

TOWN OF LITCHFIELD BOARD OF SELECTMEN

March 28, 2016

Selectmen's Meeting

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

Also Present: Troy Brown, Town Administrator

5:00 p.m. Paperwork review
5:30 p.m. Non-Public Session - RSA 91-A:3,II(c) - Reputation
6:00 p.m. Call to Order
7:20 p.m. Non-Public Session - RSA 91-A:3,II(a) - Compensation

Pledge of Allegiance

Review of Items for Consent:

1. Approval of Minutes for March 14, 2016
2. Approval of Account Payable Manifest for 3/22/2016 (\$21,356.13) & 3/29/2016 (\$104,045.95)
3. Approval of Payroll Manifest for 3/24/2016 (\$48,174.63) & 3/31/2016 (\$48,743.11)
4. Abatements - Denial (2)
5. Intent to Cut (1)
6. Veteran's Tax Credit (1)
7. Elderly Exemption (1)
8. Approval of Union Contract
9. Committee Appointments
 - a. Mosquito District Commission - John Latsha
 - b. Planning Board - Jason Guerrette
 - c. Recreation Commission - Andrew Collins & Elizabeth Darling
 - d. Zoning Board of Adjustment - Richard Riley, Jr. & Albert Guilbeault
 - e. Conservation Commission - Sharon Jones & Roger S. Laurent, Jr.
 - f. Cable Advisory Committee - Russell Blanchette
 - g. Treasurer - Sharon Harding Reed
 - h. Deputy Treasurer - Debra Hogencamp
10. Treasurer's Delegation of Authority for Deposit of Funds
 - a. Claire Croteau, Theresa Briand and Patricia A. Textor

Approval of Consent Items

Selectman F. Byron reads aloud the Items for Consent

Selectman B. Lemire **motioned** for the Board of Selectmen to approve the Items for Consent

Selectman J. Brunelle **seconds** the motion. **Vote carries 5-0-0.**

Request for Additional Items/Other Business - None

Business

Library Trustee Alternate Appointment/Interview - Donna Ferguson

Donna Ferguson introduces herself to the Board of Selectmen

Selectman F. Byron asks Donna why she would like to be a Library Trustee Alternate

Donna states that years ago when her children were small she was very involved with the Town, but as they got older she became less involved due to their activities. Now that they have gone off to college she has had more time to get back involved with Town activities. Donna mentions that she a little over a year ago she became involved with the monthly Book Club at the Library, and has really enjoyed herself. She felt that as a Library Trustee Alternate she could be involved with the Town and learn more about the process of the Library.

Selectman F. Byron asks if she feels she has the time to dedicate to the position

Donna states that she does, and they meet the second Tuesday of each month.

With no further questions from the Board of Selectmen

Selectman B. Lemire **motioned** for the Board of Selectmen to approve the appointment of Donna Ferguson as a Library Trustee Alternate.

Selectman S. Perry **seconds** the motion. **Vote carries 5-0-0.**

Selectman F. Byron states that the Board will get the appointment paperwork together and signed and Donna can make an appointment with Theresa Briand to be sworn in sometime next week.

Great Thicket National Wildlife Refuge - Bill Peterson

Town Administrator T. Brown mentions to the Board of Selectmen he notified the Planning Board and the Conservation Commission that a representative from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service would be addressing the Board this evening if they had anyone interested in attending. He introduces Bill Peterson from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service who will present information on the proposed "Great Thicket National Wildlife Refuge".

Mr. Bill Peterson states he is manager of the Great Bay National Wildlife Refuge, Wambach National Wildlife Refuge and Parker River National Wildlife Refuge, all in New Hampshire. He mentions the reason he is speaking today is to provide information on the draft land "Great Thicket National Wildlife Refuge Land Protection Plan". The purpose of the refuge area is to create, preserve and manage more land as shrublands and young forest to continue to advance conservation for the New England Cottontail, the American woodcock, ruffed grouse, box turtles, migrating monarch butterflies and a whole suite of wildlife that depend on this habitat. He states the Service is in the middle of the public comment stage of the final draft plan, which will shape the final decision. If the plan is approved after the public comment period (April 3, 2016), the agency could begin working with interested landowners to conserve up to 1,500 acres

