



Town of Winchester
1 Richmond Road Winchester, NH 03470

**Minutes of the
Selectmen Meeting**
Wednesday, August 18, 2021

Board members present for the meeting: Herbert Stephens, Lindseigh Picard, James Rokes and Theresa Sepe. Also, present were Lt. Fisher, Margaret Sharra & Rick Meleski.

First order of business: Work Session

The Vice Chairman opens the meeting at 6:00 pm.

Selectman Picard had done research on possible options for live streaming town meetings. The options are hiring a company to manage live streaming meetings and renting their equipment or purchase the equipment and the town manages the live streaming. The question came up on whether or not the warrant article would allow the town to hire a vendor and rent the equipment vs purchase the equipment. The board consulted with the Attorney stated that it is so specific in the wording that it could be attacked in Court so the only viable option would be to purchase the equipment as the article states. The board agrees that the warrant is clear in its intent. Selectman Picard stated that she reached to the Attorney to discuss the intent of the article. The intent is to live stream meetings to insure transparency. Selectman Picard said she was looking at vendors that would assist in the process because if we become responsible for the recording, we will need to enact a number of policies that outline some guidelines. The Attorney advise not to go against the article but both of us were hung up on the intent. I am trying to find the best option to bring transparency to our meetings by way of live streaming. If the board is in the opinion that the intent of the article is to purchase the equipment, I have a list of equipment that will be needed in the amount of \$7,178. This doesn't include a few items one being training for the boards/committees, a Tech person to set it all up and a cart to wheel out of the way. Selectman Sepe said if the article says to purchase the equipment and the Attorney agrees, what to says between now and then we can rent the equipment through one of the companies for a few months until we can purchase all the equipment needed. The goal is to act on the warrant article that were passed. Selectman Picard said that is a good point because there is no guarantee the equipment, we need is available. Out of the 2 vendors I would have recommended Granicus because they have more to offer for the long-term plan. For ease Town Hall Stream and there is no issue to go month to month. If we need something now until we can have the equipment purchased and ready to use, I would go with Town Hall Streams and the turnaround time is a couple of weeks for \$250.00 a month for unlimited service. Selectman Sepe asked if that includes other boards or what about the school. Selectman Picard yes, all boards/committees that meet at the Town Hall. The school would not be able use it because it is by the location. But I did bring up the options at the school board meeting. Selectman Rokes asked if the school have to archive the meetings. Selectman Picard said that they do archive. Selectman Rokes asked about the cost of Zoom compared to using a vendor. Selectman Picard said it depends on how many access points/users. Not sure on the cost for Winchester but some of the large districts \$12,000 -\$14,000. With Zoom we will still need a laptop in front of us. I am trying to advocate for what is in the best interests of our population in proving a consistent live stream option. Not everyone has access to Facebook or other platforms, but these options would give us a place to stream too. Selectman Picard reads the article,

“Shall the Town of Winchester raise and appropriate the sum of \$7,500.00 to purchase equipment to live stream and video record all public board and committee meetings to provide transparency and accountability to the citizens and taxpayers.” Selectman Sepe said that she isn't going to go against the majority of the people, and they said to purchase, however we can take the time to purchase the equipment, or we could wait the 7 months until the next vote we revisit the article and change it to purchase or rent. So 7 months times \$250.00 that is \$1700.00 and look within the budget so we can live stream immediately. Selectman Picard stated that over the past several years there has been funds returned back so I feel we could find some funds. Selectman Picard said that she didn't ask either vendor if we had equipment, they could use it if that would change the cost. But can follow up with that. Selectman Picard makes a motion to work with Town Hall Stream for the next 60-90 days as we resolve the process of live streaming the intent of the article #23. Selectman Sepe seconds the motion. The motion fails 2-2. Selectman Stephens are concerned with how the articles read and the intent. Selectman Rokes is concerned with the budget and the money that has been spent over the last couple of months. Also, would like to have Selectman Kilanski be included. Selectman Picard makes a motion to purchase the equipment on the list so we can live streaming as soon as possible. Selectman Sepe seconds the motion. The motion fails 2-2.

Second order of business: Minutes, Public Hearing & New Business

The board reviews the minutes of 8/11/21 for approval. Selectman Rokes makes a motion to approve the minutes. Selectman Stephens seconds the motion. Motion carries 4-0.

Public Hearing #1- “Notice is hereby given that the Town of Winchester Board of Selectmen will hold a public hearing on Wednesday, August 18, 2021, at 6:30pm in the Winchester Town Hall for the purpose of accepting and expending the State Highway Block Grant Aid in the amount of \$136,878.78. Questions may be addressed to the Winchester Town Hall; Office of Selectmen, 1 Richmond Road; Winchester, NH.” Selectman Picard makes a motion to open the public hearing. Selectman Stephens seconds the motion. The motion carries 4-0. No comments. Selectman Rokes makes a motion to close the public hearing. Selectman Stephens seconds the motion. The motion carries 4-0. Selectman Rokes makes a motion to accept and expend the Highway Block Grant in the amount of \$136,878.78. Selectman Stephens seconds the motion. The motion carries 4-0.

Public Hearing #2- “Notice is hereby given that the Town of Winchester Board of Selectmen will hold a public hearing on Wednesday, August 18, 2021, at 6:30pm in the Winchester Town Hall for the purpose of accepting and expending \$26,321 Rural Business Development Grant from USDA to restore sections of the Ashuelot Rail Trail. Questions may be addressed to the Winchester Town Hall; Office of Selectmen, 1 Richmond Road; Winchester, NH.” Selectman Picard makes a motion to open the public hearing. Selectman Stephens' seconds the motion. The motion carries 4-0. No comments. Selectman Rokes makes a motion to close the public hearing. Selectman Stephens seconds the motion. The motion carries 4-0. Selectman Stephens makes a motion to accept and expend the USDA Grant for the Ashuelot Rail Trail in the amount of \$26,321. Selectman Rokes seconds the motion. The motion carries 4-0.

