

Town of Litchfield

Selectmen's Meeting

February 7, 2011

Members present: Frank A. Byron, Chairman
Steven D. Perry, Vice Chairman
M. Patricia Jewett
George Lambert
John R. Brunelle

5:00 p.m. Consultation with Town Counsel

Also present: Jason Hoch, Town Administrator

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

All rose for the Pledge of Allegiance.

CONSENT ITEMS/ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Consent Items:

Other Business

1st item for discussion was for the Abatement approval.

2nd item for discussion is to approve the Insurance settlement for Seymour trial.

3rd item for discussion is Pennichuck East Corporation takeover by the City of Nashua.

4th item up for discussion is the notice concerning the Health Trust hearing.

PUBLIC INPUT

No members of the public present.

Items for Acceptance:

Mr. Jack Moorhouse (Field Rep. for FEMA), NH Department of Safety on Grant Application Modifications.

Mr. Moorhouse came in to discuss two Grant Agreements for cost overruns for the Mother's Day floods emergencies and projects approved for hazard mitigation. FEMA and the Town of Litchfield agreed that it would cost \$50,000 for these projects but it ended up costing more. The Town submitted an application detailing the items that had the cost overruns. The two projects were the Talent Road Project and the hazard mitigation on Winter Circle. The Talent Road Project grant agreement was for \$27,195.00 and the cost of the Winter Circle project was for \$20,944.00 which comes with an administration cost of \$544.00. Mr. Moorhouse had two grant agreements that needed to be signed by the Town Selectmen and then needed to be signed by the Town Administrator, Jason Hoch as a Justice

of the Peace. After these documents are signed and approved, the paperwork will be forwarded through the Department of Safety and eventually Governor and Council for release to the Town.

Selectman Frank Byron motioned that the Board of Selectmen accept the Grant supplement through the State of New Hampshire for \$27,195 for the Talent Road Project. Selectman Steve Perry seconded the motion. The motion carried 5-0-0.

Selectman Frank Byron motioned that the Board of Selectmen accept the Grant supplement through the State of New Hampshire for \$20,944 for the Winter Circle project. Selectman Pat Jewett seconded the motion. The motion carried 5-0-0.

The Board and Town Administrator signed the associated paperwork and returned it to Mr. Moorhouse.

Budget Review:

- Review of Deliberative Session proposed draft slide presentation.
 - Would like to take a straw poll at Town deliberative session to see if we want a joint deliberative session with school.
 - Article 1 – Election of Offices
 - Article 2 – Town Budget (warrant article)
 - Budget Breakdown
 - Cost per citizen – cost each citizen in Town pays and how Litchfield stacks up against other towns.
 - Police Union Contract – Cost over course of three years of contract, buyout for not taking health insurance, personal and sick time, implementing drug testing.
 - Earned Time
 - Highway Block Grant Funds – (what is the purpose of).
 - Fire hydrant fees (warrant article) talks about number of customers on system.
 - Litchfield residents per PUC. Customer pays \$12.59 per month and the slide also talks about how the citizens would pay \$800 if not a subscriber to Pennichuck East – Fire Hydrant Committee. Voters directing us to submit warrant article. Warrant article would take over hydrant fees and will take 6 months to get PUC to take action. The cost is roughly \$279,000.00 in 2013, we expect a 15% increase which will bring the cost up to \$320,850.00.
 - Land Use Change Tax – Talks about what the definition of a land use change tax is. What has been collected over the course of the years? Implemented in 2003, 100% for the conservation Committee to date. Also talks about the Conservation Commission fund.
 - Expendable Trust Fund – talks about why we want to set this up.

- Petition Warrant Article for the Appointment of Fire Chief. Chief would serve until March 2012, and then the Board would make appointments.
- Budget vs. Default
- Public Safety – Government overviews.

Review of the end of the Year Budget for 2010.

Town Administrator, Jason Hoch stated that it looks as though we are where we thought we would be with ending unspent funds, around \$200,000. The numbers may adjust when the auditors come next week.