across three New Hampshire focus areas through a combination of purchasing conservation easements and buying land, from willing sellers only. The Service is already restoring young forest and shrubland habitat within the Southern New Hampshire focus areas, which involves cutting trees and older shrubs to promote the regrowth of dense thickets, as well as planting new saplings for the New England Cottontails and other wildlife. Mr. Peterson states they have lost 90% of the shrub thicket around swamps, most of this loss is due to a forest maturing and the trees growing up. He states that the Woodcock has declined 56% since 1968-2006, and there are less than 200 (winter population) of New England Cottontail in the whole State of New Hampshire. The NE Cottontail was the only native cottontail rabbit to New England, and as the population dwindled the State brought in the Eastern Cottontail, which further displaced the New England Cottontail (they do not live together). Bill Peterson mentions that the NH Wildlife Service since 2012 has been taking NH Cottontail rabbits born in captivity at the Roger Williams Zoo and releasing them in a 1 acre enclosure in the Great Bay National Wildlife Refuge, and allowing them to adjust to the wild so they can be released into areas. They will be expanding this in the Spring into two 7 acre pen enclosures. Mr. Peterson states there is a need to restore 2,000 acres of shrubland, and they can not do this on their own. So the Fish & Wildlife Services are trying to do this along with other Conservation Agencies and homeowners and create the "Great Thicke National Wildlife Refuge Plan" which involves 5 States and 10 focus areas. He mentions the primary area where $\frac{3}{4}$ of the New England Cottontails live in New Hampshire is in the Southern area which includes our area.

Mr. Peterson states that after the public comment portion ends this friday April 3, they will consolidate all the comments received and respond them in a final Land Protection Plan. Their Service Director in Washington DC will need to approve a finding of no significant impact (this is required) meaning there will be no significant impact to the human dimension of this. If this is approved by the Director, the plan would be released and they would implement the restoration work.

Selectman F. Byron asks what does this mean to Litchfield, is the Agency looking to purchase property to help with this conservation effort, or does this mean there will be restrictions set to existing properties.

Bill Peterson states there will be no restrictions to existing property owners, the NE Cottontail is already a listed State species. The focus area for the lower Merrimack North, which includes quite a bit of Litchfield. So they are hoping to purchase easements, and property from willing sellers only, in Litchfield and other focus areas, if this plan is approved.

Selectman S. Perry asks what the benefits to the Town of Litchfield would be.

Mr. Peterson states they would get some Stormwater protection and Conservation Habitats in Town. Mr. Peterson hands out information to the Board of Selectmen and states that the public can contact him or the Agency on their website.

Joan McKibben asks if they would be interested in Town owned property.

Mr. Peterson states yes, and it is usually donated or purchased at fair market value.

Board thanks Mr. Bill Peterson for his time.

Mosquito Control Contract Approval

Selectman F. Byron mentions the Board received a copy of the contract for their review. Town Administrator Troy Brown states there were no changes to the contract from last year. Also the contract has been reviewed by the Mosquito Control District and Town Counsel. Selectman B. Lemire **motioned** for the Board of Selectmen to authorize the Town Administrator Troy Brown to approve the contract on behalf of the Board. Selectman S. Perry **seconds** the motion. **Vote carries 5-0-0.**

Public Input - None

MS-232 Form - Report of Appropriations Voted

T. Brown states the MS-232 Form is a requirement to the NH DRA, that reports the total Gross Appropriations approved by voters in 2016. Karen White and Troy went on the NH DRA web portal and verified figures that totaled \$5,804,432 in Gross Appropriations. Selectman F. Byron states that the Board of Selectmen just need to sign the form and no approval action is necessary.

2015 Annual Equalization Report - (99.9%)

Town Administrator T. Brown mentions to the Board that he received a report from NH DRA stating that Avitar did a great job, and the Town is almost at 100% Market Value.

2016 Draft Budget Adjustments

Selectman F. Byron states T. Brown shared his 2016 Draft Budget Adjustments with the Board of Selectmen to review.

