

## **BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING**

**February 7, 2023**

### **MINUTES**

**Present:** Shawn Talbot (Chair), Jason Somero, Lou Alvarez and Debbie Deaton (Town Administrator)  
Susan Mallett

**4:00 Open Meeting** in the Town Office with the Pledge of Allegiance at 5:00

#### **4:02 Timber Harvest at Transfer Station:**

Present: Shawn Talbot, Jason Somero, Lou Alvarez, Debbie Deaton, Peter Goewey (DPW), Bob Boynton (Conservation Commission), Phil Thayer (logger), Dan Reed (Forester), Dee Daley, Becky Doyle

Dan Reed stated he was contacted by Kenny Lehtonen regarding a timber harvest on his property in Sharon and also by Shawn. Mr. Lehtonen will need to use Town property at the landfill as a landing for trucks to access his property. Mr. Reed looked at the west side of the Town property because that is where Kenny would be accessing his property.

Mr. Reed added the Town had approximately \$10,000 worth of standing wood and we also have sand and gravel deposits. He said we should think of what our long term goals are and what is important in the future. Becky asked if she could have more details on the project. Mr. Reed stated we had approximately 30-40 acres on the west side of the property. Becky asked what the purpose of this is. Shawn replied it is to realize some potential income and improve the health of the forest and potentially get trees of higher value in the future. There are also the deposits of sand and gravel which is of value to the town.

Shawn asked Bob Boynton if there are any areas of concern as far as the Conservation Commission goes. Bob replied it was very wet. Dan stated the area we are looking at for the timber harvest would not be near the wetlands.

Becky stated \$10,000 as a source of revenue doesn't seem worth destroying the woodlands. Dan replied this would improve the forest for the future and would encourage new growth. The land is not going to be clear-cut, it would be somewhat of selective harvesting.

Phil Thayer stated the timber is a resource and this would help the forest for the future. Becky asked what this would do to the critters, environment, conservation, etc. Dan, Phil and Jason all responded by stating this would encourage growth and habitats for animals. Jason added this would be good management of Town property. There would also be potential for walking trails, etc.

Becky added she's seen these projects that look hideous when the job is complete. Dan replied things are left that way for a reason depending on what the owner of the property asked for. When a project is left that way, it's to encourage habitats for animals and encourages regrowth of other trees and plants.

Dee Daley stated we need to decide what the purpose of this will be. Walking trails are part of our Master Plan and are highly sought after by residents. Bob asked who would create and maintain these trails. Shawn replied this just came up right now so it's something we could look at. Dee suggested there could be snow machine clubs that may be interested in maintaining trails. Dan added we could have dog walking trails, have it be working land, there are several opportunities. The trails wouldn't be able to go too far to the north due to the brook.

Peter added the fact that there is sand and gravel is a tremendous value to the Town because we use it constantly for the roads. If we can access it, we wouldn't have to purchase it, therefore it wouldn't have to

be added to the budget. The resource that we have now is almost gone. Dan suggested we get an excavator and do some testing to see what is actually out there.

Lou brought up the fact that in the past, it was suggested to use that land for commercial purposes. Bob added there are a lot of restrictions because of the landfill and they would need to be looked into.

Jason read Bob Boynton's email saying we should have a forester. Bob said we need to put this out to bid for the forester and the logger.

Phil added there will be a percentage of the Lehtonen cut paid to the Town for the use of a landing plus the money we would receive from our timber cut. Shawn added using the land as a walking path or snow mobile trails (access to the community) and access to the sand and gravel seems like good management.

Shawn stated this is a good first step by getting everyone together and trying to figure out the scope of what we want to do and to try to better understand things. We will work on getting maps out to everyone and possibly take a walk out there. Shawn asked if everyone could make a list of pros and/or cons and also any ideas of things they'd like to see in the future.

Dee asked if we can get a list of the restrictions of the landfill, i.e. a building, parking lot, etc. Jason mentioned someone had asked him about using the cap as a runway for RC planes. He had spoken to the State and they said whatever you do out there has to be filed with the State.

Dan concluded by saying he would need to know the scope of the project before he could estimate costs. Shawn added we should do some more investigation and decide what we want to do. An RFP should be put together for a forester.

Phil added step one should be to scratch around and see what we have for gravel and the best way to access it. He also suggested we could rent an excavator from Kenny for this purpose because he will probably be checking his property also.

We need to figure out where the gravel is and have that area cleared to maximize the potential income and reduce costs for harvesting the gravel.

Shawn will keep working with everyone offline to come up with a plan. Dan asked to tag along if we do test pits for the sand and gravel.

#### **4:50 Old/New Business:**

- Debbie gave the Board a sample contract regarding the reduced energy supplier costs. Debbie added the rate from last week has expired and the company predicts the costs will continue to rise. The Board would like Debbie to email her peers to find out what experiences they have had utilizing this.

Jason added the company that is the low bidder is Engie and is a worldwide company. He is concerned about partnering with a global energy supplier.

Debbie added there are 3 contract terms...12 months, 24 months or 36 months. The Town would still pay Eversource and they would distribute the money to Engie.

- Jason asked where we were at regarding replacing the LED lighting. Debbie replied the meeting room had already been done. Most of the hallway bulbs are 8' and can't utilize "plug and play". The Board decided the highway garage should be the next project because it utilizes the most electricity. Peter will get pricing on those bulbs.

- Peter added Power Up will be coming to give him estimates for generators for the highway garage, town office, police department and fire department on Thursday.

- There will be a meeting tomorrow regarding "after event" actions from the storm.

At 5:19, Shawn made a motion to adjourn and reconvene at the high school for the Deliberative Session. Lou seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Debbie Deaton  
Town Administrator

**Minutes approved by BOARD OF SELECTMEN**

Shawn Talbot, Chairman:

  
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Jason Somero:

  
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Lou Alvarez:

  
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