

## Town of Litchfield

Selectmen's Meeting

June 13, 2011

Members present: Steve Perry, Chairman (excused late arrival)  
John R. Brunelle, Vice Chairman  
Frank A. Byron  
George A. Lambert  
Brent R. Lemire

5:00 p.m. Review of Paperwork and Communications

Also present: Jason Hoch, Town Administrator

7:00 Call to Order – John Brunelle

### **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

All rose for the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **Review of Items for Consent**

1. Minutes of May 23rd
2. Intent to Cut – PSNH RoW
3. Nomination of Michael Croteau to Lower Merrimack River Advisory Committee Reappointment of Joan McKibben and Tom Levesque and Michael Croteau to Conservation Commission
4. Commission
5. Timber Tax Warrant – PSNH RoW
6. Abatement approval for Map 2, Lot 2A
7. Veterans Tax Credit applications (3)
8. Intent to Cut – Map 4, Lots 1 & 33 (Marc Lane)
9. Intent to Cut – Map 4, Lot 25 (Page Road)
10. Unsealing of various non-public minutes as listed on memo of June 13, 2011
11. Recertifying the seal of various non-public minutes through June, 2016 as listed on memo of June 13, 2011

### **Approval of consent items**

Selectman B. Lemire motioned to the Board of Selectmen to approve items 1 – 11 listed under consent. Selectman F. Byron seconded the motion. The motion carried 4-0-0.

### **Items for Other Business**

Selectman F. Byron would like to discuss: DRA letter that came to the Board, Evaluation of Assessment data.

### **Public Hearing – Acceptance and Appropriation of Unanticipated Funds – Timber – Town Hall**

Revenue from the proceeds from timber harvest at the Town Hall site total \$5,999.00. This is unanticipated revenue that the Board needs to accept and appropriate. There is some additional work that should be done to clean up the cutting site, especially in the front – stumping and yolk raking. In addition, the Town Administrator would recommend reinvesting at least a portion of the money to improve the grounds of Town Hall – i.e. grass. There are two options to consider – First, would be to accept the money and appropriate the entire amount for improvements to the grounds of the Town Hall complex. While the Town Administrator has no intention or plan of spending the entire amount in the current year, any carried over balance could be used in a future year for an item that would otherwise go into the operating budget. Second, would be to allocate a portion (maybe ½) for grounds improvement purposes and to allocate the rest for current year tax reduction. So, the underlying decision is whether to use a portion of the revenues for current year taxes (option 2) or for future taxes (option 1). Selectman B. Lemire questioned the TA when you allocate a portion for ground improvement does that revenue stream go back into the line item, or do you even have a line item? The TA stated that this would stand alone as a new line item. This would be tracked as a separate fund. This is a separate act of the Board outside of the approved town meeting; this is a separate additional appropriation. Selectman Lemire also questioned, how would that money be appropriated at that point? TA Hoch stated that the Board would accept this tonight and appropriate it for the broad general purpose. Selectmen Lemire asked if there has been any anticipation as to a cost of how much it would be to finish the grounds. TA Hoch stated that we are looking at approximately \$1,500 to \$3,000 to clean up the front of Town Hall. Selectman F. Byron motioned to the Board of Selectmen hereby accepts the amount of \$5,999.00 in two portions, \$3,000 for the use in clean up in from of Town Hall as well as \$2,999.00 for offsetting taxes. Selectman B. Lemire seconded the motion. The motion carried 4-0-0.

## **Administrator Report**

### **Old Business**

#### **Property – Liability Insurance (Primex to LGC)**

TA has received the package of enrollment papers and authorizations for moving Property-Liability insurance to LGC. Many of these documents are the same governing documents that the Town already has in place for Health Insurance with now the new addition of Property Liability. (BOS will need to adopt 2 resolutions at next meeting – authorizing participation in both programs, and the TA to sign such agreements as well as a reauthorization of participating jointly with SAU 27 for health insurance rating purposes). Resolutions that the Board needs to adopt are in the Administrator Report folder.

#### **Resolutions:**

Selectman F. Byron motions that the Town of Litchfield shall participate in the following self-funded, reinsurance pools operated by subsidiaries of Local Government Center Inc.,

HealthTrust, for the provision of health and other benefits as may be selected for its employees.

