

TOWN OF LITCHFIELD BOARD OF SELECTMEN

June 24, 2013

Selectmen's Meeting

Members Present: John R. Brunelle, Chairman
Frank Byron, Vice Chairman
Brent Lemire
M. Patricia Jewett
Kevin C. Bourque

Also Present: Jason Hoch, Town Administrator

5:00 p.m. Paperwork review
6:00 p.m. Call to Order

Pledge of Allegiance

Review of Items for Consent:

1. Minutes of June 10, 2013
2. Approval of Accounts Payable and Payroll for June 17 (\$118,814 & \$44,641.07)
3. Approval of Accounts Payable and Payroll for June 24 (\$23,146.98 & \$45,739.85)
4. Prospective Approval of Accounts Payable and Payroll for July 1, 2013
5. Abatement Map 1, Lot 26 & Map 2, Lot 10 - Owned by state; no longer on rental market and subject to taxation.
6. Unlicensed dog warrant
7. Acceptance of Restoration Bond of \$10,000 for Hamel Circle

Approval of Consent Items

Selectman J. Brunelle reads aloud the items for consent

Selectman F. Byron mentions he has a question regarding the acceptance of the restoration bond for Hamel Circle

Administrator J. Hoch states that it is a bond recommendation that is recommended by the Planning Board and the Planning Board's engineer. This needs to be accepted by the Board of Selectman because the Planning Board does not have that authority.

Selectman B. Lemire **motioned** for the Board of Selectmen to approve the items for consent

Selectman K. Bourque **seconds** the motion. **Vote carries 5-0-0.**

Request for Items - Other Business

Selectman F. Byron would like an update from J. Hoch on Moose Hollow Circle. He would also like to discuss the County Budget.

Selectman P. Jewett would like an update on a previous discussion regarding the traffic on 102.

Selectman J. Brunelle would like to discuss Expense Items and the Budget. Also the ZBA is

proposing some by-law changes regarding the recording and procedures of their meetings and he would like to have a discussion with the Board regarding this matter.

Public Input: No members of the public were present

Administrator Report

New Business - None

Old Business

Reconciliation Policy

Administrator J. Hoch states that at the last meeting there was discussion regarding changing some wording to this policy, regarding how much involvement the Board of Selectmen had over the reconciliation process. He made some adjustments and would like the Board's input. Selectman J. Brunelle asks if anyone on the Board had a chance to review Jason's changes to the policy. They state they did not. It was decided that the Board review the documents and continue this discussion on the July 8th BOS meeting.

Noise Ordinance

J. Hoch states that this is still a work in progress, but he has put together bits and pieces from several of the samples from other towns and has provided this to the Board. Jason states that he has it in circulation to the Police/Fire Departments, Road Agent, Code Enforcement as well as Staff. He is still looking for comments and suggestions and will continue to adjust sections of this policy as comments come in. Administrator J. Hoch suggests that once he gets a draft that everyone is generally comfortable with, he will forward it to Counsel for comments. Then he feels the Board should go through a public hearing approach on this matter, rather than a general posted meeting.

Selectman J. Brunelle asks the Board if anyone has concerns regarding this approach.

Selectman F. Byron states that he had forwarded an article to Jason regarding Windham's noise ordinance policy. Seems they had some challenges with the application of their ordinance. He thought this might help Jason to see some of the problems another Town was having with implementing a policy and possibly things to avoid. Board decides to look over Jason's information and continue this on the July 8th BOS meeting.

Solid Waste District

J. Hoch mentions that Dave Mellen attended a meeting of the Solid Waste District, which handles the Towns Household Hazardous Waste collection program. Mr. Mellen advised that the District decided to keep the Towns annual dues payment unchanged for the next 2 years.

Utility Tracking

Administrator J. Hoch states that he has updated the utility tracking that was started a few years ago when the Town was a part of the NRPC, assisted proposal for joint energy purchase. These charts have been shared with the Board. J. Hoch states the next step will be to organize and analyze this information from the last few years. This information will be used for rebidding joint

energy purchases later this year.

2 Year Budgeting

Jason tells the Board he has continued to research Towns in Washington that are under 20,000 that use the biennial budgeting process. He mentions that they all seem to operate under the Mayor-Council form of government, so the council serves as legislative body and approves the budget after a public hearing. Washington state law calls for a mid-biennium review after 8 months of year one for formal adjustments to the bottom line. Jason mentions that after reviewing the budget documents for these communities, it appears that several have been at this biennial process for a long time. He states that some websites of these communities did a good job of explaining the process and he has forwarded these as well as some other information for the Board to take a look at.

Administrator J. Hoch states that at the last BOS meeting it was discussed that the Board of Selectmen along with Representatives from the School and Town Counsel get together for a meeting to discuss this matter. It will be held on July 2, 2013 at 9:00 am.

There was discussion amongst the Board regarding the \$500 voted on at the last meeting to be given by the Town and the School, to pay for Counsel.

FEMA Reimbursement

Administrator J. Hoch states the the Town has received the final paperwork from FEMA regarding the February storm. He tells the Board the eligible costs of \$32,740.11 yielded a reimbursement of \$24,555.08. So just under \$900 of this will offset the 80% share of the Fire Departments costs, with the balance of \$23,655 being applied to costs incurred by the Highway Department.

Selectmen Reports

Selectman P. Jewett states that last Thursday the Senior Group met at the Community Church and they had Rebecca Rule author of "Moved and Seconded", which is a book about town meetings in New Hampshire. P. Jewett purchased a copy of her book and after reading will donate it to the Litchfield Library.

