

Minutes of the
Selectmen's meeting
12-30-20

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

First order of business:

Chairman opens the meeting at 7:02pm.

Second order of business:

The board reviews the minutes of 12/16/20 for approval. Selectman Rokes makes a motion to approve the minutes, Selectman Leustek seconds. The motion carries 5-0.

Third order of business:

The board has two Oaths of Office. One is for Jennifer Rhodes as Welfare Director and Nicole Pelkey for Broadband Committee. Selectman Marsh makes a motion to appoint Nicole Pelkey to the Broadband Committee, Selectman Leustek seconds. The motion carries 5-0.

Selectman Rokes makes a motion to approve a Raffle for Santa's Helpers with cash prizes, Selectman Leustek seconds. The motion carries 5-0.

The board reviews the final bid on the old Mack firetruck through Muni-bid. It sold to Gordon Jones of Louisiana for \$10,400. He is sending the town a check and a tow truck. No motion is needed.

There is an abatement in the amount of \$171.52 for map 7 lot 9 regarding timber. Selectman Marsh makes a motion to approve, Selectman Stephens seconds. The motion carries 5-0.

There is a tax exemption for map 1 lot 32 for solar. Selectman Marsh makes a motion to approve, Selectman Rokes seconds. The motion carries 5-0.

The yearly abatements and supplements for Snowbrook (\$8060A), Warwick Meadows (\$3433S), Winchester Senior (\$1045A) and Wedgewood (\$11,135S). Selectman Marsh makes a motion to approve, Selectman Leustek seconds. The motion carries 5-0.

The board reviews numbers to pay off the TAN. Interest paid is \$904.10, and payoff amount is \$1,904,000.10. Selectman Rokes makes a motion to pay off the TAN, Selectman Stephens seconds. The motion carries 5-0.

The board reviews department transfers:

Fire to Highway for diesel fuel is \$351.53

Cemetery to Highway for diesel fuel is \$62.45

Selectman Stephens makes a motion to approve, Selectman Rokes seconds. The motion carries 5-0.

Supplies and postage in the amounts of \$260.12 & \$55.00. Selectman Rokes makes a motion to approve, Selectman Leustek seconds. The motion carries 5-0.

Payments from the Cemetery Donation account are \$85.00 to Lawrence Sign Shop, \$34.62 to Blue Tarp, and \$210.70 to Home Depot. Selectman Marsh makes a motion to approve, Selectman Leustek seconds. The motion carries 5-0.

Payments from the RED account for \$62.50 to Mike Faulkner and \$100 to Jeanne Van Patten. Selectman Marsh makes a motion to approve, Selectman Rokes seconds. The motion carries 5-0.

Payment from Assessing Revaluation fund is made to Avitar Associates for \$19,470. Selectman Marsh makes a motion to approve, Selectman Leustek seconds. The motion carries 5-0.

Fire Chief Kellom would like to purchase a plow for one of the department's truck in the amount of \$5614.62 to use if access to a house isn't provided during an emergency during a snowstorm. This is to open up a driveway in case an ambulance has to move a patient. The town does not plow personal driveways but if there is an emergency, like happened recently, the town will. Many times the Highway Department is busy on the other side of town. This plow would permit the FD do it quicker. Selectman Marsh asked about chains on the ambulances. Chief Kellom said not now but will be getting some. Selectman Marsh would like to table this for a week so the board can get information from our attorney on liability. Chief Kellom would like to take the burden off Dale. Selectman Kilanski noted Chief Kellom submitted multiple bids for the plows. Selectman Rokes asks where does our responsibility end? People need to be responsible for their own driveways. Selectman Kilanski explained that based on experience, he has shoveled steps as a Fireman to improve the situation. He will send an email to the town's attorney and will have information for next week.

Selectman Marsh and Chief Kellom discuss the Capital Reserve Account for a new Fire Truck. Chief Kellom said not much in it. Selectman Marsh thinks this board should continue funding these reserve accounts for future purchases. He'd like to put 5K into it. Chief Kellom said that money isn't worth it toward a 500K truck. Need to put away 75K a year. Right now the pump is not good in the current truck. Selectman Marsh is looking at all the Capital Reserve accounts and says we can't do it all at once. Selectman Kilanski said the reserve funds can be used as a down payment. Selectmen Rokes and Stephens agree with the Chief. Selectman Rokes makes a motion to put 50K in the reserve account, Selectman Stephens seconds. The motion carries 4-1. Selectman Rokes makes a motion of recommendation, G. Leustek seconds. The motion carries 4-1.

Chief Kellom asks about the warrant article for the ambulance capital reserve. Selectman Kilanski says the board already approved 5K. Chief Kellom says it should be more like 25-30k. The ambulance has been at Porter's a lot. Selectman Stephens makes a motion to revisit this article, Selectman Rokes seconds. The motion carries 5-0.

Selectman Stephens makes a motion to amend the amount to 20K, Selectman Rokes seconds. The motion passes 5-0.

