

**TOWN OF DEERFIELD
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
December 7, 2020
MINUTES**

Call to Order

5:30 pm – Chairman Robertson called the meeting to order

Present: Andrew Robertson, Chairman; Richard Pitman, Vice Chairman, Fred McGarry, and Cynthia McHugh, Selectmen.

Absent: Alden Dill, Selectmen

Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

Chairman Robertson did not do the Pledge as they were on ZOOM.

Deerfield Fire/Rescue Department – Matt Fisher

Chairman Robertson stated that Chief Fisher wasn't on the line but hoped that he could join them later.

Parks and Recreation – Nick Lawrence

Chairman Robertson stated that at this time, they would hear from Nick Lawrence and he believed that he wanted to give the Board an update on potential plans for moving the ice rink next year from Hartford Brook to the Gazebo field.

If he is with them, he would recognize him at this point.

Mr. Lawrence indicated that he was there and asked how it was going.

He continued that he met with the Commission last Wednesday for their monthly meeting and they were discussing the success that they had with the ice rink and they are trying to look forward and see how they could best do it for the town.

So, it came up with possibly doing an engineering study with the town's engineer and the Board suggested spending up to a \$1,000.00 on a study to see what could be done or what needs to be done in order to maintain an ice rink at the Gazebo field as far as like drainage, any grading that needs to be done and so forth. He stated that they just wanted to run that by the Board as well.

Chairman Robertson asked the Board if they have questions or concerns about that.

Vice Chairman Pitman stated that he thought that it would be a great idea if they could make it work if it is donated money.

Mr. Lawrence stated that there was one clarification is that they did raise almost \$7,000.00 for the ice rink project this year so the \$1,000.00 would be paid for out of the revolving fund which they do have some change in there.

Chairman Robertson asked if this answered all their questions or generate new ones from the Board to which there were none.

Hearing none Nick, he thought that he had general agreement among the Board members and is a good way to proceed.

Mr. Lawrence thanked the Board and stated that he appreciated it.

Chairman Robertson wished Mr. Lawrence a good evening.

Chairman Robertson stated that he was going to give one more call to see if Matt Fisher is with them.

Mr. Harrington stated that he just got a text from him. He just went out on a med call.

Chairman Robertson stated that he assumed that Matt Fisher will not be with them probably this evening then.

At this point, he stated that they would move to their regular business.

Regular Business:

Review of Outstanding Minutes of November 30, 2020

Motion: Vice Chairman Pitman moves to approve the minutes of November 30, 2020

Second: Selectman McGarry

Discussion: The chairman wanted to note that he thought that Selectwoman McHugh was muted and didn't know if she wanted to be muted.

Vote: Yea 4, Nay 0, Abstained 0 – Motion Carries

Vouchers/Payroll Manifest/Accounts Payable Manifest:

Accounts Payable week ending December 7, 2020 - \$41,058.31

Motion: Selectman McGarry moves to approve the Accounts Payable Manifest in the amount of \$41,058.31

Second: Vice Chairman Pitman

Discussion: The vice chairman stated that he had two questions when he got to it. He asked if Mr. Harrington could find out, as you see in the payables, \$7,400.00 for shoulder gravel. It only listed Candia Road and he stated that he didn't have to look now but to let them know.

Mr. Harrington asked the vice chairman if he wanted to know if that was for more than one road and he stated, correct. Mr. Harrington stated that he would double check.

The vice chairman stated that Mr. Harrington could send an email tomorrow or something. He stated that he was not going to not pay it, that he was only curious if it was that much to just do Candia Road.

The chairman asked for other discussion.

Vote: Yea 3, Nay 0, Abstained 0 – Motion Carries

The chairman stated that he also had an invoice from Kyle Barker for the police station planning and because this is coming from the trust fund set up for this, they need a motion to pay this separately.

Motion: Vice Chairman Pitman moves to approve the payment of the invoice for the police station planning from Kyle Barker from the trust fund

Second: Selectman McGarry

Discussion:

Vote: Yea 4, Nay 0, Abstained 0 – Motion Carries

Signatures/Correspondence:

The chairman stated that the only thing that requires a vote is a notice to cut wood or timber and is from John Smith and Susan Smith and this is for property on Mountain Road. This has been ongoing and it was formerly Joe Brown's property and these are relatives of Joe Brown.

Vice Chairman Pitman asked the chairman if he needed a motion and the chairman stated that actually they didn't need a motion for a notice of intent but will do that as an e-signature tomorrow or the next day.

Mr. Harrington stated to the chairman that there was one more item and that he didn't know if he had gotten his updated, electronic voting which was the Sanders Tax Search contract for 2021.

The chairman stated that he did not see that this evening.

Motion: Vice Chairman Pitman moves to approve the Sanders Tax Search contract and have the chairman sign

Second: Selectman McGarry

Discussion: Chairman Robertson stated that this is for the town clerk/tax collector and Mr. Harrington stated that this was correct. This was the organization that she uses every year. It is just the 2021 contract.

