

Office of Board of Selectmen

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Selectmen's Meeting Minutes
Monday, April 3, 2023, 10:00 am
Belmont Mill, 14 Mill Street
Tioga Meeting Room

Present were Chairman Ruth Mooney, Selectman Jon Pike, Selectman Claude (Sonny) Patten, Jr., Selectman Travis O'Hara, Selectman Sharon Ciampi, TA Alicia Jipson, Assessing Admin Colleen Akerman, DPW Director Craig Clairmont, Assistant DPW Director Brian Jackes, Building & Grounds Supervisor Patrick Golden, Police Chief Mark Lewandoski, Captain Stephen Akerstrom, General Assistance Director Donna Cilley, TC/TC Cynthia DeRoy, Fire Chief Mike Newhall, Assistant Fire Chief Deb Black, CEO Mark Ekberg, Librarian Eileen Gilbert, and Planning Board Member Kevin Sturgeon. Via ZOOM were Finance Director Katherine Davis, Interim Town Planner Karen Santoro, Town Clerk/Tax Collector Assistants Jenn Thomas and Leigh Smith.

Those present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Minutes:

Selectman Sonny Patten moved the minutes of the public meeting held on March 20, 2023, as written; seconded by Selectman Jon Pike. *Roll Call 1: J. Pike – aye, S. Patten – aye, T. O'Hara – aye, S. Ciampi – aye, R. Mooney – aye. Motion passed (5-0).*

Meeting Procedure:

Chairman Ruth Mooney reviewed the process for Board discussion and actions: The Board will discuss an agenda item, it will be opened for public comment, public comment will be closed, and it will be brought back to the Board for further discussion to give new members time to digest things before any votes.

New Business

Sale of State-Owned Land in Belmont:

TA Alicia Jipson received a letter from the State of New Hampshire informing the Town they are going to sell the parcel next to the storage facility on Route 3. If the Town is interested, the State is offering it for \$49,400, but it does not seem to be of value to the Town. It is a state road. Selectman Pike said it has already been offered to Winnisquam Storage. Selling the parcel will get it onto the tax roll, whereas currently the parcel is tax exempt.

The Chairman opened the discussion for public comment. Building & Grounds Supervisor Patrick Golden asked if the Town would consider purchasing it for parking for the WOW trail. There is no parking to use the trail and people use Agway's parking lot. There was

discussion about the dangers of trail parking across Route 3. B&G Supervisor Golden said when the trail is extended there will need to be a crossing somewhere on Route 3. Police Chief Mark Lewandoski said the future crossing will be near the train tracks and the flashing light. The Chairman closed public comment.

The Board reviewed the location of the lot and the State's turnaround.

Selectman Pike moved to take no action on purchasing this state-owned parcel next to Winnisquam Storage; seconded by Selectman Travis O'Hara. Roll Call 2: S. Ciampi – aye, T. O'Hara – aye, S. Patten – aye, J. Pike – aye, R. Mooney – aye. Motion passed (5-0).

TruNarc Training – Opioid Funding Reimbursement Request:

TA Jipson reminded the Board they had previously approved using Opioid Funding to purchase a TruNarc Laser. Staff training is required and Chief Lewandoski is asking for reimbursement for straight time and overtime for the training. TA Jipson conferred with the Attorney General and has a list of approved uses for the funds which was copied to Fire Chief Mike Newhall, Chief Lewandoski and General Assistance Director Donna Cilley. They are the three department heads who will need to access these funds. The training falls under expanded training for first responders and ties into what we are doing to abate the opioid epidemic.

There was no public comment.

Selectman Patten moved to approve using \$2,236.60 from Opioid Settlement Funds for the reimbursement of straight time and overtime for TruNarc Laser training; seconded by Selectman O'Hara. Roll Call 3: S. Patten – aye, S. Ciampi – aye, J. Pike – aye, T. O'Hara – aye, R. Mooney – aye. Motion passed (5-0).

Foot Bridge Fencing Quote Over Pipe:

Selectman Pike explained there is foot traffic by the river banking near the Mill. For public safety, orange fencing was put up because of the underground pipe. B&G Supervisor Golden estimated it would be \$375 to replace the orange fencing with a split rail cedar fence, with a rubber mat underneath and gravel and wood chips and the work to be completed by Building & Grounds and DPW. Selectman O'Hara asked what the underground pipe was for. B&G Supervisor Golden stated it fed the pipe from the dam to turn the turbines at the mill. It has been disconnected but no one knows where it ends or how big it is, so it is not likely to be dug up.

Selectman Pike moved to approve \$375 to replace the orange snow fence with a split rail cedar fence; seconded by Selectman Patten. Roll Call 4: T. O'Hara – aye, J. Pike – aye, S. Ciampi – aye, S. Patten – aye, R. Mooney – aye. Motion passed (5-0).