Selectman F. Byron states that the last Planning Board meeting he was out of town, however Selectman K. Bourque attended.

He mentions that last week he did attend as a State Representative the County Convention. Where by a vote of 44 to 32, the County Budget was approved with an increase of 4.8% for next year. Selectman F. Byron states the the Budget is \$86,179.381, and 2,800,000 will be applied to the surplus to decrease costs. The amount to be raised by taxes will be \$46,213.110. He calculates that 1-2% will be Litchfield's share, therefore the Town will end up paying taxes of about \$462,131 to the County.

J. Hoch states that it should be approximately a \$42,000 increase in what the Town paid to the County last year. Based on last year's County Tax of \$44,109.420 which was \$887,538 from Litchfield - just a bit over 2%. Which should mean a 2013 bill of around \$930,000 or around \$0.05 on the tax rate by his calculations.

Selectman P. Jewett asks why so much of an increase.

Selectman F. Byron states that there were several motions that were made but failed. He mentions that he gave Jason the County documents and budget.

Selectman J. Brunelle asks if Jason could post the County Budget online or a link so the public can review it if they are interested.

Selectman F. Byron states the the County has approved and Litchfield will be able to participate in the Prisoner Work Sessions. He mentions there will be a flat fee charged to Towns, so there will be no expense to the County. It will be a \$1,000 for a week, which includes their food and an Officer.

Selectman B. Lemire states that last Thursday he went to Campbell High to attend the Retirement Open House for Debra Mahoney and Steve Martin. He wished to extend his best wishes to both.

Also he will be covering the Budget Committee on Thursday evening for Selectman J. Brunelle

Selectman K. Bourque mentions the Planning Board will be holding a meeting Tuesday June 25th from 7-9 at the Town Hall. This will be a Future Land Use Workshop and is open to the public.

Items Moved From Consent

No Items Moved

Other Business

Selectman J. Brunelle mentions he has a few concerns regarding some Expense Items in the Budget. He states that most of the maintenance budget lines, specifically ones which pertain to the Town Hall and Fire Department are running very tight. Also the Police Departments vehicle repair is well over the \$6,000 budgeted and is closer to \$11,000.

Administrator J. Hoch states that when making the decision to purchase only two new police cruisers part of the purchase line was reserved for additional vehicle maintenance repairs.

Selectman J. Brunelle states that everything else in the Budget seems to be tracking fairly close to the same as last year.

Selectman J. Brunelle would also like to discuss with the Board of Selectmen the ZBA wanting to update their by-laws, regarding their records retention policy. He states that they seem to be concerned about what is considered a legal or certified copy of any video recording of their meetings. The ZBA is requesting that they work directly with a vendor of their choice to provide an audio/video transcription service. Which the person making the appeal or requesting a copy of a DVD or transcript would have to pay the cost in full. Selectman J. Brunelle states that he feels this is a decision to be made by the Board of Selectmen and not the ZBA regarding any policy or procedure. He mentions that the video recordings are all posted on the Town website and are televised live unedited and can be downloaded. So there is no need to pay for a transcription service to provide a copy.

Selectman F. Byron states that the Attorney General has clearly stated that a video is not a certified or official copy of any meeting. That the minutes taken by a secretary and approved by a board are considered the certified copy of a meeting.

Selectman J. Brunelle states that this discussion has come up before and made clear what the law and policy is. There is no need to have the ZBA add this to their by-laws.

There is discussion with the Board regarding referring to legal counsel on this matter.

J. Hoch states that all video and electronic services provided are being done as a service and convenience for the Town. Also the records retention policy of the Town has clearly stated the recordings/video are a convenience and are not part of the official retention program, the minutes are. These records are also kept for a period of 6 years per this policy for anyone to view or request a copy of.

Selectman J. Brunelle discusses that this matter has been discussed with Town Counsel and is written in the Towns policy's. It is governed by the Attorney General's Office regarding what is official and certified as legal copy. He feels there is no need to incur any further legal expense regarding this matter. The Board decides to have Administrator J. Hoch send a letter to the ZBA with a section added showing the Attorney General's regulations on this matter.

Administrator J. Hoch discusses the question regarding Moose Hollow Circle from Selectman F. Byron. He states that a request was made to remove a pile of dirt that the Developer had placed out there in preparation for the road that is pending with the Planning Board. Developer thought he would get to that removal in the last few weeks, however has not. Jason states that today a washout occurred down the street from Moose Hollow and the Towns Backhoe was out there dealing with this matter. Instead of bringing in material to fill in the washout, they contacted the Developer regarding using the pile of dirt already there, and solved the problem.

J. Hoch mentions that he reached out to the State to see if anyone had numbers regarding the 102 traffic discussion that the Board had last meeting. He is waiting on that information and to get on the NRPC schedule.

Selectman F. Byron stated he spoke with a Hudson State Representative who felt that this matter of reducing the speed limit had a possibility of getting through. He was also going to follow up with the State to try and get some current traffic data as well.

Jason reminds the Board that in order to get this done, there has to be current data gathered regarding speed and volume to present to the State, which is taking time to gather. He spoke with State Engineers and they are looking into seeing if there are any figures on file from the study that was done in 2009. This will be continued and the Board will be updated as information becomes available.

Selectman B. Lemire makes a **motion** to adjourn. Selectman P. Jewett **seconds** the motion.
Vote carries 5-0-0.

The next Board of Selectmen's meeting will be held on July 8, 2013 at 6:00 pm at the Town Hall

Approved July 8, 2013