Vote: Yea 4, Nay 0, Abstained 0 – Motion Carries

Chairman Robertson stated that those were the voting issues that they had this evening. They had a couple of other things in correspondence. One was a request from the Northwood Lake Association.

It doesn't require action this evening but they are looking for another \$8,000.00 in their continued fight against milfoil and invasive aquatic weeds and at some point, they will need to decide whether they want to include that on the warrant this year.

Typically, they have put it as a warrant article and given the town the opportunity to decide specifically, whether they wanted to participate or not.

Vice Chairman Pitman asked if they could let it seat right now to which the chairman stated that they could.

The chairman stated that they also had some updated plans for the highway salt shed and he believed that Selectman McGarry had his hand in this and didn't know if the vice chairman did as well but he would leave it to Fred to go over.

Selectman McGarry stated that the plan that he had prepared reflects the recommendations that they got from Steve Keech and it calls for ballyards to be place a couple of feet off of the back wall to protect that wall from any damage that might occur when the loader is pushing against the pile of salt and sand in the building and similarly, it calls for ballyards out at the corners, at the front of the building so nobody ends up whacking into the wall there.

It also includes some planking again, like the ballyards, to protect the wall from getting a lot of sand and stuff, primarily salt, against the concrete.

Vice Chairman Pitman stated that he didn't know what those were for and didn't understand the 2 x 12's.

Selectman McGarry stated that it is to stop any salt from getting up against the concrete or at least minimize it.

Vice Chairman Pitman stated that he hadn't seen any updated sketches for it but would be willing to look at them if it comes about.

Selectman McGarry stated that Steve Keech thought that the price that they got for that was very reasonable for the concrete work.

Chairman Robertson asked if the Board wanted to take any action at this point or did, they want to review it further?

Vice Chairman Pitman asked Selectman McGarry if the concrete work was going out to bid and was it ready?

Selectman McGarry stated that he thought that Steve Rollins had already got a price on it, he thought and he thought that they could put it out. He forgot what the price was which he thought it was under \$10,000.00 and asked the town administrator if it was.

Vice Chairman Pitman stated that it should have been for concrete.

Chairman Robertson thought that the concrete was definitely under \$10,000.00 since the whole project was, what were they looking at, \$14,000.00, \$15,000.00 to which Selectman McGarry agreed.

Mr. Harrington stated that if it under \$10,000.00, it doesn't require a bid.

Vice Chairman Pitman added that it was someone from town and the chairman also stated that he thought that it was a quote Steve Rollins received from an "in town" concrete firm.

Selectman McGarry stated that this was his understanding also and added that the installation of the ballyards would be an additional cost to that \$14,000.00 and he didn't know what the price of those individually are.

Chairman Robertson asked the Board what their pleasure was at this point.

Vice Chairman Pitman stated that he thought that they should get the concrete work done if they could weatherwise and Selectman McGarry agreed.

Mr. Harrington stated that the estimate was for 34 x 16 ft. foundation for salt shed addition and the price includes labor, concrete and rebar for a total of \$5,100.00. That was Littlefield Concrete from Jeff Littlefield in Deerfield.

Chairman Robertson asked if the Board was comfortable with moving ahead with the concrete work at this stage of the game to which both Selectman McGarry and Vice Chairman Pitman agreed they were.

Chairman Robertson asked if anyone was opposed and it appears that everyone was in favor and they could advise Steve to move forward with the concrete.

Vice Chairman Pitman asked if Steve could get the plan. It doesn't have to be anything fancy and they could take a quick peek at it, Fred.

Chairman Robertson asked Mr. Harrington if he could relay that message to Steve Rollins that they wanted to see the plans so they could take a look at the wood and the roof and Mr. Harrington stated that he believed that Steve was on the line to which he was and then indicated that the Board could relay that to him directly.

Chairman Robertson told Steve Rollins that the Board was in agreement if he wanted to move forward with the concrete and that they would like to see the plans just outlining the wood superstructure and the roof.

Steve Rollins agreed and he stated that this was why he was actually on the line to see what his next step was.

Chairman Robertson stated that if he could move ahead with Mr. Littlefield and get things rolling, that would be good and Mr. Rollins thanked the Board and asked the Board if they needed him for anything else.

Chairman Robertson stated that he wasn't aware of anything but Selectwoman McHugh had a question which she asked if they were going to be doing the groundwork for this project, you and the guys and Mr. Rollins stated that the crew will be doing it themselves, inhouse.

The chairman asked if there were other questions or concerns to which there were none and thanked him for being with them.

Town Administrator's Report:

Mr. Harrington stated that the new door to the town clerk was opened today. Customers were using it and Kelly Roberts reported that everybody was following the recommendations of the Board; wearing a mask, limiting to two customers at a time and they were very happy to have the access to the inside of the building and was working very well.

