

TOWN OF LITCHFIELD BOARD OF SELECTMEN

March 09, 2015

Selectmen's Meeting

Members Present: John R. Brunelle, Chairman
Brent T. Lemire
Kevin C. Bourque
Steven D. Perry

Absent: Frank A. Byron, Vice Chairman - (Excused)

Also Present: Jason Hoch, Town Administrator
Student - Observing

5:00 p.m. Paperwork review

6:00 p.m. Call to Order

Pledge of Allegiance

Review of Items for Consent:

1. Minutes of February 23, 2015
2. Approval of Accounts Payable Manifest (\$48,236.44)
3. Approval of Payroll Manifest (\$43,474.51)
4. Veterans Tax Credit Applications (3)
5. Abatement Approval - Map 2, Lot 14
6. Appointment of Road Agent

Approval of Consent Items

Selectman J. Brunelle reads aloud the Items for Consent

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

Selectman K. Bourque **seconds** the motion.

Selectman S. Perry mentions that the paperwork for the Road Agent was not in the file for the Boards signatures, and questions approval without seeing the documents.

Selectman J. Brunelle and Administrator J. Hoch state that the Board already approved and voted the appointment of the Road Agent effective March 11, 2015 and the signing of the documents is just a formality. **Vote carries 4-0-0.**

Request for Items - Other Business

Selectman S. Perry would like to discuss tree cutting.

Administrator Report

New Business - None

Old Business

Pipeline Update

Administrator J. Hoch tells the Board that several of the Towns impacted by the pipeline are discussing the benefits of shared legal counsel. Most are waiting until after Town Meeting to have a better handle on their financial situations. He has shared a draft document regarding a shared municipal agreement among the group of possible participants. As a group, everyone is trying to identify the best ways to control and share the cost of legal services, (some towns have a more heavily engaged population regarding this issue). They are looking for ways to share information and resources between themselves. Jason will continue to update the Board.

Jason also mentions that he has been asked by some of the potential neighbors of the pipeline to host a meeting so interested parties can meet one another and review information they have received, as well as what information he has gathered. This is in anticipation of a future meeting with representative of Kinder Morgan and the Board of Selectmen. J. Hoch states that he is not looking to make this a formal meeting of the Board of Selectmen, and will touch base with Selectman F. Byron as he felt he was going to attend. Jason also mentions that Tom Young Representative from NRPC will be attending. It will be held in the meeting room at Town Hall on Wednesday March 11th at 6:30.

Selectman J. Brunelle mentions that Litchfield is not supporting the pipeline at this time and is looking for information and answers to questions from Kinder Morgan.

Jason states this is a way to update information and share resources.

Other Items

NRPC Energy Aggregation

J. Hoch tells the Board that the Town worked again with group energy aggregation through NRPC, for group energy pricing. Litchfields share of the professional services was invoiced for \$36. NRPC covered the cost of staff time. Jason tells the Board that the savings for the contract last year was approximately \$7,000 (more than the annual dues to NRPC).

Snow Declaration

Administrator J. Hoch states that enough Communities were able to provide quality information that has allowed three Counties to qualify for a Presidential Snow Declaration for the 48 hour period beginning on January 26, 2015. They are optimistic that Hillsborough, Rockingham and Strafford Counties have met thresholds for a Presidential Declaration Request. Jason also mentions that the Governor has requested an extension in an effort to attempt to gain some time to investigate the opportunity to request an "expanded time frame" of the original request, this would allow the declaration period to be extended. If approved, it would allow these three Counties to capture some of the expenses for the three repetitive storms that followed the original 48 hour period (from 1/26/15 to 2/22/15) as well as capture some of the expenses for the relocating of some of the snow following the original storm. Jason tells the Board that they requested additional rough estimates of expense information for the extended time frame, which he has supplied them with an estimate of FEMA

reimbursable expenses of roughly \$207,000. He mentions that he would be surprised if that whole month period would be approved, however they felt it was in the Communities best interest to request financial relief for these extended efforts. Jason will keep the Board updated.