Forest Lake Improvement Association- Dave Johnson & Board Members gave a flood update on the Forest Lake dam and where the FLIA is on repairs to dam. The project planning has been ineffective since Sept 2020. Phase I has been completed and consisted of a Hydrologic & Hydraulic (H&H) Study (required by the State), data collection, site evaluation, reports & submitted to DES Dam Bureau in the amount of \$8,400. Phase II is survey, engineering design, NHDES wetland permit, DES reconstruction permit, construction drawings & bid packages in the amount of \$95,500. The FLIA is committed to fund raising for phase II. Phase III- Fund Raising/Warrant Article. Phase IV- site work renovation, contingency & performance bond in the amount \$225,000. Total cost \$326,900 and completed by May 2024. FLIA will be asking the board and residents to help with funding the repairs to the dam. Selectman Picard asked if the FLIA has thought about teaming up with other boards or committees. Dave stated that they will be meeting with the Conservation Committee and are willing to give the presentation to other organizations that will listen.

Nonpublic under RSA 91-A:3II

Selectman Picard makes a motion to enter nonpublic session under “ b ”. Selectman Stephens 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 7:30pm.

The board reconvenes in public session at 8:27pm.

The board reviews and approves the following financial documents:

Selectman Picard makes a motion to approve payment from the Evergreen Cemetery Expendable in the amount of \$750.00 to Smith Landscaping. Selectman Sepe seconds the motion. The motion carries 4-0.

Selectman Stephens makes a motion to approve payment from the Town Owned Building Capital Reserve acct. in the amount of \$1,200.00 to Marvin Smart for roof repairs. Selectman Picard seconds the motion. The motion carries 4-0.

Selectman Rokes makes a motion to approve a PO from the Highway Dept. in the amount of \$5,000.00 to All State Construction. Selectman Stephens seconds the motion. The motion carries 4-0.

Selectman Picard makes a motion to approve the updates and the allowable expenses made to the welfare guidelines during the work session on 8/11/21. Selectman Sepe seconds the motion. The motion carries 4-0.

Selectman Sepe read an email from Maryan Platz who received a message from a funeral home that responded to a scene. “Hi Maryan! I just wanted to let you know I did the removal from the fatal accident last night and got a chance to work with your fire and rescue folks. They are all AWESOME! Very helpful and professional. Great group of folks.”

Third order of business Other:

N/A

Fourth order of business public comment:

The board discussed whether or not to read email comments. Selectman Picard stated that we want the public to participate, and they want to have their voice heard. I am in favor of reading them out loud and maybe we need to have a policy. Selectman Sepe said she agreed but was concerned with the negative comments directed at the board members and not talking face to face is not ok. We start allowing emails we will be here all night. There is a fine line, and some people can't get to the meeting, but I rather see them face to face if they are being derogatory. Selectman Picard said she wants to encourage people to participate. As a board when someone makes comment we like to respond back and have an open conversation, but it is public comment and as a board we do not have to respond back. So it goes back to what our policy will be. Selectman Rokes said we cannot be here each week answering every email, so I suggest that we open it up to 15 minutes of public comment letting the people at the meeting speak first then if there is time left, we can read the emails. Again we can have 30 emails show up and spend hours on them. The board agrees.

Natalie Quevedo asked the board where they are on hiring a Police Chief. Selectman Sepe said close, there will be an announcement in a couple of weeks.

Concern Citizen emailed the board, Colleen Duquette, Elm St.

“Hi! I believe you are in the midst of negotiating a contract for the landfill. Would it be possible to discuss there being several days a year or even one where it could be free to dump items without a charge? Maybe even hazardous waste? It might stop some of the misc. dumping on roadsides. Just a thought. They may say no but worth an ask. Thank you” Selectman Sepe stated that the board spoke last week about the increased cost for Winchester to go to Keene for only 3 residents. Budgets are coming up so the board can look at it again.

Concern Citizen emailed the board, Jonathan Gallup, Michigan St.

"I noticed that the declaration was not passed and I think you for not wasting the time on it as it does nothing. I notice that not all my email was read completely and I'm a bit confused to why as it was not attacking anyone nearly pointing out that the town is upset about spending and that we need to use wisdom as this isn't keene. If individuals that can't attend meetings in person can't trust that there statements will not be read in entirety then what good does it do to send them. Also I get that there are possible expensive for buying your own equipment but in the long run and short run it will cost us less then a monthly payment. I hope this is truly considered. Maybe look into company's that will help with any technical issues or even reach out to tech savvy town members we have them."

Nonpublic under RSA 91-A:3II (c)

Selectman Sepe makes a motion to enter nonpublic session under " b & c ". Selectman Stephens 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 7:49pm.

Adjournment:

The board reconvenes in public session at 9:14pm.

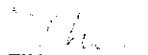
Selectman Rokes left the non-public meeting.

Selectman Picard makes a motion to seal the minutes under "b"-Personnel. Selectman Sepe seconds the motion. The motion carries 3-0.

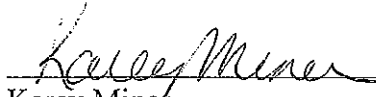
The board accepted Officer Gordon's resignation letter.
The board hired Jonathan Bebey-Highway Dept.

Selectman Picard makes a motion to adjourn at 9:15pm. Selectman Stephens seconds the motion. The motion carries 3-0.

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



Theresa Sepe, Vice Chairman



Karey Miner