2022 Audit Reminder:

The 2022 Town Audit will take place this week. The auditors should be here for about three days. The Town Clerk's office will be done first because they will be short-staffed later in the week because of training. We have uploaded as much information as possible, but it will be a busy week getting information to them.

Mill – Generator Engineering Quote:

At the last meeting the Board asked to move forward with obtaining a generator quote for the Mill building. Bonnette, Page & Stone gave the Town a quote of \$6,200 to have H. L. Turner do the sizing for the generator. That seems expensive just to size the generator. B&G Supervisor Golden has NuWave Electric and Gove Electric coming to give free quotes for the generator sizing. Both companies say the generator will be based on the electrical panels in the building to run everything. He hopes to have some numbers before the next Board meeting. The generator will be built to work as an Emergency Operations Center (EOC) so the building can always be open. Chief Lewandoski commented that the generator at the police department is three-phase to work the elevator, the circulators, and the lighting. It is a Kohler 125, which is the largest propane-fired generator that could have been purchased. It was top of the line and cost \$80,000 including installation.

It was the consensus of the Board to table the generator discussion until quotes have been obtained.

Other New Business:

Fire Chief Retirement:

On Thursday, Fire Chief Mike Newhall submitted his intention to retire. We will be moving forward to put out an ad and fill the position. Chairman Ruth Mooney said the Board wishes Chief Newhall the best and thanked him for his service.

Old Business:

Fuller Street Tree Removal:

B&G Supervisor Golden distributed photos of the problem tree. Chairman Mooney said if it fell our insurance deductible is \$1,000 no matter what. It could fall on the fence or a person. There is a quote from Tall Timbers for \$2,400 which does not include fixing the broken light. There was discussion about the mechanics of the removal and placement of equipment. B&G Supervisor Golden said he and Parks & Rec Director Danielle St. Onge determined they could move back fixing the tennis court wall until next year to use the \$1,500 towards the cost of the tree removal. There is also a Park Maintenance line that could be used. Chairman Mooney does not want to see necessary repairs and maintenance delayed for this type of situation. Perhaps some funds can be removed from capital, and TA Jipson added that DPW also has funds for tree removal. There is a huge debate about whose tree this is, and the neighbors are arguing. DPW Director Craig Clairmont noted he currently has Tall Timbers scheduled for Friday. The price from the company he regularly uses would be a minimum of \$4,500 because of the crane required for this particular job. There was discussion on the price

comparisons for three different companies. The Cemetery Trustees also uses Tall Timbers. DPW Director Clairmont said cars will need to be moved for the removal because it will need to be done from the police department parking lot.

The Chairman opened public comment. General Assistance Director Donna Cilley was concerned about the property owner signing a release of liability however there is a dispute about the ownership of the tree. DPW Director Clairmont noted the tree company also has insurance. There was no additional public comment.

Selectman Pike moved to remove the tree at a cost of \$2,400 without using Parks & Recs funds; seconded by Selectman O'Hara. Roll Call 5: S. Patten – aye, J. Pike – aye, T. O'Hara – aye, S. Ciampi – aye, R. Mooney – aye. Motion passed (5-0).

Parks & Rec's goal is to have Sargent Park open for April 15th.

Other Old Business:

Tax Deed:

TC/TC Cynthia DeRoy has the tax deed prepared for 4 Leisure Lane which was voted on at a prior meeting. She needs signatures to record it at the registry. TC/TC DeRoy suggested that moving forward will involve several people. Legal will need to be contacted about an eviction. There were concerns about the structure and its possible use to manufacture drugs, and how should we proceed with cleanup and abatement and does it need to be disclosed to the cleanup company. Chief Lewandoski said if there was any drug manufacturing in the structure it will need to come down.

Town-Owned Properties:

TA Jipson said in 2020 the Board tried to sell properties that were of no use to the Town. Two of the four parcels were sold one on Rogers Road and one on South Road. The two that were not sold include a small land-locked triangle parcel off Route 140 and the merged Dearborn Street parcel. The land-locked piece could be offered to abutters. The Dearborn Street property was originally three parcels that were merged into one. The previous minimum bid was \$59,675 because of what was due, but it went through a sealed bid process and was not widely advertised. The Board could consider offering the Dearborn Street property at an auction or hire a realtor. Selling the parcel would get it back on the tax roll. The land-locked parcel minimum was \$2,396. Selectman O'Hara thought the cost was limiting on the Dearborn Street parcel. TC/TC DeRoy said three companies were interested but the bids were not high enough.

The Chairman opened public comment. Planning Board Member Kevin Sturgeon asked if the property comes with a clean bill of health where it had proper demo. She replied that it is a Quitclaim Deed and it has not been tested. What you see is what you get. General Assistance Director Cilley asked if it has been appraised. TA Jipson stated the current assessment is \$47,600. There was no additional public comment.