PLT, for the provision of protection against property and liability risks.

Be it resolved that Jason Hoch Town Administrator is hereby authorized and directed to execute and deliver to the applicable Trusts on behalf of the Town of Litchfield, the “Application and Participation Agreement,” including any applicable Schedules thereto, in substantially the form presented to this meeting, together with any related documentation necessary to effect and complete the Application and Participation for the above-authorized protection and benefits. And be it further resolved that Jason Hoch, Town Administrator is hereby authorized and directed to execute and deliver to the applicable

Trusts a certificate of this resolution. Selectman B. Lemire seconded the motion. The motion carried 4-0-0.

Selectman F. Byron motioned to the Board of Selectmen that the Town of Litchfield shall participate in the combined rating arrangement offered by HealthTrust in connection with School Administration Unit #27 and their participation in the health benefits program offered by HealthTrust. Further, that the "Terms Regarding Combination of Entities for Rating and Participation" accepted by the Town of Litchfield, HealthTrust and the other combining HealthTrust members (the "agreement") is hereby approved in the form presented to this meeting and that Jason Hoch, Town Administrator is hereby authorized and directed to execute and deliver to the HealthTrust an acknowledgement of the terms and a certification of this resolution. Selectman B. Lemire seconded the motion. The motion carried 4-0-0.

### **Emergency Operations**

Some departments have sent initial requests for information back to the TA to forward to Consultant Lee Kimball. Mr. Kimball dropped off master text of sections for the Town to update. The TA is separating and distributing to departments now (or keeping the sections for which TA is responsible for). As the TA was working on his Communications section, it was clear to the TA that he should attend an upcoming Emergency Planning Conference in Manchester on 6/16 (free). There is a social media track which is the component plan that the TA is most focused on adding.

### **Audit**

Audit reports have arrived. Auditors will be at the Selectmen meeting of June 27<sup>th</sup> to discuss. Electronic copies are forwarded. Please let the TA know if the Board would like a paper copy.

### **Solid Waste**

NHDES and Governor and Council approved used oil grant application in the amount of \$2,414.00 (maximum) for Used Oil Storage Shed. This is a reimbursement receivable after project is completed. The Town is eligible annually for these grants and Dave Mellen has been encouraged to continue to apply each year for relevant projects. We are now working on an application for a waste oil heater for kennel to replace expensive electric heat. Probably would not see award of funds until this time next year. Dave is working on the application now and the TA expects that it will be brought to the Board in the next few weeks. Town Administrator showed a sample (1/3<sup>rd</sup>) of a portable compost bin. The citizens of Litchfield can purchase this compost bin through the town at cost for \$45.00. There is a visual at the incinerator for citizens to see, Also this will be put on the cable channel and the Town's face book page.

### **Rigid Plastic Recycling**

Dave prepared the first bale on Memorial Day weekend of rigid plastics. He estimates that each bale will have a net value to the Town of approximately \$100 to \$50 of avoided disposal costs and \$50 of revenue from sale.

### **Cable Franchise Renewal**

The TA met with Comcast rep this past week. We are in general agreement on terms. Each of us is revising some language which will then go to counsel for review. (Based on our discussion contract of most recent local franchise documents prepared with same counsel). We do need to think about having a hearing about Comcast **Television** service issues and to highlight likely contract items. The TA would

like to schedule that sometime before the end of summer. Does the Board prefer bundling with a regular BOS meeting or holding it on an alternate Monday? TA Hoch questioned the board on where we want to go from here and also stated that we are at a spot now where we can cover what we need to cover, or we say how do we get to the next level and what will it cost? We have an opportunity once a year to change the franchise fee. We need to give a notice of 120 days. Mr. Hoch also stated that we need to hold a hearing. Selectman F. Byron motioned to the Board of Selectmen to hold a joint citizens input meeting for cable as well as a Citizens concern meeting for other topics with the Board of Selectmen. Selectman G. Lambert seconded the motion. The motion carried 4-0-0. The Town Administrator will work on scheduling an alternate Monday meeting for everyone.

