

**Board of Selectmen  
Regular Meeting  
January 12, 2021 — 5:00 PM  
TELECONFERENCE  
MINUTES**

**Members Present:** First Selectman Kevin Cwikla, Selectmen Kathleen Smith, Glen Coutu, Robin Chesmer, and Betsy Petrie-McComber

**Others Present:** Bernard Dennler (Administrative Assistant/Teleconference Host); Valerie Belles (Senior Accountant); Jay Schall (Fire Chief); Phil Chester (Town Planner); Jim Russo (Library Building Committee Chair)

**1.0 Call to Order**

K. Cwikla called the meeting to order at 5:05 PM.

**2.0 Public Forum**

No public comments were made.

**3.0 Correspondence**

**3.1 Monthly Letter from Troop K**

The Selectmen reviewed the monthly letter.

**3.2 Police Activity Report**

The report was not yet available.

**4.0 Financials**

**4.1 Monthly budget reports**

V. Belles reviewed monthly reports including updates on the COVID fund and TIP. B. Petrie asked if there were any budget line items that are concerning based on the amount spent at the half-year mark. V. Belles said legal has just 35 percent remaining and that could be an issue later in the year.

V. Belles also said revenue has begun coming in from the state as part of the Coronavirus Relief Fund. \$55,837 received was a direct reimbursement for the claim period from March to June 30. The \$52,956 received was an allocation, not a reimbursement, for the claim period from July 1 to December 31. This was a last-minute change in the program the State made in December. K. Smith asked how much less the Town received from the allocation than they would have received for a reimbursement. V. Belles said the Town expended about \$72,000 in that period. She said the Selectmen now need to act to confirm acceptance of the funds, according to OPM. This can be done retroactively.

*B. Petrie MOVED to add to agenda Item 7.11 "Discuss and Act Upon: Acceptance of Coronavirus Relief Fund Allocation." K. Smith SECONDED.*

**MOTION CARRIED 5:0**

The Selectmen discussed getting a larger version of the TIP reports to track projects that have been completed and make sure other projects don't fall off the list.

## **5.0 Fire Department Report**

J. Schall said the Fire Department is continuing to operate at their highest alert level. He said they are now transporting one or two COVID patients daily. Six members have tested positive but are all believed to have contracted COVID outside their work for the LVFD. There has been no documented member-to-member transmission. 24 members have received their first dose vaccine.

The new communications tower is up and radio coverage has improved. He said there will need to be upgrades to the radio system in the next few years due to a change in the bands they use. B. Petrie said radio infrastructure fund should be used to help begin addressing these upgrades and other needs.

## **6.0 Consent Agenda**

*B. Petrie MOVED to accept the Consent Agenda:*

### **6.1 Appointments**

- a. *Re-appointment of Bonnie LeBlanc to the Commission on Aging, term to expire 01/01/2024*
- b. *Re-appointment of Jim Donnelly Jr. to the Commission on Aging, term to expire 01/01/2024*
- c. *Re-appointment of Marion Russo to the Commission on Aging, term to expire 01/01/2024*
- d. *Re-appointment of Sean McCarthy to the Cemetery Commission, term to expire 02/01/2024*
- e. *Re-appointment of Keith Laporte to the Cemetery Commission, term to expire 02/01/2024*
- f. *Appointment of Jim Barrett to the Cemetery Commission, term to expire 02/01/2023*

### **6.2 Resignations**

- a. *Resignation of Bob Gentes from the Recreation Commission, effective 01/01/2021*

### **6.3 Approval of Tax Refunds**

ALLEN DALE R, LAVECH-ALLEN BARBARA	\$81.74
BYRNES AGNES & SUPICKI STANLEY	\$2237.70
FINLEY MADISON E, LAVALLIE AMI B	\$115.90

### **6.4 Approval of Minutes**

*Approve the following minutes:*

- a. *Minutes of the December 18, 2020 Special Meeting*

### **6.5 Authorize the First Selectman to sign the 2021 Paramedic Agreement**

*G. Coutu SECONDED.*

**MOTION CARRIED 5:0**

## **7.0 New Business**

**Discuss and act upon:**

### **7.1 Hiring a Director of Public Works and Facilities**

K. Cwikla said Dean Hunniford had accepted the offer for the position of Director of Public Works and Facilities and is scheduled to begin January 19, 2021.

