



Town of Winchester  
1 Richmond Road Winchester, NH 03470

**Minutes of the  
Selectmen Meeting  
Wednesday, May 19, 2021**

**Board members present:** Ben Kilanski, James Rokes Sr., Lindseigh Picard, and Theresa Sepe. Also, present Chief Kellom, LT Fisher and Rick Meleski.

**First order of business:**

The Chairman opens the meeting at 6:30 pm.

Rick Meleski, Jenna Raza-Tata & Howard, Brian Vose-Granite State Water & Luis Adorno-DES presented the Asset Management Assessment-Phase II per the grant requirements. Brian went over how the GIS mapping works and how the data is collected and entered. This information will be easy to access by the operators on their smartphones or tablets while out in the field. It shows the whole inventory of the water system and helps with capital planning and applying for grant funding. Jenna explained the condition assessment piece of this project. They assess the water mains, hydrants, and valves to determine their condition based on a rating system by category. Such as age, material, break history, diameter, static pressures, and soil characteristics. This information will help with long term planning, cost, and prioritizing upgrades to the water system.

The board recessed for 5 minutes.

**Second order of business: Minutes & New Business**

The board reviews the minutes of 5-19-21 for approval. Selectman Rokes makes a motion to approve the minutes. Selectman Picard seconds the motion. The motion carries 4-0.

Chief Kellom has request a standby fee of \$12.50 per hour to be paid to the Ambulance department when on standby for the Fire department. Selectman Sepe makes a motion to approve the standby fee of \$12.50. Selectman Rokes seconds the motion. The motion carries 4-0. Chief Kellom let the board know the Ambulance has lost 2 employees, so they have placed an ad to replace them.

The Water Department will be repairing a small leak on Richmond Rd. Thursday, May 27<sup>th</sup>.

Selectman Rokes makes a motion to approve the tax abatement for map 27 lot 3-25. Selectman Picard seconds the motion. The motion carries 4-0.

Selectman Rokes makes a motion to approve the tax warrant in the amount of \$4,797,190. Selectman Picard seconds the motion. Motion carries 4-0.

Selectman Sepe makes a motion to approve the tax warrant in the amount of \$1,842 for map 20 lot 7. Selectman Picard seconds the motion. Motion carries 4-0.

Selectman Rokes makes a motion to approve the water warrant in the amount of \$116,506 and the sewer warrant in the amount of \$88,480.35. Selectman Picard seconds the motion. Motion carries 4-0.

The board will hold the 1<sup>st</sup> hearing on the donation of land on 397 Back Ashuelot Rd. to the Winchester Historical Society on June 9<sup>th</sup> @6:30 and the 2<sup>nd</sup> hearing on June 23<sup>rd</sup> @6:30.

Karey is on vacation next week. The board agreed to have Margaret take the minutes. Selectman Sepe makes a motion to approve Selectman Picard to sign the PO's. Selectman Kilanski seconds the motion. Motion carries 4-0.

Selectman Rokes makes a motion to approve the Oath of Office for ZBA- Lou Fox, Broadband- Larry Wood, Conservation-Gus Ruth, Mim Johnson, Natalie Quevedo, Kristen Bagster-Alt. Selectman Picard seconds the motion. The motion carries 4-0.

Selectman Rokes makes a motion to approve a gravel tax for map 15 lot 51 in the amount of \$843.50. Selectman Sepe seconds the motion. Motion carries 5-0.

Selectman Kilanski makes a motion to revisit the Diluzio contract Winchester Ambulance. Selectman Rokes seconds the motion. Motion carries 4-0. Selectman Sepe makes a motion to accept and sign the Diluzio contract. Selectman Rokes seconds the motion. Motion carries 4-0.

Liz Lead Lifeguard is asking the board if they want guards on duty this week due to the weather will only be in the 60's. Selectman Kilanski stated that its Memorial Day weekend and it is opening weekend. The board agrees to have lifeguards on duty.

**The board reviews and approves the following financial documents:**

Selectman Rokes makes a motion to approve the water tank payment to Tata & Howard in the amount of \$6,872.50. Selectman Picard seconds the motion. Motion carries 4-0.

Selectman Picard makes a motion to approve the transfer from the Transfer Station to Highway for winter maintenance in the amount of \$11,466.95. Selectman Rokes seconds the motion. Motion carries ~~5-0~~ 4-0.

Selectman Rokes makes a motion to approve the Ambulance billing reimbursing March payroll in the amount of \$946.78. Selectman Picard seconds the motion. Motion carries 4-0.

Selectman Rokes makes a motion to approve the Police outside activity reimbursing in the amount of \$26,465.99. Selectman Picard seconds the motion. Motion carries 4-0.

Selectman Rokes makes a motion to approve the Cemetery General maintenance payment to Nichols Tree Service in the amount of \$1,000. Selectman Picard seconds the motion. Motion carries 4-0.

Selectman Rokes makes a motion to approve the Evergreen Expendable Care fund payment to Jay Roy in the amount of \$12,400. Selectman Picard seconds the motion. Motion carries 4-0.

