



Town of Winchester
1 Richmond Road Winchester, NH 03470
**Minutes of the
Selectmen Meeting**
Wednesday
December 4, 2019

Board members present: Roberta Heinonen, Ben Kilanski, Jack Marsh, Herbert Stephens and Gloria Leustek. Also, present Margaret Sharra, Chief Tollett, Dale Gray, Rick Meleski and Captain Ford.

First order of business: Minutes

The board reviews the minutes for 11/20/19 and 11/25/19. Selectman Kilanski makes a motion to approve the minutes. Selectman Leustek seconds the motion. Motion carries 5-0

Second order of business: New Business

The Ashuelot Fire Station renovation bids were due today. One Bid was received from Level Up Building & Renovations in the amount of \$108,500.00. Selectman Kilanski stated that he priced the material-\$19,000 with volunteers doing the work. Would need to have the electrical priced out. Selectman Kilanski would have the figures next week. Selectman Kilanski also look at the running the internet cable and it's not something we can do. We should hire someone.

Selectman Kilanski makes a motion to sign the 2019 2nd issue tax warrant in the amount of \$4,946,398. Selectman Leustek seconds the motion. Motion carries 5-0. 2019 Tax Rate is **\$35.64**. Town \$8.59, County \$3.61, School \$21.36 & State \$2.08.

Selectman Kilanski makes a motion to sign WEDC-Stone Mt Business Park Subordination of Mortgage for NH Community Loan Fund. Selectman Stephens seconds the motion. Motion carries 5-0

Selectman Marsh made a motion to approve water abatement for Carol Bercher in the amount \$50.00. Selectman Kilanski seconds the motion. Motion carries 5-0.

The Board of Director of the Land and Community Heritage Investment Program (LCHIP) awarded the Town \$75,000 grant to repair the Church Steeple.

Selectman Marsh made a motion to nominate Dale Gray to the SWRPC Transportation Advisory Committee. Selectman Kilanski seconds the motion. The motion carries 5-0.

Selectman Leustek made a motion to approve the TAN in the amount of \$1,000,000 from Savings Bank of Walpole. Selectman Stephens seconds the motion. The motion carries 5-0.

Selectman Kilanski made a motion to approve a timber tax for McGrath Trust- \$4,452.56
Selectman Leustek seconds the motion. The motion carries 5-0.

Intent to cut for map 7 lot 9.

Selectman Stephens makes a motion approve vacation in March for Karey. Selectman Leustek seconds the motion. Motion carries 5-0

Selectman Kilanski made a motion to approve sewer abatement for Rose Trust-Lovely Lane in the amount of \$450.68. Selectman Stephens seconds the motion. Motion carries 5-0.

Planning Board notice of a public hearing for a boundary line adjustment on Dec 9th for the Beaman Trust located on Snow Rd. The Town of Winchester is an abutter.

The board reviews and approves the following financial documents:

Selectman Kilanski made a motion to approve the correction to the water tank withdrawal in the amount \$84,135. Selectman Stephens seconds the motion. Motion carries 5-0.

Selectman Kilanski made a motion to approve the request to deposit into the water capital reserve from the water tank project. Selectman Stephens seconds the motion. Motion carries 5-0.

Selectman Kilanski makes a motion to approve the Ambulance billing to CAG in the amount of \$346.46 from the Ambulance billing fund. Selectman Leustek seconds the motion. The motion carries 5-0.

Selectman Kilanski makes a motion to approve the Ambulance reimbursement to the general fund in the amount of \$1,114.33. Selectman Leustek seconds the motion. Motion carries 5-0.

Selectman Marsh makes a motion to approve the request for final payment from VT Yankee (RERP) in the amount of \$2,000.00. Selectman Leustek seconds the motion. Motion carries 5-0.

Third order of business Board comment:

Selectman Leustek stated that the Presidential Primary will be Feb 11th.

Selectman Marsh let the board know that a long time resident passed, Howard Spaulding @97.

Selectman Kilanski would like to have the Kevin, Lindseigh, Mary and Ken from the school to come to next weeks meeting to discuss why they didn't return any money back to the town. Also, he has been showing Paul Hubner how to wind the town clock. They are still working on the timing for the bells.

Gus Ruth stated that the tree work in Musterfield Park is still on going and the will be working on the area along RT 119.

Christmas in the park will be Dec 8th 2-4pm.

The lighting of the Creche will be on Sunday, Decembem 8th @ 5:30pm.

