



Town of Winchester
1 Richmond Road Winchester, NH 03470

**Minutes of the
Selectmen Meeting**

Wednesday, February 24, 2021

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

First order of business: Minutes

The Chairman opens the meeting at 7:00 pm.

The board reviews the minutes of 2-17-21 for approval. Selectman Rokes makes a motion to approve the minutes. Selectman Marsh seconds the motion. The motion carries 4-0.

Second order of business: New Business

Selectman Marsh makes a motion to approve the Water warrant-\$125,313.24 & Sewer warrant-\$98,207.80. Selectman Leustek seconds the motion. The motion carries 4-0.

Intent to Excavate for map 15 Lot 51-Payne Rd.

Selectman Marsh makes a motion to approve a tax refund for map 35 lot 15-Forest Lake Rd, in the amount of \$2,367.00. Selectman Leustek seconds the motion. The motion carries 4-0. The taxes were paid by the owner and the Title company.

Selectman Marsh makes a motion to approve sending a letter to Mascoma Bank & Savings Bank of Walpole asking if they would be interested in having a location in Winchester. Selectman Leustek seconds the motion. The motion carries 4-0.

The board reviews and approves the following financial documents:

Selectman Marsh makes a motion to approve depositing the school payment electronically-ACH to the Winchester Schools bank account. Selectman Leustek seconds the motion. The motion carries 4-0.

The Cemetery Trustees Henry Parkhurst & Val Cole recommend hiring a 3rd person. The budget was approved for a 3rd person. The board tabled the hiring of a 3rd person for the Cemetery until there is a full board.

Third order of business Board comment:

Selectman Kilanski read an email from Lindseigh Picard. *To the Chair of the Board, thank you for taking a moment to read my comments this week. I just had a few. In follow up to last week's meeting, you mentioned the Select Board requested Officer Fischer provide some information for your review. What information did you ask him for? When will you begin having regular reviews of your year to date budget during the public meeting?* Selectman Kilanski stated the board asked LT Fisher look at other similar size towns to see if they have a Chief and are, they full-time/part-time or interim. Selectman Kilanski stated that the board doesn't review the year to date budget during a meeting. A copy of the budget is given weekly for the board to review.

Selectman Kilanski read 6 emails from citizens. See attached.

Selectman Kilanski said he would like to see the town continue with live streaming next week. People are stating they are watching online and want to continue. We will live stream and link it to the towns Facebook page. Selectman Kilanski and Selectman Leustek will work together on it.

Selectman Kilanski stated the board received 54 online petitions and was not going to read them all but a copy would be with the minutes. Selectman Kilanski read the statement and question. *Chairman Kilanski and Selectboard members, We the undersigned would like the Winchester Selectboard to provide another option to attend and participate in meetings other than in person. We believe that transparency in our local government is essential to a well functioning community. I am not able to attend in person for the reason described below. Thank you for reconsidering this and serving our community. Why can you not attend in person?*

Selectman Kilanski read Natalie Quevedo email: *Chairman Kilanski and board members, First off I would like to thank you for staying here this evening as you listen to the 54 people who have taken time out of their day to express to you the need for transparency within our local government. These people utilize the live stream every week to stay engaged and you should continue to engage them as a service to your community. I would also like the questions in this letter to be answered at the end of the letter by each board member, so the public knows where they stand. I highlighted the questions for you to go back and find easily after the below is read. I have been taping all of our meetings for over a year now and I feel that it is time that the town take over this responsibility. I have spent my time and resources to bring transparency to the residents of Winchester and it is time that you, the elected officials do the same. Now, I know that in the past a lot of people did not come to meetings and you, the select board, were begging people to come. So, we started live streaming and people started to become engaged because they were offered more than one opportunity to participate. Mission accomplished or so it seems. When live streaming first started there were about 10-15 that watched for the first couple of months. Those numbers started to grow more and more as people started to talk to one another and were speaking actual facts about what they were seeing, rather than hear say (which we all know is dangerous). Today the live stream has grown and is watched on two separate pages and has reached more people in one year than 5 years of in person meetings. One meeting on 1/27 (that I have highlighted in a picture below) reached over 1,000 in one day. One thousand people, in one day! I ask you why you would not want your voice, your elected official voice, to reach the residents of your town as fast as possible? Why is it so important that they come in person? They can't comment anyway. Why would they take time out of their day to sit in a room just to sit and stare at you when they could be multitasking at their home, driving in their car or listening in headphones at work. Not everyone is free at 7pm on a Wednesday and it is certainly not everyone's job to be available for these meetings. It is however your job to ensure that the residents of this town are being heard and represented accordingly. Right now the 50 plus people who are asking you for a solution are not being heard. These people are actually engaged, and you need to engage them further. Are you scared that the more people that are able to participate will somehow take away from your agenda and why? If you have no fear or agenda what is another reason you want people in person during a pandemic other than "that's what I want" or "I want to see their faces"? I am asking once again that the board please opens back up for public comment and makes a new motion to provide live streaming and virtual access to all meetings effective immediately. Again, thank you for your time and I do hope you reconsider your prior motion. 1st question: Selectman Kilanski said that pre COVID he prefers to talk to someone in person and look them in the eye. But times are different now due to COVID and has been in favor of Zoom or live streaming. Selectman Rokes stated he feels that if someone has an issue they should come to the meeting and say it not make comments on the computer. Selectman Leustek stated that she has always been in favor zoom and buying equipment. 2nd question: Selectman Kilanski said he has no agenda. No other comment.*

Selectman Marsh said that last week Selectman Kilanski said he would ask Amy to come into explain the unreserved fund balance. Amy was not able to attend tonight but will be here next week.

Selectman Kilanski stated that the board will discuss changing the Selectmen meeting to 6:30 next week when there is a full board.

Selectman Kilanski thanked everyone for coming to the meeting and to the people who sent emails with their concerns.

Rick Meleski let the board know that the Bilo and Pump Rd stations had new roofs put on this week.

Fourth order of business Public comment:

N/A

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

Selectman Marsh makes a motion to enter nonpublic session under "c & e". Selectman Leustek seconds the motion. The motion carries 4-0. A roll call vote was taken, and members vote "yes" individually, and the board convenes in non-public at 7:44pm.

Adjournment

The board reconvenes in public session at 8:40pm.

Selectman Marsh makes a motion to seal the minutes under e. Selectman Leustek seconds the motion. The motion carries 4-0.

Selectman Leustek makes a motion to adjourn at 8:42pm. Selectman Marsh seconds the motion. The motion carries 4-0.

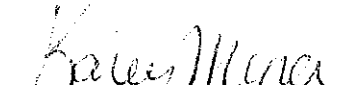
Minutes respectfully submitted:

Karey Miner, Town Administrator

Minutes signed by:



Ben Kilanski Chairman



Karey Miner