Dale Gray presents 3 quotes for a new loader for the Highway Department. The board reviews them. Dale explains prices have gone up 12-15k from last year and he has put 7k in repairs into the current loader. He prefers John Deeres and that was also the best price at \$129K purchase bottom line with trade-in and 15K downpayment* or \$27,640 a year lease for 5 years and 5 year warranty. Volvo and John Deere were within 4K of each other. Selectman Rokes makes a motion to approve the warrant article to lease the John Deere for 5 years, Selectman Stephens seconds. The motion carries 5-0. Selectman Marsh makes a motion to recommend the article, Selectman Stephens seconds. The motion carries 5-0.

The board discusses the article for Highway Equipment Capital Reserve. Selectman Marsh makes a motion to place 15K into reserve, Selectman Stephens seconds.

Discussion: Selectman Marsh said there is 38K in the reserve account now. Selectman Rokes suggests a friendly amendment to 50K. There is no second. The original motion carries 4-1.

The Selectmen continue with all warrant articles for capital reserve accounts.

Selectmen Stephens makes a motion to ask for 20K in the culvert reserve account, Selectman Rokes seconds. There is discussion on the balance of the account of maybe 15K and the condition and lack of grants for the "Jones" culvert. The motion carries 5-0.

Selectman Rokes makes a motion to ask for 10K in the Ashuelot Rail Trail reserve account, Selectman Stephens seconds. The original request was for 15K to hopefully use as a match for a grant the town hopes to do with Hinsdale. The motion carries 5-0.

Selectman Leustek makes a motion to ask for 5K in the Grant writer reserve account, Selectman Marsh seconds. The motion carries 5-0.

The board will vote on all articles for recommendation.

Article 2- Operating budget of \$3,670,597 and default budget of \$3,694,477. Selectman Rokes makes a motion to recommend, Selectman Leustek seconds. The motion carries 5-0.

Article 3- water department budget of \$309,900 and default budget of \$309,604. Selectman Rokes makes a motion to recommend, Selectman Leustek seconds. The motion carries 5-0.

Article 4- Sewer Department budget of \$375,544 and default budget of \$389,439. Selectman Stephens makes a motion to recommend, Selectman Leustek seconds. The motion carries 5-0.

The Selectman agree and Selectman Stephens motion to recommend all remaining Warrant Articles for the Capital Reserve accounts, Selectman Rokes seconds. The motion carries 5-0.

Police Chief Tollett submits a warrant article for a 3year lease for a Ford police interceptor. This would be to replace unit #3 or #4. The cost is expected to be \$39,216 or less. He has the same arguments as last year; the SUV has already had a new engine and transmission. Selectman Marsh makes a motion to approve this article and recommend it too. Selectman Stephens seconds. The motion carries 5-0.

Selectman Kilanski announces the Budget Committee will be reviewing both the town and school warrant articles on Tuesday at 6pm.

Selectman Kilanski acknowledges a good job by the Highway Department for their work with the snowstorm 2 weeks ago even with a broken, but now repaired, sidewalk plow. Dale's truck goes in for repairs on Monday. The icy patches problems on Keene Road and Michigan Street are a nuisance but not much can be done about mother nature. The RED committee has held a holiday light contest. They will announce a winner next week. There were about 25 entries.

Fifth order of business: Public Comment:

Chief Tollett is now down two officers and soon it will be three. He asks for permission to fill one position. Selectman Marsh is ok with that. He asks with COVID and all, what is your backup plan? The Chief can lean on other agencies if needed. He would avoid the State Police because that is \$80 per hour. Also just having a full staff helps. He has a lead on a certified officer. Chief Tollett also explains all towns are going through a shift of officers for many different reasons. Selectman Marsh makes a motion to approve, Selectman Stephens seconds. The motion carries 5-0.

Jen Rydell of Ashuelot asked which Selectman, 2 weeks ago, made a comment about people sitting on couches and running their mouths? Selectman Rokes said he did and explains why it is frustrating for people to comment only through social media and not at a meeting. She then asks why he was against plowing driveway? Selectman Rokes doesn't think we should spend \$5600 for one incident. She had a question on what capital reserve accounts are for. Selectman Marsh explains them and that last year this board decided to fund these reserve accounts each year. Selectman Kilanski asks her to stay on topic. She wants to know how the public will know. Selectman Kilanski says the public has access to all meetings, minutes and town hall. They just have to ask if they have a question. She says people don't understand about the loader and cruiser articles. Selectman Marsh reads an article from last year. It clearly states the purpose and intent.

Sixth order of business: Non Public:

Selectman Marsh makes a motion to enter non public session under 91A:3 a,b,c,&e. Selectman Leustek seconds the motion. All members individually vote yes in rollcall vote. 8:22pm.

Seventh order of business: reconvene public session:

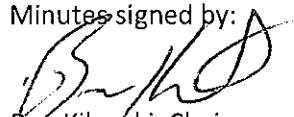
Selectman Stephens makes a motion to return to public, Selectman Leustek seconds. The motion carries 5-0. Selectman Kilanski announces the resignations of Sherrie Willard, Peg Tatro and Mike Parrott. Selectman Marsh makes a motion to seal the minutes under b, Selectman Rokes seconds the motion. A roll call vote was taken and all voted yes individually.

Selectman Marsh makes a motion to adjourn, Selectman Leustek seconds. The motion carries 5-0. 9:30pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted by:

Margaret Sharra, LUA

Minutes signed by:


Ben Kilanski, Chairman