Fourth order of business Public comment:

Steve Bracket came before the board to ask for their support on a warrant article in the amount of \$20,000 for repairs and maintenance to the Rail Trails. Currently there are 2 bridges that are dangerous and need to be replaced. They have been working with SWRPC on planning for trail use, Conservation clearing trials and Snowmobile Club. Selectman Kilanski asked who owns the 2 bridges. Steve said that the State does. Margaret said that several of us from town have been involved with the Ashuelot Rail Trail planning with SWRPC for the past 18 months. The final report will be completed in the next few weeks. The trail is 21 miles from Keene to Hinsdale and 10 miles just here in Winchester. Its not only recreational to the communities, it is an economic engine to the communities. The State has acquired the abandoned railroads over the years and in 2005 the State did an extensive State trial plan. The trails bring in millions of dollars to the US economy. There is grant money available, Keene & Swanzey received grant money to update their trails. Not only do the bridges need to be repaired, there need to be work done on drainage, brush hogging and ditching on the trails. Selectman Kilanski said he is in favor of working on the rail trails, are you proposing that the \$20,000 be used for matching funds towards a grant. Margaret stated yes, but if we apply for a grant and do not receive grant funds that we would be able to use the money to make the repairs to the bridges and other projects on the trails. Margaret let the board know that the Snowmobile Club will be applying for grant money also. Selectman Kilanski asked if we repair the bridges is the town now responsible for them and are we liable if someone is injured. Margaret will ask that question. Selectman Heinonen asked who would the money be going to. Margaret believes that the Selectman would be the overseers because its town money. Selectman Marsh asked if anyone will be going to the Ashuelot Rail Trial Advisory Committee meeting on Dec 17th. Steve & Margaret stated yes, they would be going. Selectman Marsh asked how much is SWRPC getting involved? They have put fourth all the research and the planning of the project, are they getting grants, or do they have their hands out asking for money. Margaret said neither, they have brought interested party together to brainstorm to put together an in-depth report with the pros & cons and how to do it. SWRPC have assisted the town on how to move forward. Steve added that the purpose of the study is to prioritize the projects and to use this as a tool to apply for grants. The study was funded with Federal Transportation money. Selectman Marsh would like some information from the Ashuelot Rail Trial Advisory Committee meeting and what Keene & Swanzey received for grants. What happens if you don't get the money needed to fix the bridges? Steve said that he would come to the board next spring for help. Selectman Heinonen would like to have a legal opinion on the funds, who makes the decisions on what gets done and we will need to come up with the way it can be done correctly. Margaret will talk to Keene & Swanzey to see how they have managed the process.

Jenny Rhodes asked the board to support a warrant article to bring back the Housing Standard Ordinance. There is a great need to have this ordinance back in place. Selectman Heinonen said she did support the ordinance, but it was contentious subject and the town voted it out. Jenny said she feels strongly that this ordinance would help to enforce occupancy. This a big issue and

a huge safety issue. I have made some changes to the ordinance to make it better. As a town we can do better, and we need to better. I adjusted the fees and the fee would be the way to pay a majority for it. Not only more and more towns in NH are doing this, more towns across the nation. As you know the sizes of some of the homes in town people can't sustain them or heat them. So, what happens is people rent out rooms. Maybe this could be away to enforce the payment of taxes and water & sewer. We did make some changes to make it fair for everyone. Selectman Heinonen said that she supports it, but we need to have things in place to do it again. Last time we held a public hearing and information sections on how this would be put in place. There was a lot of work and time put into it. It's December and we need to have it done by the middle of January. I am not sure if there will be enough time to put it all together. We would also need hard figures of what it will cost so it can be placed in the budget. Even with the fees it will take a few years before it would fund itself. You would need someone to enforce the ordinance. I don't want to place in on the ballot quickly without having all the information in place. We will need to be able to answer questions when asked. Margaret the ordinance that was in place has been approved by town council. There were some good changes made when we had the ordinance in place. Some of the Landlords did listen and made changes that were needed. There is still substandard housing in town. The only way we can get into these properties is if we adopt this ordinance. Jenny asked the board to support putting it on as a warrant. It would have a better chance of passing if the Select Board supported it. Selectman Heinonen said the concern is not enough time. We need to have figures and how we plan on enforcing it. Once its on the ballot we need to be prepared to answer questions.