**Selectman S. Perry (Chairman) is now present and will assume role as Chairman.**

### **Ambulance Contract**

The TA met with the Fire Chief and Town Administrator from Hudson last week. They reviewed some general concepts relating to updating the ambulance contract and billing issues and they were generally in agreement on direction. They will be working on the revisions to cover those items and all will meet again. The items of note were finding a way for greater budgeting predictability (recall we now pay quarterly based on our share of use in the quarter and have no provision for dealing with bad debt that is transferred back to the Town as our obligation). Depending on the approach taken, the Town may need to consider establishing a revolving fund (like it uses for Special Detail) to manage payment and collection of bad debts.

### **VIPS (Volunteers in Police Service Program)**

Chief O’Brion and the TA have been working together over the past several months to lay the groundwork for a Volunteers in Police Service Program. This is a nationally recognized program for constructively engaging volunteers to assist in elements of community policing. The underlying concept is to maximize the support efforts of the volunteers and to minimize the time that professional law enforcement officers must devote to administrative work and other tasks that are ancillary to the core law enforcement mission. With the assistance of the VIPS Volunteer Service Coordinator from the Littleton program, they updated and revised a comprehensive manual for a Litchfield program. To that end, the manual covers more ground than they anticipate undertaking at the start, but it also allows the department to be prepared if we have the right match with a given volunteer. Pat Jewett has volunteered to be the first citizen Volunteer Service Coordinator. Officer Bob Bennett will be the primary Police contact for the program. The first subprogram we plan to offer is a “Good Morning Program”, which will provide a daily status telephone call made by a VIPS volunteer to senior who sign up for a daily well-being check.

### **Brickyard Parking**

Chief O’Brion met with Mrs. Frisbee following the last meeting. They discussed shifting the signs to encompass the legal prohibition of parking in the vicinity of fire hydrants. It was the sense that clearer posting would achieve the objective desired. Jack did not have signs in stock and ordered them. All of those items were able to be achieved without making additional changes to the ordinance. Upon further review, Mrs. Frisbee would now like the parking ban to expand further. This means a revision to the ordinance. The TA has advised that he will draft a proposed change for the Board to consider at the next meeting.

## **New Business**

### **Health Insurance**

The TA reviewed several other options with LGC (recall that Primex is no longer offering). So far, the most likely substitute for Matthew Thornton does not offer significant benefits in savings and would not be a reasonable exchange for the current plan. At the request of the union, TA has also investigated high deductible plans. Of the two LGC offers, one provides no significant cost savings for the Town or employee and the TA is waiting a price on another alternative. At this point the TA is recommending continuing with our current program (with the possibility of adding one more high deductible plan – if it offers a genuine alternative to those who want it).

### **Disability and Life Insurances**

A proposal was received from another company (Davis and Towle) offering these insurance services. The overall package represents a savings for the Town. Davis and Towle deals with many municipalities and School districts. The TA has worked with the company in the past and did not experience any service issues for employer or employee. The TA's estimate for the same level of coverage from LGC to Davis and Toll is a savings of \$2,360 for the next six months. Selectman F. Byron motioned to the Board of Selectman to transfer disability and life insurance services to Davis and Toll and to hereby Authorize Jason Hoch, Town Administrator to execute any transfers. Selectman G. Lambert seconded the motion. The motion carried 5-0-0.

### **Other Items**

Steve Martin has forwarded payment schedule for school. Initial payments are lower than in previous years since the school has a fund balance and fewer than usual summer projects. If things change after tax rate setting and/or adjustments are made to the school funding formula, we will receive a revised schedule.

TA has provided a copy of article regarding first court decision regarding new law about not amending articles at deliberative session. It appears that anything that can be seen as nullifying the article is invalid (other than appropriation articles). The TA has shared the article with Moderator and Town Clerk and Town Counsel has forwarded the actual court decision.

As part of The TA's attempt to find records regarding Trust Funds and a few of the restricted funds held by the Town, Mr. Hoch went through the boxes released from the Seymour matter that now no longer need to be held as evidence. Mr. Hoch found a few items that may be helpful, set some records aside consistent with our retention policy and flagged others for removal. (He also found 500 stamp imprinted envelopes which will be re-labeled, add three cents postage, and put in rotation for accounts payable – to that end our postage expenditure may be lower than anticipated this year based on this discovery).