Review of the 2011 snow budget – Through the end of the week we have used about \$48,000 of the \$95,000 line in the Highway budget for contracted snow removal. The Groundhog Day storm had a higher cost than a usual storm because of the duration and the amount of snow already on the ground. The contracted cost for this storm was \$13,700, which about twice the amount of what we budgeted for a “normal” storm.

Review of status of Impact Fees – Mr. Hoch sent out a spread sheet with a hard copy of the impact fee expiration calendar. With some of the moves with encumbering some of the money at the Elementary School and for recreation; the Elementary School does not have monies expiring until April and the recreation monies expiring in December. The High School has some of its money expiring this month.

Selectman F. Byron motioned to the Board of Selectmen to direct Town Administrator Mr. Jason Hoch to send to the various organizational units who have impact fees available their accounting and notice of expiration of these funds coming up with the particular dates as indicated. Selectman S. Perry seconded the motion. The motion carried 5-0-0.

Town Administrator Report:

Street light conversion is complete with two lights replaced at a cost of \$1,175.30. The undepreciated cost buyout is \$9,840.59, making the total paid to PSNH \$11,015.89. The check was mailed last week and the new rate should be effective by the second week of February. PSNH’s estimate is that the annual savings under the new rate plan will be \$7,914 which would make the payback period 1.4 years.

There was a request from UPS to place a drop box outside Town Hall. There will be no cost to the Town, UPS provides liability insurance coverage. The agreement looks to be fairly straightforward. My sense is that this would be a worthwhile service to provide residents since it looks like the closest drop off boxes are in Londonderry and Nashua. Mr. Hoch requests authorization to enter into drop box agreement with UPS.

Selectman G. Lambert motioned to the Board of Selectmen to authorize Mr. Hoch to enter into an agreement with UPS for drop box in front of Town Hall. Selectman P. Jewett seconded the motion. The motion carried 5-0-0.

Comcast has provided their annual compliance documents. Copies are in the correspondence folder.

NHMA has provided a great publication regarding state aid to municipalities. Mr. Hoch provided copies to each of the selectmen. This booklet is also being given to all House and Senate members. It will be available via the web on Friday – suggest that electronic link be provided to the Budget Committee as well.

This week's Legislative bulletin highlights HB 77 which restricts deliberative sessions from amending articles in such a way that deletes the subject matter of the article. (Ostensibly to offset trend in some towns to gut articles back to read "To see").

HB 446 would repeal all local licensing of hawkers and peddlers

Legislation Bulletin discussions HB further and notes committee vote scheduled for February 8th.

Also from Legislative bulletin, HB 393 which would repeal the statute authorizing revolving funds such as special detail funds. NHMA opposes. This would create a logistical hassle in handling details through the gross budgeting process and part of the reason the Town voted in 2007 to set up detail funds in this way.

There is a hearing on February 8th to consider reducing rooms and meals tax. This is one of the most important state aid revenues Towns receive. This could result in an overall loss to the state of between \$16 and \$27 million.

New bills of note: HB 457 reduces by 50% interest applicable to late tax payments; HB 530 moves septic approvals from DES to towns and requires appointment of local plumbing inspectors; SB 2 authorizing a spending cap.

Representative Lambert passed along a clarification from the Secretary of State's office regarding ballot name order. A pre-selected position of alphabetically listed names will be listed first and names that follow that name alphabetically will then be listed following.

Jack and I met with Northpoint Engineering about the Cranberry Lane culvert project, Roberts Road work, potential improvements at Albuquerque, Page & Cutler and various items for storm water management compliance.

Dave Mellen has passed along that NH the Beautiful has awarded grant for baler purchase in the amount of \$3,000 (less than the \$6,600 for which he asked). He's looking at alternatives to stretch the available funds we have.

Town Clerk has passed along a letter from the Towns Clerks Association regarding allowing dealerships to process vehicle registrations. The Association opposes this for a list of reasons. I would be particularly concerned about the potential loss of revenue, undermining the verification of residency and loss of local control.