Town Administrator T. Brown wanted to stress to the Board this is just a draft, he has not been able to speak with all Department Heads. This draft is contingent on all Departments being able to operate on how they had calculated the Default Budget in the Fall. He reviews the outline with the Board:

Accounts	Increase	Decrease	Explanation
01-4150.10-110 Accounting Wages		\$ 2,500.00	Wage difference new employee
01-4150.10-210 Accounting Health \$ 11,629.00			Change from single to family plan
01-4150.10-211 Accounting Dental 672.00			Change from 2 person to family
01-4140.20-630 IT Equipment & Main.		26,000.00	Support service contract \$12k year
01-4153.10-320 Legal Services		5,000.00	Reduction shouldn't impact budget
01-4155.40-230 Employee NHRS		500.00	NHRS savings vacant position
01-4155.40-231 Firefighter NHRS		2,500.00	NHRS savings vacant position
01-4155.50-250 Unemployment Insurance		3,481.00	Acct. credit will cover 2016 prem.
01-4196.90-520 P & L Insurance		1,973.00	Savings result of new policy
01-4210.10-125 Police Part-time Officer		30,000.00	Defer hiring of pt. Detective
01-4210.10-210 Police Health Insurance	8,100.00		Change from buyout to family plan
01-4210.10-211 Police Dental	1,490.00		Enrolled in family plan
01-4220.10-111 FT Firefighter/EMT wages		3,000.00	Savings YTD due to vacancy

01-4220.10-210	FD-Health Insurance	6,100.00		Assume new hire POS family plan
01-4220.10-211	FD-Dental Insurance	500.00		Assume new hire family plan
01-4220.90-412	Hydrants	2,000.00		Based on actual FY2015 cost
01-4316.30-410	Street Lighting	2,000.00		Based on actual FY2015 cost
01-4321.10-693	Demo Material Disposal	3,000.00		Based on actual FY2015 cost
01-4321.10-694	Solid Waste Disposal	2,000.00		Based on actual FY2015 cost
	Welfare		5,537.00	Reduction shouldn't impact budget
01-4520.10-410	Rec. Electric	2,000.00		Based on actual FY2015 cost
01-4520.10-443	Rec Chem. Toilet Rental	1,000.00		Increased toilets FY2016
	Non-Union Wage/longevity	30,000.00		2nd yr. Implementation 7/1/16
	Stormwater MS-4 Permit	10,000.00		
Total Default/Adjustments		\$5,359,717.00	\$80,491.00	\$80,491.00
				\$5,359,717.00

Board of Selectmen and Troy discussed the stormwater permit, he will be attending a meeting this week where they hope to have some updates as to when the State would be looking to implement this plan.

Selectman F. Byron commented the hydrants are contracted with a PUC determination and the Town is obligated to pay those hydrant costs, so the \$2,000 needs to stay in the budget. Troy states that there was a rate adjustment and an accounting error. They agree to take another look and make sure that sufficient funds are left in the budget to cover the necessary contracted expense. Selectman F. Byron states that if the Board is in agreement with this list, he would like to finalize and authorize Troy to allocate these fund changes within the budget.

Board is in agreement and feels Troy did a good job with this "draft", and it is pretty straightforward.

Selectman J. Brunelle mentions he is still working on some contracted updates with the IT budget and is hoping to be able to give back a little more.

Selectman F. Byron and Selectman S. Perry have concerns about waiting to hire the PT Police Officer (Investigator), they feel there is a need for coverage. Troy and the Board agree to monitor for a few months (this would capture 6 months of savings), and if they feel coverage is needed they and the Chief can move forward with a hiring process.

Selectman B. Lemire **motioned** for the Board of Selectmen to approve and authorize the Town Administrator T. Brown to implement the allocation of these funds within the Budget.

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

2016 Draft Action Items

Troy constructed an outline for the Board of Selectmen of issues he would like to work with the Board on in the coming year.

"DRAFT"

2016 BOARD OF SELECTMEN ACTION ITEMS

Financial

1. Calculate Default Budget Adjustments
2. Schedule Special Town Meeting for Tax Cap
3. Quarterly Review of 2016 Budget

4. Employee Wage Plan Implementation
5. Review Funds to Determine if Still Active or Obsolete
6. Review Abatement Status of Utility Assessments
7. Monitor Ambulance Billing Services by Comstar and Town of Hudson
8. Prepare 2017 Budget Development & Adoption Schedule

Health, Safety and Environment

1. Monitor PFOA Water Contamination Issue
2. Code Red Training for Key Personnel
3. MS-4 Stormwater Management Permit & Program
4. Darrah Pond Water Usage Concerns

Policies and Procedures

1. Develop Uncollectable Receivables / Ambulance Write-Off Policy
2. Review General Fund Policy
3. Review Investment Policy
4. Review Purchasing Policy
5. Review Fraud Policy
6. Review Conference & Travel Policy
7. Review Personnel Policy