Fire Chief Contract

J. Hoch states that he had posted for a Non-Public session to discuss the Fire Chief contract which is up for review and renewal (he has provided a draft for the Board to review). He would like to defer this until there is a full Board. Administrator J. Hoch states that due to the current contract expiring, he would suggest the Board approve an extension of the current contract through April 30, 2015 so the BOS has time to review the documents and have a replacement contract in place.

Selectman B. Lemire **motioned** for the Board of Selectmen to approve an extension of the Fire Chief's current contract through April 30, 2015 while a new contract is approved.

Selectman S. Perry **seconds** the motion. **Vote carries 3-0-1.**

Town Meeting Coverage

Administrator J. Hoch mentions that tomorrow March 10th is Town Meeting. Board discusses their coverage for the day/evening. Selectman S. Perry is a candidate and will be unable to help cover inside. Selectman J. Brunelle states that Patricia Jewett will be there to help greet voters and help out at the ballot machine. Voting will be held at Campbell High School from 7:00am to 7:00pm.

Department of Labor Compliance

Administrator J. Hoch states that he had a conversation with the State Department of Labor regarding the Cable Committees Contractors being classified as Contractors. It appears they should be classified as Part-time Employees. Jason mentions that over the next few weeks they will be reviewing and processing paperwork in order to make this transition.

Selectman S. Perry asks why

J. Hoch states that based on the way their schedules and time sheets worked, the Labor Department takes the view that they are classified more as a PT-Employee, than a freely independent contractor.

Selectman S. Perry asks if the Towns minute takers would also be classified as PT-Employees as well.

Jason states that with these small issues the Town will usually lose. These topics are fuzzy areas and have been up for discussion before in Litchfield and other Towns. The Town's minute takers have put time in at meetings as well as unstructured time on their own at home away from the Town facility.

Selectman J. Brunelle states that the feels if one is being converted he feels the minute takers should also be converted over and classified as PT-Employees and give a schedule and time card.

Jason and the Board discuss when this was changed to Contractors, and that Litchfield is not the only Town going through this process of changing over Contractors to Employees due to

complaints to the Labor Department. They agree it is not a problem to convert it is mainly a paperwork issue and paying invoices regularly rather than sporadically. The Chairman of the Cable Committee will have to file time-sheets each week, no more 1099 forms.

J. Hoch mentions that he will be getting together with the Chairman and working through the necessary paperwork and become compliant with the Department of Labors requests.

Items moved from consent - None

Other Business

Tree Cutting

Selectman S. Perry mentions that last year the Town worked on mapping Town lots for tree cutting, and knowing this is the optimal time of year for the highest dollar value he is wondering if it should be looked into now.

J. Hoch states that it would not be a problem, there is not a lot of money involved in the harvesting. He mentions there was a section on Talent Road, lot on Page Road and a piece on the Town Line on 3A to the river (access could be challenging). He will discuss this with the Conservation Committee and see about moving forward.

Selectman S. Perry mentions the temporary gas price that was locked in last year, he is wondering when does that expire.

Administrator J. Hoch states that has expired and the Town is now paying market price, which includes a delivery charge to bring it on site.

Selectman S. Perry asks why not look elsewhere and explore another contract.

J. Hoch mentions that this is a State bid and there will not be a big difference, and there is a price to pay for having it brought on site, and not a lot of companies deliver. Also because the Town does not have a large storage facility (500 gallons) there is a price attached for that.

Selectman Reports

Selectman B. Lemire would like to thank everyone involved with the Pat Jewett Volunteer Appreciation Day, he states that it was a fantastic event and a great tribute to Pat.

He would also like to congratulate Derek Barka for being recognized and awarded the Union Leaders 40 under 40.

Also would like to Frank Byron for sharing the House record each week, his information has been very helpful to the Town.

Selectman J. Brunelle would also like to thank all those involved with the Pat Jewett Volunteer Appreciation Day, he states that she was very emotional and enjoyed the event tremendously and was very appreciative.

Board reminds everyone to Vote

Public Input - None

Selectman B. Lemire **motioned** for the Board of Selectmen to adjourn

Selectman K. Bourque **seconds** the motion. **Vote carries 3-1-0.**
Approved March 24, 2015