As the Town rep. for the Transportation Advisory Committee at NRCP, Mr. Hoch can report that NRCP is hoping to reinvigorate conversations again about additional bridge capacity across the Merrimack River. Nashua and Hudson have been realizing that without some other diversion that Taylor Falls Bridge will continue to be deficient. Obviously, this is a project with a long history and little execution so far. TA does expect though, that we will be asked to join in a new conversation to see what may be reasonable.

The rebuild of Roberts Road and related drainage improvements is complete. If you haven't seen the results, the TA recommends taking a trip over to see it. Jack is pleased with the work. We expect the Cranberry Culvert project to start shortly. There is a preconstruction meeting next Monday. The TA has floated a trial balloon with some staff and Frank, who offered to take it to the Planning Board regarding investigating a possible Village Center type development on the Town Hall campus. The initial idea would be development of a small scale commercial complex with local services such as bank, restaurant, etc., at the corner of Albuquerque and Hillcrest with access and parking off Liberty. It would solidify the idea of turning the municipal complex area into a fuller local service center. Part of the thought would be that we could allocate any proceeds from such a development to fund future construction of public safety buildings elsewhere on this site. TA has raised the idea to gauge interest and to identify concerns. If it is something for which there is interest in pursuing, it would require laying a lot of groundwork for potential zoning changes and Town Meeting actions, so Mr. Hoch wanted to initiate the conversation now so we could prepare for the coming year.

The Budget Committee had discussed schedule of different items for the coming year. We're getting close to the time to put together a schedule so departments can begin thinking about initial drafts. The TA floated a couple of ideas for the Board to consider given our schedule. The first idea is to schedule budget sessions on the alternate Mondays that we do not have regular business meetings. The second idea would be to hold a Saturday work session to try to cover as many departments as reasonably possible for a first pass and then schedule in further review as needed. The second concept would allow us to potentially clear many department budgets to be ready for Budget Committee on one fell swoop. If there is a preference on the Board for one approach or the other, the TA can try to develop a schedule that seems reasonable, gets budgets to the Budget Committee in a reasonable fashion and tries to avoid overloading with large budgets being considered at the same time. Selectman S. Perry asked the TA to see if he can get feed back for a Saturday work shop and an allotted time frame. The TA will work on a response.

Received a letter from DRA regarding 2010 assessment review noting they look at a variety of practices and measures as outline in state law. The Letter states "we are pleased to report that you have met all of the above guidelines as recommended by the Assessing Standards Board. Your attention to detail, thoroughness, periodic review and hard work are commendable. You stand out as an excellent example for other communities to follow. Congratulations and thank you for a job well done.

The TA stated that the people to be thanked are the Board of Selectmen, Avitar and Linda. Selectman F. Byron motioned to the Board to post the letter on the Town website. Selectman Perry seconded the motion. The motion carried 5-0-0. Selectman G. Lambert motioned to the Board to draft a letter thanking Linda Langille for her work to place in her personnel file. Selectman B. Lemire seconded the motion. The motion carried 5-0-0.

### **Recreation Fields**

Authorization by the Board of Selectmen for Recreation Commission to develop fields and other recreation facilities with on-site parking at town owned land located at Map 15, Lot 28. The Board of Selectmen should consider naming of access road into new recreation fields (similar to Highlander Court as 'Private Road'). Mr. Hoch is looking for suggestions.

Selectman F. Byron motions to the Board of Selectmen in congruence with the authority granted to it under the State statutes as the manager of the Towns property and in consideration that the citizens have

granted to the Recreation Commission in year 2000 under RSA 35-b the ability to establish recreation fields, the Board of Selectmen hereby grants the Recreation Commission the authority to construct recreation facilities on Town property currently used in concert with the Highway Department and Town Incinerator. Selectman B. Lemire seconded the motion. Selectman S. Perry questions that doing this at this time because the Board of Selectmen agreed that we would do this at the time the plan is complete, and do all at once. By granting blanket authority to this land to the Recreation Commission which Selectman Perry is a member of, you have no control of this land by giving that up as to what the rec. commission will do with it at this time. They may decide to leave it the way it is. Selectman F. Byron states that he has no problem with them leaving as it is because in order for them to build anything they still have to come to the BOS to request the impact fees at that point the BOS can make decisions as to whether the impact fee monies are being spent the way we would want them to in terms of a development plan. Selectman Perry stated that he sees it as incomplete without a final plan. Selectman Byron stated that we have already granted them the use of the monies with no authorization to develop the property. Jason Allen from the Recreation Commission stated that they are still waiting for State approval. This could take weeks. They would like to start breaking ground in the August time frame. The commission is delayed by the State's time frame. Jason Allen also stated that they also do not want to spend their own money until they are sure the property is still going to be used for recreational fields. Selectman J. Brunelle stated that the intent is still that the property will be used for recreation. The Motion carried 3-2-0.