Infrastructure and Capital

1. Monitor 2016 Paving Projects
2. Monitor NHDOT Hillcrest Road Paving Project
3. Review / Adopt 2016 Capital Improvement Plan
4. Impact Fees
 - a. Determine fees can be used
5. Cutler and Page Road Intersection Improvement
 - a. Need to project listed on NRPC Long Range Plan
6. Fire Station Feasibility Study
 - a. Draft report should be complete in April
7. Wastewater Feasibility Study
 - a. CMA to present to BOS 4/25/16

Committees

1. Establish Agricultural Committee
 - a. Approved at 2015 Town Meeting
2. Establish Safe Routes to School Committee

3. Litchfield Community Television
 - a. Dissolve Committee and Establish Department?
4. Pat Jewett Award
 - a. Keep informal or establish a committee?

Miscellaneous

1. Sign Union Contract
2. Recreation Mowing Bids
3. Review Great Thicket National Wildlife Refuge Proposal
4. Monitor Submittal of all NH DRA Forms and Information for Tax Rate Purposes
5. Review / Update Town Hall Job Descriptions

Board and Troy agree on the topics, and they will discuss and update these topics periodically throughout the year.

Administrator Report - None

Selectman Reports

Selectman J. Brunelle states he attended a Recreation Commission meeting last Tuesday, where the mowing bids were discussed. Due to confusion with the bidding requirements (some were for 1, 2 and 3 years.) so all the bids were rejected and everyone involved was asked to resubmit their bids. John thought the Board was meeting on Saturday and will make a decision and report their decision at the next Recreation Commission meeting.

Selectman S. Perry states he attended a Planning Board meeting, where they discussed and are working on the Master Plan.

Also a conceptual plan has been shown for property which abuts Pagewood Oval, it would include approximately 42 Townhouse units. These units will fall into the Affordable Housing/Multi-Family specifications.

Selectman F. Byron states the Governor signed a Bill changing Accessory Housing specifications, which will now require certain criteria. So if a Town already has Accessory Housing, they will have to comply.

Selectman B. Lemire will be attending a Conservation Commission meeting next Thursday

Selectman K. Bourque states he attended a Budget Committee meeting where a long time member handed in his resignation. So he would like to recognize Bill Spencer for all his time and dedication throughout the years. K. Bourque mentions they are asking people to submit their resumes by April 8th, for a one year term replacement to the Committee. They will make a decision at the meeting on April 21st, so people are encouraged to attend and voice their opinions because the Budget Committee represents the Town.

Selectman J. Brunelle asks why was this not announced before elections. K. Bourque states this was a topic of conversation, and why the Board was split.

Conversations were also discussed regarding a conflict with the Chairman of the School Board, Brian Bourque who is also the Budget Committee's Representative, and who has a wife on the Budget Committee. Some feel this is a conflict of interest. Selectman K. Bourque states that everyone throws out the words "people said", so he asks anyone who has an opinion on this issue to come and speak out at a meeting expressing their views.

Selectman J. Brunelle states he feels a School Board member represents the School and is on a Board and cannot act on his/her own, decisions are made by and as a Board, he does not see an issue.

Board agrees and states that the Community (voters) voted these people in to serve on these Boards/Committees.

Selectman B. Lemire mentions there are no State laws preventing a husband and wife from serving as representatives for a town on Boards/Committees.

Selectman F. Byron states that a Budget Committee member reached out to him as a State Representative, asking what could be done about this matter. F. Byron mentions that he responded and has shared this with the Board of Selectmen and Budget Committee Chairman. He states this is a Budget Committee issue and not a Town issue, and there is nothing illegal about the matter.

Items moved from consent - None

Other Business - None

Selectman F. Byron **motioned** for the Board of Selectmen to adjourn the public portion of the meeting to go into a non-public session per RSA 91-A:3,II(a) - Compensation.

Selectman B. Lemire **seconds** the motion.

Roll call vote - Selectman K. Bourque (yes), Selectman J. Brunelle (yes), Selectman S. Perry, Selectman B. Lemire and Selectman F. Byron (yes). **Vote carries 5-0-0.**

Board of Selectmen will only come out of non-public to adjourn.

The next Board of Selectmen's meeting will be on April 11, 2016 at 6:00pm at Town Hall

Frank A. Byron, Chairman

Brent T. Lemire, Vice Chairman

John R. Brunelle

Steven D. Perry

Kevin C. Bourque