Mr. Hoch has begun gradually working through the welfare files (5 or 6 per day) to organize, index and archive as needed. This has also led to a need to clarify and track outstanding liens – he has been researching a few each day with Town records and Registry.

The Board of Selectmen recessed the meeting at 8:05 pm and will reconvene at 8:10.

Discussion of future meeting schedules: Selectman J. Brunelle was not present at the previous meeting which talked about changing the meeting dates to the 2nd and 4th Mondays of the Month. Mr. Brunelle stated that he was okay with the new schedule. Mr. Byron stated that the meetings are scheduled for the 2nd and 4th Mondays each month and that if there was a need for another meeting one would be called. Any month with a 5th week (May, August and October) the intention of the 5th week is to hold some informational meeting (those weeks previously had been Department Head meetings.) Meetings are open to the Public.

Committee and District Reports:

Selectman P. Jewett stated that on Tuesday February 8th there is a Recreation Commission meeting. Selectman P. Jewett would also like to publicly thank the members of the wrestling committee for donating the left over food from the meet. They did not have as many people as anticipated, so there was a lot of food let over. Selectman P. Jewett delivered the extra food to a few families in town, who were very grateful.

Community Bulletins:

Town Deliberative Session meeting is this Saturday, February 12th at 12:00 noon at Campbell High School.

Selectman P. Jewett announced that there is a pancake breakfast this Saturday February 12th from 8:00am until 11:00. It will be held at LMS and is put on by Project Safe Guard Group sponsored by the 7th grade to earn money for workshops about problems teenagers face. The cost is \$5.00.

Public Input:

No members present.

Approval with Consent:

No Items.

Other Business:

Selectman F. Byron motioned to the Board of Selectmen to grant abatements to Map 2 Lot 19 in the amount of \$992.64. Selectman P. Jewett seconded the motion. The motion carried 5-0-0.

There was a request from Town Counsel regarding insurance settlement for Seymour case, for an outstanding balance of \$13,062 with \$6,531 paid by Primex and \$6,531 by AIU holdings.

Selectman F. Byron motioned to the Board of Selectmen to hereby agree to the settlement of the final bill for the loss due to the Seymour theft of \$13,062 with \$6,531 paid by Primex and \$6,531 paid by AIU holdings. Selectman P. Jewett seconded the motion. The motion carried 5-0-0.

Mr. Don Ware of Pennichuck East was invited to attend the Selectmen's meeting of the 7th because he was unable to attend the meeting of the 14th. Mr. Ware was also unable to attend the meeting on the 7th. Does the board want Mr. Ware to attend the Meeting of the 28th of February (talking about Hydrant issues). The intent was to have Mr. Ware in before the deliberative session, but this was not possible. Selectman P. Jewett motioned to the board of Selectmen to invite Mr. Ware to the meeting of the 28th. Selectman G. Lambert seconded the motion. Mr. Lambert has temporarily left the meeting. The motion carried 4-0-0.

Selectman G. Lambert has returned to the meeting.

Selectman F. Byron asked the Board if they were interested in talking to the Londonderry Town Counsel in regard to Pennichuck East Corp. We are the two largest subscribers of Pennichuck East. Would board like to get both boards together to discuss any problems or concerns? All Board members agreed.

There is a letter in the folder in regards to the Health Trust Hearing which will take place in Derry. It is a public hearing on rate studies.

There is a legislative forum from NRPC's perspective on February 17th at 6:30pm at the Anheiser Busch Facility in Merrimack. You must RSVP no later than February 11th.

There being no further business, Mr. Byron motioned to adjourn the public meeting. The Public Meeting ended at 8:30pm. Selectman P. Jewett seconded the motion. The motion carried 5-0-0.

The Board will go into a non-public meeting RSA 91a 3 IIc.

Frank A. Byron, Chairman

Steven D. Perry, V. Chairman

M. Patricia Jewett

George A. Lambert

John R. Brunelle