Chief Tollett asked the board to support a warrant article for new 2020 Police Cruiser. Unit #3-2014 SUV is constantly in for repairs. The cruiser maintenance budget is \$12,500, we have spent \$7,000-\$8,000 on repairs on unit #3 & #4. Unit #3 has 135000 miles & unit #4 has 170,000. The 2nd article is to add 13,300 to the existing capital reserve account to be able to purchase out right a new cruiser when needed and keep the fleet in a rotation. Selectman Marsh stated that he would support adding money the capital reserve account and wouldn't support \$40,000 lease when we currently have a new truck, we leased last year. Chief Tollett said when the 2 units are out of service for repairs that means that the other cruisers are putting on more miles. Selectman Kilanski asked why a new SUV and not a truck? Chief stated the SUV is cheaper. We currently have 2 2008 Crown Vic's, 2014-SUV, 2015-SUV, 2017-SUV and 2019 Truck. The Chief stated that it is his responsibility to have vehicles that are in working condition and safe for his officers to drive. He would ask that the board place these articles on the ballot and let the residents vote.

Selectman Kilanski said he had talked to Dale about getting the amounts for leasing a new Loader. 5 Year Term at a 3.7% Rate = \$29,264.37 and a 7 Year Term at a 3.7% Rate = \$21,660.23.

Selectman Marsh stated that he would like to have warrant article to add an additional \$5 fee to the car registration and to create a new infrastructure capital reserve account. The fees will be for the Highway to use for road work. Adding the fee to the registration will also be charged to the renters in town that don't pay taxes but use the roads.

Selectman Heinonen asked the board if they are in favor of holiday pay for the Part-time Ambulance and town beach employees. Selectman Kilanski stated that if you pay holiday to 2

department you have to pay all departments that have part-time employees. Highway and Police. The board asked Karey to have Amy get the figures for next week's meeting.

Selectman Marsh asked Dale to drop sand off to the Ashuelot Fire Station, Combs Bridge & South Parrish Cemetery.

Mike Coope thanked Selectman Kilanski for working on the clock. Mike has a concern with how the town is being assessed, is rapidly making the town property rich and cash poor. If on a fixed income it is making very tough to live here. With what Jenny was saying earlier, its not hard to see that these multi family homes are jammed full of people. It is impacting the town. The \$5 fee that Selectman Marsh talked about could benefit all departments. As a town we need to get creative. Selectman Marsh said as a town we can make changes to the zoning and planning regulations. Mike has an issue with how the multi family are assessed differently form single family. Selectman Marsh stated that the State explained a few years back, they start with the amount that it costs new and then they subtract the current conditions. Mike said that there are some people that won't do any work to there building. Avitar does taxes everything. Selectman Marsh stated that he was under the impression that any assessing company followed State guidelines. Selectman Heinonen said that is true. When the town changed assessing companies many years ago the State had to come in and fix all the errors. The State is the watch dog over the assessing companies. The town asked the State why are pools, sheds, chicken coops being assessed because the residents were complaining. The State confirmed these can be assessed and if not assessed it is against the law. We have to send the State the totals of assessed property in town to set the equalization ratio, which we are low compared to what homes are selling for.

Mike asked who the recipient of the Church Steeple grant. Karey stared the Town of Winchester. Mike wanted to make sure the board is aware that RSA 227m is specific, given the amount of money we received. Anything over \$50,001 will require a 10 year stewardship by the recipient. Also, Salt & Light will need to have the town listed on their deed. There will need to public access to the steeple due to the fact there is tax payer's money being used.

Ken Cole asked what the tax rate was. Karey stated \$35.64. Ken asked if that was final. The board said yes.

Mike Coope asked if next year we could ask Bart to petition Superior Court to close the Julia B Thayer capital reserve fund. The board agreed

Fifth order of business: Nonpublic under RSA 91-A:3II (a)(b)(c)(d)(e)

Selectman Kilanski makes a motion to enter nonpublic session under (c & e). Selectman Marsh seconds the motion. The motion carries 5-0. A roll call vote was taken, and members vote "yes" individually, and the board convenes in non-public at 9:15 pm.

Sixth order of business: Adjournment

The board reconvenes in public session at 9:25pm.

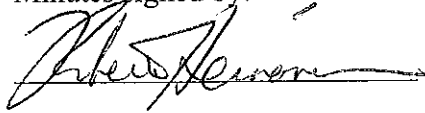
Selectman Leustek makes a motion to seal the minutes under (c & e). Selectman Heinonen seconds the motion. A roll call vote was taken, and members vote "yes" individually. The motion carries 5-0.

Selectman Leustek makes a motion to adjourn at 9:27pm. Selectman Stephens seconds the motion. The motion carries 5-0.

Minutes respectfully submitted:

Karey Miner, Administrator

Minutes signed by:



Roberta Heinonen, Chairman



Karey Miner, Administrator