*B. Petrie MOVED to hire Dean Hunniford as the Director of Public Works and Facilities, effective January 19, 2020, with a salary of \$88,000 to be paid for from the Department of Public Works Salaries Account 430-5110-0000-0000 and \$12,000 from Buildings and Grounds Salaries Account 431-5110-0000-0000.*

*K. Smith SECONDED.*

MOTION CARRIED 5:0

### **7.2 Appointment of Tree Warden**

K. Cwikla said that the new Director of Public Works has the qualifications to serve as the town's tree warden.

*B. Petrie MOVED to appoint D. Hunniford as the Tree Warden for the Town of Lebanon, with a term to expire December 1, 2021. G. Coutu SECONDED.*

MOTION CARRIED 5:0

### **7.3 Hiring an Interim Highway Foreman**

K. Cwikla said that due to Jay Tuttle's resignation as highway foreman in December, Dennis Wengloski has been serving as interim highway foreman to help facilitate the transition in the department. He has been paid a rate calculated using the original highway foreman rate of pay before Jay Tuttle had assumed the responsibilities of the Director of Public Works following the resignation of Brandon Handfield in late 2015.

*B. Petrie MOVED to hire Dennis Wengloski as the interim highway foreman, effective December 2, 2020 at an hourly rate of \$30.91. R. Chesmer SECONDED.*

MOTION CARRIED 5:0

### **7.4 Hiring of Relief Snow Drivers**

K. Cwikla said Heather Marien has been working as a relief driver during recent snowstorms at hourly rate of \$25.00 per hour based on an agreement she made with him. K. Cwikla said the additional coverage has been necessary due to the staffing changes at Public Works.

*B. Petrie MOVED to hire Heather Marien as a snow relief driver effective December 2, 2020 at an hourly rate of \$25.00 per hour for the 2020-2021 snow season. K. Smith SECONDED.*

MOTION CARRIED 5:0

K. Cwikla said he has also had Pete Hodina working as an on-call facilities plow driver for the parking lots at the same rate of pay as the other part-time facilities employee.

*K. Smith MOVED to hire Pete Hodina as an on-call facilities plow driver effective December 2, 2020 at an hourly rate of \$19.88 for the 2020-2021 snow season. B. Petrie SECONDED.*

B. Petrie talked about need to hire more relief drivers and to look carefully at the rate of pay for snow relief positions. She said the wage has made it difficult to attract on-call help for snow emergencies and that there may need to be increases next year.

MOTION CARRIED 5:0

- 7.5 Recommendation from Conservation and Agriculture Commission to authorize \$2,600 from Open Space Account 220-00-461-2701-0060-0000 to prepare the 2021 Commission newsletter**  
P. Chester said the Department of Agriculture grant no longer will fund the newsletter due to a grant restructuring. The ConsAg commission has requested to spend from the Open Space Account to fund the newsletter to keep residents informed about the Open Space efforts.

*B. Petrie MOVED to authorize \$2,600 from Open Space Account 220-00-461-2701-0060-0000 to prepare the 2021 Commission newsletter. R. Chesmer SECONDED.*

B. Petrie asked if this is a permissible use of the funds. P. Chester said that is a determination to be made by the Board of Selectmen. P. Chester said the funds are available for soft costs and the Selectmen need to determine if this should be considered an open space preservation soft cost.

MOTION CARRIED 4:0 with G. Coutu abstaining

- 7.6 Recommendation from Conservation and Agriculture Commission to authorize \$3,000 from Open Space Account 220-00-461-2701-0060-0001 to conduct a supplemental appraisal of Matthew Williams property, 312 Mack Road for farmland preservation purposes**  
P. Chester said appraisals had previously been approved but there were delays and a new supplemental appraisal is being required by the State.

*B. Petrie MOVED Commission to authorize \$3,000 from Open Space Account 220-00-461-2701-0060-0001 to conduct a supplemental appraisal of Matthew Williams property, 312 Mack Road for farmland preservation purposes. R. Chesmer SECONDED.*

MOTION CARRIED 4:0 with G. Coutu abstaining

- 7.7 Recommendation from Conservation and Agriculture Commission to authorize \$8,000 from Open Space Account 220-00-461-2701-0060-0001 to conduct two (2) appraisals of Ethan & Michelle Stearns property, 256 Village Hill Road for farmland preservation purposes**

*R. Chesmer MOVED to authorize \$8,000 from Open Space Account 220-00-461-2701-0060-0001 to conduct two (2) appraisals of Ethan & Michelle Stearns property, 256 Village Hill Road for farmland preservation purposes. K. Cwikla SECONDED.*

P. Chester explained the recommendation from Conservation and Agriculture.

MOTION CARRIED 4:0 with G. Coutu abstaining

- 7.8 Recommendation from Conservation and Agriculture Commission to authorize \$8,000 from Open Space Account 220-00-461-2701-0060-0001 to conduct two (2) appraisals of Hill Fields farm, 724 Exeter Road for farmland preservation purposes**

*K. Smith MOVED to authorize \$8,000 from Open Space Account 220-00-461-2701-0060-0001 to conduct two (2) appraisals of Hill Fields farm, 724 Exeter Road for farmland preservation purposes. B. Petrie SECONDED.*

G. Coutu asked about the acreage. P. Chester said it is about 39 acres. B. Petrie said she thought this had already been done. P. Chester said it had been considered but not done.

