about 1,000 feet) for next year.

There may be a fee charged by R&D Paving to remobilize if the project is split up. The Selectmen directed Mr. Buteau to find out if this is the case and what, if any, charge there would be. All three entities (Aqueduct, Tilton, and Northfield) have separate CIPs; it can be difficult to align projects so that Aqueduct is replacing lines when the Town is paving. There will be a concerted effort to keep everyone in discussion this fall as plans are prepared for next year.

- **Department Update**

Mr. Buteau explained that he received a call from NHDOT about a cross culvert on Shaker Road. NH DOT thought it was their culvert, but it is the Towns and it is in dire need of repair. Chairman Crowley explained that this situation is going to be a large and costly repair. There was discussion about what type of professional will be engaged to size the replacement structures, a professional engineer or a culvert supply company. There was also mention that the Town will work closely with NHDES on wetlands permitting.

The AC is not working in the “trackless.” It was sent to Londonderry for repair since the warranty was expired on all but the powertrain.

Dr. Hutton inquired at a previous meeting, on behalf of a resident, why the sidewalk near Exit 19 was not maintained. There is a lot of dirt and brush obstructing use. The Selectmen were told about NH DOTs policy to build but not maintain sidewalks, as it is the responsibility of the Town to maintain. The Selectmen agreed to have DPW trim back the brush and sweep off the dirt.

- **Non-Public - RSA 91A-3 II (e) and (c)**

Crowley/Browns moved to enter into non-public session under the provisions of RSA 91-A3II (a), (b), and (c) at 6:35 pm. **Motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.**

Also Present: Dr. Hutton and Chief Raffaelly

Crowley/Brown moved to reconvene the public session at 7:28 pm. **Motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.**

Crowley/Haskins moved to seal the minutes of the non-public session. **Motion passed by unanimous vote.**

- **Administration**

- **Sandogardy Pond Utility Letter and Financial Update**

The Selectmen signed letters prepared by Dr. Hutton on behalf of the Board. The letters were directed at the telecom utilities regarding the utility poles on Sandogardy Pond Road. The letter was suggested by NH DOT to apply pressure as the relocation of the poles is holding up completion of construction.

- **Administrative Assistant Job Description**

The revised job description for the Administrative Assistant at Town Hall was reviewed. This is a compilation of the Land Use Assistant and DPW Clerical positions. Dr. Hutton worked with Mr. Buteau on making sure the job description is reflective of what the Town needs in the position. Mr. Buteau requested that a couple of hours a week at the DPW garage be required to assist with paperwork. Dr. Hutton agreed this would be a good idea and has added it to the document that was being reviewed.

Brown/Crowley moved to approve the Administrative Assistant job description in place of the Land Use Assistant and DPW Clerical positions. **Motion passed by unanimous vote.**

- **Employee Handbook - Potential Updates**

There was extensive discussion of the differences between traditional vacation/sick/personal time versus Paid Time Off (PTO). The pros and cons of both systems were compared including the impacts to both employer and employee. There was a proposal to increase the PTO for individuals who were continuously employed by the Town for 15 or 20 years. The Selectmen did not like the idea of offering additional PTO. There was, however, 8 hours removed from PTO in exchange for making the day after Thanksgiving a paid holiday, since most people like to take this off anyways. The handbook is proposed to remove PTO from counting towards time worked for overtime purposes.

Holiday pay was discussed further. Chairman Crowley and Mr. Buteau were adamant that the DPW employees should get time and a half plus 8 hours holiday for Thanksgiving and Christmas. Chairman Crowley felt that these employees deserved this “golden time” because they had to come in to plow sometimes on those holidays. He also felt that since PD has regular shifts on those days and do not have to “all hands on deck” then they did not need this extra benefit. Dr. Hutton was undeniably opposed to treating departments differently. The Board concluded that this benefit would only be offered to DPW.

Other minor changes were discussed to keep the Handbook up to date with current practices. Dr. Hutton will prepare a new draft and distribute it to the Board.

- **Town Administrator’s Goals**

Dr. Hutton presented the Board with their compiled goals for her first year. The Selectmen felt it was representative of what they had sent in. Dr. Hutton explained that the goals have to be agreed on and there were some she did not agree with. Some specific provisions were discussed; Dr. Hutton will bring a new draft to the next meeting. The goals must be agreed upon prior to September 1.

- **Review minutes of the meeting of July 11 and 19, 2019**

Brown/Crowley moved to approve the minutes of July 11 and 19, typos corrected. **Motion passed by unanimous vote.**

Next meeting August 6, 2019

- **Adjournment**

There being no other business the meeting adjourned at 9:01 pm.

Respectfully submitted by:

Dr. Tracey E. Hutton

Minutes approved July 30, 2019