



Town of Winchester
1 Richmond Road Winchester, NH 03470

**Minutes of the
Selectmen Meeting**

Wednesday, January 20, 2021

Board members present: Ben Kilanski, Jack Marsh, Herbert Stephens, James Rokes Sr. and Gloria Leustek.

First order of business Minutes:

The Chairman opens the meeting at 7:00 pm.

The board reviews the minutes of 1-13-21 & 1-15-21 for approval. Selectman Rokes makes a motion to approve the minutes. Selectman Stephens seconds the motion. The motion carries 5-0.

Second order of business: New Business

The board agreed to allow the Ashuelot Rail Trail to hire Jack Munn the Grant Writer to apply for grants.

Karey let the board know that she and the Fire Chief are working with Jack Munn-Grant Writer to apply for a FEMA Grant to purchase Scott Air Packs for the Fire Dept. Application is due Feb 12th.

Selectman Stephens makes a motion to approve the 2020 State of NH Closure Report for the closed landfill. Selectman Leustek seconds the motion. The motion carries 5-0.

Selectman Stephens makes a motion to approving Stateline Fireworks to operate a business on Keene Rd. in Winchester. Selectman Leustek seconds the motion. The motion carries 5-0.

Selectman Rokes makes a motion to approve a tax refund for map 6 lot 6-2 in the amount \$1848.00. Selectman Stephens seconds the motion. The motion carries 5-0.

The board reviews and approves the following financial documents:

Selectman Rokes makes a motion to approve payment to the State of NH in the amount of \$15,258.62 from the Bridge Reconstruction capital reserve acct. Selectman Stephens seconds the motion. The motion carries 5-0.

Selectman Marsh makes a motion to approve payment to Diluzio Ambulance in the amount of \$5,550.24 from the Ambulance Billing acct. Selectman Leustek seconds the motion. The motion carries 5-0.

Third order of business Board comment:

Selectman Kilanski read and addressed an email from concerned citizen Paul Landry. "I'm very upset with the decision to take away public comments. I am also upset with Ben for talking about the Keene flag issue, which was false information and had nothing to do with Winchester. I believe no public comment should be for everyone including the select board. Also when the public voices their concerns it is very unprofessional for members of the board to be yelling back at the citizens. I strongly feel that Ben, Jack, and James should publicly apologize at the next select board meeting. Concerned Winchester Citizen, Paul Landry." Selectman Kilanski said he does apologize for the false information the Keene Flag issue. In regard to yelling at citizens, I can only

think of a few times and unfortunately that is the human nature. When other people raise their voice you raise your voice back and it gets out of control. I have been trying to do better with that. Selectman Rokes stated that he tries not to raise his voice any higher than the person that is speaking to him. Selectman Marsh said that when someone is speaking over you it is human nature to speak louder when someone is interrupting you. To the comment of no public was just to try and shorten the meetings up. Selectman Kilanski stated that the intentions of no public comment was to shorten the meetings just like before when COVID first hit the board had no public comments. The alternative is to email any questions or concerns.

Selectman Kilanski said at last week's meeting the board voted to livestream the meeting, but by law if we livestream the meeting, we have to have the option for people to be able to call in by phone. Selectman Kilanski would recommend that we start using the Zoom platform and have Karey look at options and pricing.

Selectman Rokes stated that the board hasn't had an update from WEDC-Stone Mt. Business Park in a while. How often should we be getting an update. Karey stated that it is quarterly and will reach out to WEDC and ask for an update.

Selectman Rokes stated that he would like to look at using another Attorney for the town, Sheldon, Davis & Hockensmith. They are a local firm. Selectman Rokes makes a motion to start using Jeremy Hockensmith as the town's attorney. Selectman Marsh seconds the motion for discussion. Selectman Kilanski would like to make sure that the town could use Upton & Hatfield if needed and not limit to just 1 attorney/firm. Selectman Leustek asked what their fees are. Selectman Rokes said he didn't have that information but will call and ask. Selectman Rokes makes a motion to withdrawal his motion. Selectman Marsh second the motion.

Selectman Marsh stated that he wanted it to be placed on record that last week the board decided to not renew the contract of the Police Chief. By law and RSA we can't not talk about the details that lead to that decision. There was some misunderstanding with the Town Attorney with announcing it to the public. The board should have gotten the information out, but it was a misunderstanding.

Selectman Rokes stated that there are still some issues at the transfer station and would like to set up a meeting with MDS to discuss the issues. Also look at increasing the dump sticker fee.

Fourth order of business Public comment:

Lindseigh Picard wanted to make a comment on the citizens email on the debate that often happens. This is public comment not a public debate. As hard as it is to listen to criticism as a board member that's your job. So when you respond in any way it completely impacts the intent when it is the citizens turn to speak. Just as you have your time to speak behind the table. Lindseigh thanked selectman Marsh for commenting on the misstep that happen last week with not informing the public on not renewing the Police Chiefs contract. I have discussed transparency numerous times and hopefully you heard from the public was that you are not being transparent on a regular basis. There are ways to show the public the steps your taking and there is way to have conversation, so we know what's next in your plan. Thank you for listening and hopefully you move forward with zoom meetings that you will see there are a lot of people participating. The pandemic is happening, and people are worried. This is important for the public.

Natalie Quevedo thanked the board and knows it's hard to be in your position. Natalie wanted to offer her help with the zoom meetings. In October there was an emergency order that would allow deliberative meeting to be virtual and does not have to be in person. With getting zoom now will help keep the public safer in the future when we are all gathering. Natalie stated that the board shorten the public comment to 15 minutes and then took it away for safety. I would ask that when the board does decide to go virtual that public comment is allowed back in. I know for myself I can't send an email every week. I value you my public comment.

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

Selectman Marsh makes a motion to enter nonpublic session under “a, b, c & e”. Selectman Leustek 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 7:46pm.

Adjournment

The board reconvenes in public session at 9:37pm.

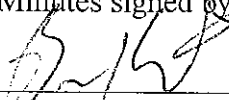
Selectman Kilanski makes a motion to seal the minutes under e. Selectman Marsh seconds the motion. The motion carries 5-0.

The board accepted Mike Carriers resignation.

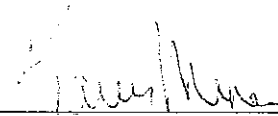
Selectman Kilanski announced the board hired Gary Phillips a part-time patrolman and promoted Jim Fisher to Lieutenant.

Selectman Stephens makes a motion to adjourn at 9:40pm. Selectman Rokes seconds the motion. The motion carries 5-0.

Minutes respectfully submitted:
Karey Miner, Town Administrator
Minutes signed by:



Ben Kilanski Chairman



Karey Miner