Selectman Kilanski asked if Selectman Sepe & Selectman Picard were able to review the Police proposal on salary increases. Selectman Sepe wanted to speak to Officer in Charge LT Fisher on what his needs are. Do you need the 5<sup>th</sup> officer open position to be filled. The department has been working a lot of overtime. Lt Fisher stated that the 5<sup>th</sup> officer is needed but the wages need to be competitive with surrounding departments. What I would like to see is 5 officers at \$50,000 a year. The department has sacrificed and dedicated themselves over the past several months thru COVID. LT Fisher presented a new proposal for the board to review that is within the current budget. Selectman Sepe said that she would review the proposal and understands competitive wages. These increases are not budgeted in the new July 1<sup>st</sup> budget, so we need to look at budget to see if it is even possible. Selectman Picard stated that we should be looking at what we need, and it looks like we need 5

fulltime officers. We should be offering competitive wages for what we need but it is not an overnight fix. Some of the increases that happened and that are proposed are 5-10% increase on the salaries. Maybe this conversation needs to be discussed with the board and the new Chief who may bring new ideas to budgeting. Maybe the answer is we raise the wages and then at budget time we look at putting the position back in. The board needs to decide if we are going to eliminate a position or increase salaries. Having a plan that allows appropriate increases and sustainability. Selectman Kilanski said maybe we table the proposal to have the new Chief be apart of the process. LT Fisher stated that we have lost 2 just before the increase and now we have 2 officers that are being recruited. What is their value. They all have worked hard the past 5 months and we are building a team, but if we lose another officer, it will be painful. Selectman Rokes stated that the conversation started because we have been having a turnover, so giving a salary increase to retain them and to attract more certified officers. Selectman Kilanski stated that is has been large issue for many years. Selectman Sepe stated that she will speak to the Amy-Financial Director and would like LT Fisher to go over the proposal with Amy as well. Also thinks that the new Chief should be part of the discussion. But in the meantime possibly give something to give hope to the officers and let them know we are working on it. Selectman Picard said that a market survey would be helpful and reach out to the other towns determining their base salaries. This way we have something to look at and get out as much information as possible. Lt Fisher stated that he would like to see some type of pay scale. Selectman Sepe agreed and also look at the benefits too. Selectman Kilanski stated that the Police department employees have been great employees and we value them as employees. Selectman Picard asked if there are any grants or any economic incentives for employees that continued to work during the pandemic. It would be worth looking into. Or maybe a 1-time stipend to say thank you and this would be specific to our current budget. Just a few ideas to encourage our current staff. Selectman Sepe has been working on an idea and not cost the town anything but will give thanks to our employees that have worked thru COVID.

#### **Third order of business Board comment:**

Selectman Picard gave an update for the RED Committee. Music in the Park starts June 10<sup>th</sup> and are looking for businesses to sponsor the event. RED has started to discuss Dinner on the Bridge for September 11<sup>th</sup>. The event will be smaller and spread out.

Selectman Picard said that are always talking about budgets and I have been making an effort to attend as many budget discussions at the State level. Yesterday there was a budget review it is important to know what is happening at the State level. There will be some significant tax cuts in the next proposed budget. Potential 230 million dollars that could be cut from the budget and that will impact us and the people of Winchester. Also some good information the COVID funding and money coming directly to towns. Selectman Picard thanked LT Fisher for the review of the PD. Last week there was discussion on firework permits and the importance of why the Fire Dept. needs to know. There is currently danger of burning and while you may think it is ok to have a small fire on your property that could be a significate impact on other people or on our natural resources. Just a reminder safety 1<sup>st</sup>.

#### **Fourth order of business public comment:**

Natalie Quevedo thanked the board for an open discussion. There is a grant called COPS that funds hiring new officers. 2021 they granted 4million dollars to help hire officers. Has the board thought about rehabbing some of the run-down properties for people that have lost everything in a fire and have no where to go. Or offer the new Police Chief the property and lower the salary.

Selectman Kilanski stated that the Police Chief Hire Committee interest forms were due in by today. The board will review this coming week and discuss it at next week's meeting.

Rick Meleski invited Selectman Sepe & Selectman Picard over to the Sewer Plant next Thursday or Friday to see another rotary fan & press pilot. Rick was attending a DOT meeting Thursday on the paving of Rt119.

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

Selectman Picard makes a motion to enter nonpublic session under "c". Selectman Rokes 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 8:40pm.

**Adjournment:**

The board reconvenes in public session at 9:15pm.

Land Use update on code violation.

Selectman Kilanski announces the resignations of Katelyn McDonald-Ambulance, Ryan Labby-PD and Brendan Bosquet.

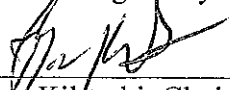
Kevin Bazan let the board know that the Pickle Festival Committee are still discussing whether to hold the Picklefest this year or not and asked the board for any recommendation.

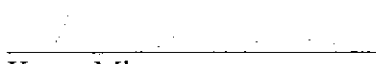
Selectman Rokes makes a motion to adjourn at 9:17 pm. Selectman Picard seconds the motion. The motion carries 4-0.

Minutes respectfully submitted:

Karey Miner, Town Administrator

Minutes signed by:

  
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Ben Kilanski, Chairman

  
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Karey Miner