The Board has options for a sealed bid, an auction or a realtor. Selectman O'Hara thought an auction would get the most people. There was concern about fees, but TA Jipson said there are fees but only for the buyer, with zero fees for municipalities and the buyer pays the auction fees. She will do additional research if the Board would like to go this route.

It was the consensus of the Board to do some more research about auctioning the Dearborn Street property. Selectman O'Hara said the Town is losing money by not having the property on the tax roll. TA Jipson can collect information about the different auction companies and get feedback from the Board. The Chairman requested that TA Jipson choose a "soup to nuts" company to handle everything.

Selectman Pike said to check with the abutters of the Route 140 parcel because we are wasting time holding onto the property. Selectman Sharon Ciampi asked how big the parcel is. TA Jipson answered it is 0.31 acres.

Christmas Storm Update:

Chief Newhall is working on obtaining FEMA reimbursement funds for the storm. The first estimate was \$40,400. The second more complete estimate was \$51,500. They are including a new generator for the school at \$58,769. We should be getting back over \$109,000 from the State. We will administer the funds for the generator for the school and the rest will go into the General Fund. The state is moving quickly, and they already know what has been allotted from the federal government. The generator is a 100kW, propane, three-phase, 40 volt generator.

NHPDIP Update:

Funds were moved in February and earned \$12,791 in interest. The March interest was \$18,652, for a total so far of \$31,343. The interest rate was previously at 4.6% but is now at 4.83%.

Code Enforcement Update:

CEO Mark Ekberg explained he has met with Mr. Walker at 130 Depot Street, who has made it clear he does not want to get rid of the vehicles. He said Mr. Walker told him that he has hired an attorney, but we have not heard from an attorney about this yet. Our attorneys were notified March 21st and we have not heard from them since then. Chairman Mooney asked what the next step is. TA Jipson thinks it is headed for court action, whether voluntarily or imposed. There was discussion about the violations, and the fact that there is no longer a license to operate a junk yard at the property. Additional legal funds were included in the Enforcement budget for these situations. CEO Ekberg thinks he has exhausted all efforts. Mr. Walker has met with the Board four times and Mrs. Walker once. There have been promises made but no action. NHDES was contacted but they will kick issues back to the Town. They will provide support but not take the lead.

Selectman Patten asked about the status of 752 Laconia Road. CEO Ekberg said there has been no update from our attorneys since December. Chairman Mooney was concerned that our attorneys have not responded. TA Jipson explained that our attorneys have sent letters instructing the owner to contact CEO Ekberg, but we have not seen the letters.

CEO Ekberg updated the Board on 194 Gilmanton Road. They plan to reapply for the Special Exception they need but things have slowed with a recent death in the family.

The Board requested that CEO Ekberg contact our attorneys and let them know that he is getting pressure from the Board. We would like an update, a copy of any letters, and any responses to the letters.

It was the consensus of the Board to move forward with legal action on 130 Depot Street. The Board has been patient and met with Mr. Walker multiple times over 18 months. He lost his junkyard license in June 2021 and had one year to come into compliance, and he did not.

Next Meeting: The next regular meeting will be **Monday, April 17, 2023, at 10 am.**

Non-Public:

Chairman Mooney moved to enter non-public session in accordance with RSA 91-A:3 II (a and c) at 11:07 am. Selectman Patten seconded the motion. Roll Call 6: S. Ciampi – aye, J. Pike – aye, S. Patten – aye, T. O’Hara – aye, R. Mooney – aye. Motion passed (5-0).


Those present and voting were Ruth Mooney, Jon Pike, Claude Patten, Jr., Travis O’Hara and Sharon Ciampi. Also present were TA Alicia Jipson and General Assistance Director Donna Cilley.

No voting took place in NP. Discussion was had with GA Director Donna Cilley regarding the Homeless population and how we will move forward with addressing issues of concern and assistance. After Donna Cilley left discussion was had on the Fire Chief’s intent to retire and how and where the TA would advertise and whom to seek for the oral boards.

The Board returned to public session at 11:50 am.

Adjournment:

Selectman O'Hara moved to adjourn the meeting at 11:51 seconded by Selectman Pike.
Roll call: S. Ciampi – aye, J. Pike – aye, S. Patten – aye, T. O'Hara – aye, R. Mooney – aye.
Motion passed (5-0.)

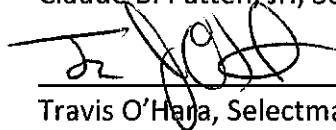


Ruth P. Mooney, Chairman



Jon Pike, Vice Chairman

Claude B. Patten, Jr., Selectman



Travis O'Hara, Selectman



Sharon Ciampi, Selectman