

BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING
FEBRUARY 18, 2020
MINUTES

PRESENT: David Lage, Chairman; John Veaser; Bert Hamill
Town Administrator Scott Butcher
Building Inspector Rick Donovan

Chairman Lage called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm at the Town Hall and led the Pledge of Allegiance and reviewed the meeting agenda.

Selectman Hamill noted that both he and Chairman Lage would be out of town on March 17th and suggested that the Town Administrator be authorized to sign the payroll manifest that week. Chairman Lage and Selectman Veaser agreed.

Chairman Lage discussed the upcoming meeting on March 5th with NH DES regarding the Smithville Cemetery and the possible construction methods to be recommended for the maintenance of the adjacent state-owned dam. Selectman Veaser referenced the upcoming Candidates' Night on March 3rd for town and school committee elections.

Old Peterborough Road Street Numbering: Building Inspector Donovan joined the meeting to discuss assigning a street number to a house under construction on Old Peterborough Road which may have been discontinued at some point in time. Chairman Lage stated that he believed that Old Peterborough Road was still a Class VI road. Building Inspector Donovan went on to explain that, because of the location of the new home on the north end of Old Peterborough Road, it might be confusing to first responders trying to access it since they would likely come from the southern end where it intersects Old Rindge Road. Old Peterborough Road has not been maintained and the trees overgrown so that there is currently no access to the northern end from Old Rindge Road. The only access would be from Chapman Road which is private. E911 is suggesting that the northern end of Old Peterborough Road be renamed to something else to avoid confusion for first responders who may first try gaining access via Old Rindge Road and then have to backtrack losing valuable time in an emergency. Chairman Lage stated that under the Class VI road agreement the town has people sign the town doesn't provide emergency services. Building Inspector Donovan said that we still have to give them 911 services despite the town being held harmless. There was discussion on the condition of Old Peterborough Road and how it impacts access. He still recommends renaming the north end of Old Peterborough from the intersection of Chapman Road to Wapack Trail Road or something else to avoid the confusion for first responders. The other option would be to leave the entire length of the road named Old Peterborough and put notes in the E911 dispatch system that first responders will hopefully be made aware of. Selectman Hamill questioned the status of the road and requested that the Land Use Administrator research it. Chairman Lage agreed.

The discussion turned to the fees for inspections. Building Inspector Donovan told the Selectmen that he will be reviewing them and comparing to other communities to determine if any adjustments are required. The last time they were reviewed was 2017.

Treasurer Update: Treasurer Linda Langille came to update the Selectmen on changes being made in the Treasurer's Office over the last couple of months since she assumed those responsibilities. She explained that she was updating and streamlining some of the processes to make the office more efficient. Bank accounts have been consolidated into accounts that earn more interest and to reduce the number trips that are required to the bank. Redundancies between the Treasurer's Office and the Bookkeeper are being eliminated. The expansion of utilizing electronic transfers will save time as well and the Treasurer Langille requested that the Town Clerk-Tax Collector be granted the privileges to set up ACH electronic payments to the State of NH that will then be approved by the Treasurer, Deputy Treasurer, or Town Administrator. Some of these changes will reduce the number of hours the Deputy Treasurer is required to work in the office. Selectman Veaser made a motion to give the Town Clerk-Tax Collector the ability to set up the ACH payments. Selectman Hamill seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.

Treasurer Langille explained some of the other redundancies she has eliminated and teaching the Bookkeeper about the existing functionality in the BMSI software the town is utilizing. She also discussed the Fire Dept./Police Dept. Detail Accounts and the Parks & Recreation revolving fund. Chairman Lage inquired about the creation of a credit card policy. There was some discussion about a version that the previous Town Administrator had circulated. The Selectmen would like to review that policy again.

Chairman Lage made a request to get the unreserved fund balance. Treasurer Langille said she would provide that information and will also be putting together cash flow reports as well. She also stated that in addition to direct deposit for employees that check stubs can also be sent electronically via e-mail rather than printing out paper copies to be distributed manually.

Police Station Project: Resident Earl Somero joined the meeting to discuss the delayed warrant article regarding the construction for a new police station. He asked what the townspeople could do to assist in getting a new police facility built. Selectman Veaser stated that a lot of information has been put together and that informational sessions need to be held to educate voters on the urgency of the project and the mechanisms available to pay for it. The current interest rates for a bond issue are very low and this is a good time to borrow money. Selectman Veaser explained that the \$1.98 million estimated cost includes the cost of demolishing Building #2, the relocation of utilities, and the other site work required. Mr. Somero stated that the more the town procrastinates, the more expensive this project will become. He asked if it made sense to hold a Special Town Meeting to keep the project moving along. Chairman Lage stated that the option of a Special Town Meeting had and is being explored, but the project might not meet the threshold of being an emergency that is required. He also reiterated that the lease on the current Police facility expires at the end of 2020. Mr. Somero thanked the Board for their time.

Road Committee: Selectman Veaser stated that he wanted to get the Road Committee formed quickly so that an RFP can be issued immediately after the vote on the budget on March 10th. There was discussion about what the role of the Road Committee is. Chairman Lage felt that their role was only advisory and that the Selectmen control the funds associated with the two warrant articles in question. Selectman Veaser hopes that the Road Committee will take the opinion of the DPW Director seriously because they won't have time to analyze the condition of the roads quickly enough to avoid delaying the paving schedule for 2020. Selectman Veaser feels an RFP for paving should be developed quickly and a contract awarded before all of the contractors get booked up with work for other communities/customers.

Other Business: Chairman Lage discussed the various facilities issues including the need for a septic system and water source for the Old Town Hall. He also wanted to address what to do with the Old Fire Station at 36 Main Street. He asked the Town Administrator to get a draft of the RFP ready for the Selectmen to review. He also asked about the status of the Employee Handbook and whether the attorney had completed the review of it. Selectman Veese discussed the 1927 Wachusett fire truck located at the Old Fire Station and whether to restore it. Chairman Lage asked the Town Administrator to reach out to David Keurulainen to see if he would be able to meet with the Selectmen to discuss the future of the truck. He also suggested that the Selectmen tour the Old Fire Station to assess the condition and start thinking about what to do with it. Selectman Veese suggested it may be a candidate to sell. The Selectmen decided to look at the building before their next meeting on February 25th.

At 7:21 pm, Selectman Veese made a motion to adjourn. Selectman Hamill seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,
Scott Butcher, Town Administrator

Minutes approved by:
BOARD OF SELECTMEN


David S. Lage, Chairman


John Veese


Bert Hamill