MOTION CARRIED 3:0 with G. Coutu and R. Chesmer abstaining

**7.9 Recommendation from Conservation and Agriculture Commission to authorize \$8,000 from Open Space Account 220-00-461-2701-0060-0001 to conduct two (2) appraisals of Andrews farm, 234 Cook Hill Road for farmland preservation purposes**

*R. Chesmer MOVED to authorize \$8,000 from Open Space Account 220-00-461-2701-0060-0001 to conduct two (2) appraisals of Andrews farm, 234 Cook Hill Road for farmland preservation purposes. B. Petrie SECONDED.*

MOTION CARRIED 4:0 with G. Coutu abstaining

**7.10 Budget Planning Schedule**

The Selectmen decided to meet next Tuesday, January 19 at 5:00 PM.

**7.11 Acceptance of Coronavirus Relief Fund Allocation**

K. Cwikla said there

*G. Coutu MOVED to accept the December allocation of \$52,956 from the State of Connecticut Coronavirus Relief Fund. K. Smith SECONDED.*

MOTION CARRIED 5:0

**8.0 Old Business**

**Discuss and act upon:**

**8.1 Updating the job description for the Director of Public Works and Facilities**

B. Dennler stated that since a hire had been made he wanted to the Selectmen to review the job description to see if it was consistent with their vision for the position. He noted that the original job description had included an engineering component and had not mentioned serving as tree warden for the town. The Selectmen agreed to review the job description for consistency and make any necessary changes later.

NO ACTION TAKEN

**8.2 Public Works Garage Door Project**

K. Cwikla said the TIP project for the renovations of the public works garage doors was overbudget by \$3,010 due to the unexpected need to buy new doors.

*G. Coutu MOVED to authorize \$3,010 from the TIP Buildings and Grounds subaccount for the purchase of new garage doors for the public works garage. K. Smith SECONDED.*

MOTION CARRIED 5:0

### **8.3 Jet Truck Sale**

The Selectmen reviewed a document from legal counsel regarding how to dispose of the jet truck by a sale. They discussed the need to attempt to recoup the funds put into the vehicle by the WPCA. They agreed on the need to sell the vehicle and the need for transparency in the sale. They suggested having the First Selectman's Office post it on Craigslist or some other website in addition to the town website. They agreed not to take it to auction.

*B. Petrie MOVED to sell the jet truck. K. Smith SECONDED.*

MOTION CARRIED 5:0

### **8.4 Temporary relocation of Jonathan Trumbull Library at the Community Center**

J. Russo said the renovations and additions project is going out to bid this week and bids are due February 25. They need to make plans for the relocation of the library at the Community Center as a temporary home. He believes they will need to get access beginning March 15. He asked if the HVAC and other electrical work will be done before that date. K. Cwikla said the lighting and electrical work will be done, but the HVAC may have to wait. K. Smith asked about the need for humidity control. J. Russo said he thought the HVAC on the ground-level would be done beforehand. G. Coutu and B. Petrie said that was the plan. B. Petrie also said the Town will need to find a temporary location for some of the furniture. J. Russo said it can be moved to storage.

J. Russo provided an update on the project. He said the grant funding is intact and they will meet a critical deadline for getting out to bid this month. K. Smith asked about funding for internet and phone at the Community Center. J. Russo said library is covering those costs. HVAC will be handled on the Town's side.

NO ACTION TAKEN

### **9.0 Approval of Minutes**

#### **9.1** Approval of Minutes

Approve the following minutes:

- a. Minutes of the December 1, 2020 Regular Meeting (G. Coutu not present)

*B. Petrie MOVED to approve the minutes of the December 1, 2020 Regular Meeting. K. Cwikla SECONDED.*

MOTION CARRIED 4:0 with G. Coutu abstaining

- b. Minutes of the December 15, 2020 Special Meeting (G. Coutu not present)

*B. Petrie MOVED to approve the minutes of the December 15, 2020 Special Meeting. K. Smith SECONDED.*

MOTION CARRIED 4:0 with G. Coutu abstaining

### **10.0 Executive Session**

*B. Petrie MOVED to enter Executive Session for purposes of strategy and negotiations regarding Lebanon Green Litigation. G. Coutu SECONDED.*

MOTION CARRIED 5:0

#### **10.1 Executive Session: Strategy and Negotiations regarding Lebanon Green Litigation**

Executive Session began at 6:20 PM. The Selectmen returned to public session at 7:00 PM.

**11.0 Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 7:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Kevin T. Cwikla

First Selectman