#### **Public Hearing – Acceptance and Appropriation of Unanticipated Funds – Timber – Rec. Fields**

The total amount received from timber harvest on site of recreation fields is \$34,214.20. These funds need to be accepted as unanticipated revenue and appropriated for the project (either generally for the project or for a specific component if that is the interest of the Board).

Selectman G. Lambert motions to the Board of Selectmen to put in reserve to accept funds and appropriate them for purpose of development of recreational fields and further not release out of funds until the Board has approved the entire project and how those funds fit into the overall funding plan. Selectman B. Lemire seconded the motion. The motion carried 5-0-0.

#### **Public Input**

Jason Allen from the Recreation Commission asked if the money can be used on other recreation projects in town. The Board of selectmen stated that it cannot.

#### **The Public Hearing is now Closed**

#### **Selectman Committee and Community Reports**

Selectman S. Perry reported that at the last Recreation Meeting they heard the Bandstand Committee present to them a proposal for \$35,000 (no longer entertaining the idea for a gazebo) for a Pavilion style unit (60 x 120') at Darrah pond. They are going to try to raise money to pay for this. Selectman F. Byron made a suggestion that the Recreation Committee investigate using unexpended monies in Town accounts. Selectman G. Lambert stated that he has big concerns with the idea that the Gazebo is reasonable use for money raised for Town celebration that was going to be put in and used effectively for community benefit turning it into "lets go spend \$35,000" and collect money from Town. Selectman Perry stated that they presented that they will try to raise money and if they can't raise the money they may bring it to the town as a warrant article but this has not been decided yet.

Selectman B. Lemire attended a Budget Committee meeting on 5/26 and will report back on ambulance contract. Selectman Lemire advised the members of the Budget Committee that their job was to recommend budget to the Town not policy.

Selectman F. Byron attended a Planning Board meeting on the 7<sup>th</sup> of June which was adjourned due to lack of quorum. No business could be conducted. The Chairman as well as another member of the board had excused absences. The Chairman of the Planning Board is trying to contact members who regularly due not attend the meetings to reconsider their position. Volunteers for the Planning board need to be solicited.

### **Public Input**

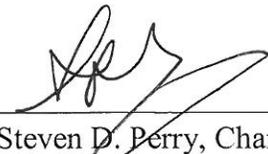
No members of the public present

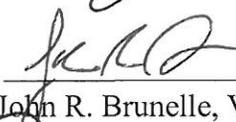
### **Other Business**

Town Administrator Jason Hoch stated that in regards to the Town Clerks Office the motor vehicle renewals for July have not been sent out yet, they are waiting for the final disposition of the motor vehicle surcharge out of Concord. Also, this is the last call for getting your dogs registered. June 20<sup>th</sup> is the date a list of all unregistered dogs goes to the Board and then the Police Department. There were call and courtesy letter sent out.

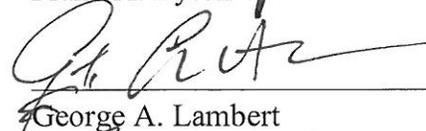
Selectman S. Perry motioned to the Board of Selectmen to adjourn the public meeting and go into a non-public session – RSA 91-A:3 II(d) – Consideration of Property Acquisition. Selectman J. Brunelle seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Selectman Brunelle – yes, Selectman Perry – yes, Selectman Byron – yes, Selectman Lambert – yes, Selectman Lemire – yes. Motion carried 5-0-0.

The public portion of the meeting adjourned at 8:45 pm.

  
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Steven D. Perry, Chairman

  
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John R. Brunelle, V. Chairman

  
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Frank A. Byron

  
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George A. Lambert

  
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Brent L. Lemire