Update on the MBC. The 2021 budget, the MBC has finished its review and voted to approve the total budget in the amount of \$4,542,412.00. The default budget is in the amount of \$4,006,518.00.

The MBC is moving onto the school budget next, this week and the chairman added that it would be tomorrow night if anyone wants to listen in and Mr. Harrington stated that this was correct.

Mr. Harrington stated that they had quite a number of fire alarms going off obviously because of loss of power and snow throughout the town. Ray received quite a few.

One of them was enough to concern them. The pumphouse behind or to the side of the town hall which houses all of the machinery and the pump for the sprinkler system, once the power was restored to Church Street, threw out a signal that there was actually a fire. It was a false alarm but the fire department, the police department showed up and because of that alarm being activated by mistake by the panel, it started the pump with no water flowing. In order to protect the pump, the fire department just shut down the whole panel.

Consequently, they found out why it kept running. There is a gasket that needs to be replaced as well as some of the major piping that goes to the pump. They had R.B. Lewis out here this morning examining it. He is going to get an estimate for the cost of fixing the gasket and the one piece of piping within a couple of days and he will let the Board know. That is down until this is fixed because that leak will constantly throw off the pressure and once it is reduced, it will start the pump up again. He didn't want that running without water to damage that.

So, good thing the town hall is not open to anybody. Matt Fisher is aware of the situation and because there is not occupancy, they are comfortable with that being down but again, if there should be a fire, the sprinkler system pump

is not active. It will alert them to a fire but it won't automatically go one so he just wanted to get this repaired as soon as possible to get that back online.

Mr. Harrington asked if there were any questions on that?

Chairman Robertson stated that he didn't have questions specifically on that but he wanted to make sure that they keep that they keep checking with state guidelines and maybe Denny is a good place to do this as to when and under what auspices that they might open the town hall up again for small group use.

Mr. Harrington stated absolutely.

Chairman Robertson stated that he knew that it was a community concern. He hears about it pretty regularly.

Mr. Harrington stated that he would address it with her tomorrow to see what they could get for guidance.

Chairman Robertson stated that clearly, with numbers on the rise, that sort of thing, that they didn't want to open it up for open use but the community is interested in them keeping an eye on that.

Mr. Harrington stated that he would definitely get back to the Board on that.

With that, this concludes his update for tonight unless you folks have any questions for him.

Chairman Robertson stated that one thing that he mentioned, and he doesn't know if Steve Jemele has gotten back to you or not but he had spoken with Mr. Harrington a couple of times about a community resident had come forward wondering whether they could do some sort of list serve type option on the website for meeting agendas and meeting postings as he and Mr. Harrington had discussed that the calendar might be more appropriate or was there a suitable, list serve option that people could opt in to receive notice.

Mr. Harrington stated that Steve has been working with a community member and he believes he has a solution to it. Hopefully, they will hear back from the community member to whether it works but he can actually sign people up to get any updates, specifically to any department that they are interested in for agendas, minutes and they will automatically get an email sent to them, letting them know that there has been activity and there has been an update on these things so he's working on it right now.

Chairman Robertson stated that this was great and appreciated that.

Selectwoman McHugh asked if Mr. Jemele is going to have to add every person singularly? Why can't this be a group thing or in other words, what is someone going to have to do to get on this alert?

Mr. Harrington stated that it is not an alert, it is through our webpage host. For them to set up a list serve, the town's email does not accommodate a very large list. It will block it from being sent out because it recognizes it as junk mail because they don't have a real paid for, email server service. They would have to pay for a list serve service in order to add a lot of people on so he is testing this out to see how it works but yes, it would require adding people on that want to get notified.

Chairman Robertson stated that along those lines, when he was checking up on minutes for boards that meet, he noticed that the ZBA met a couple of weeks ago and their minutes are still not up. He wasn't sure what the time frame was to get minutes up and going but they had a meeting before Thanksgiving that some community members were interested in and he was interested in and he knew that they got some report of decisions that they had made recently but he still could not find the minutes.

Mr. Harrington stated that he knew that if it is the meeting that he was talking about, one of the last meetings that they had, Jane Boucher, who is the secretary for the Zoning Board, lost power at her house, just before the meeting began so he has had to work with her, getting her a flash drive with the minutes and she is having her son help her figure out how to listen to those so he knows that there has been a delay if those are the minutes that he was looking for.

Chairman Robertson stated that this would have been the Wednesday before Thanksgiving.

Mr. Harrington stated that the reason was that she lost power.

The chairman asked if anyone else had anything and the vice chairman was recognized.

He stated that he read it and wanted to know what happens now? In the minutes from the secretary, where they were going to reverse the decision of the building inspector, what happens now?

Mr. Harrington asked if he was talking about the decisions that were sent to them?

Chairman Robertson stated one of them was the decision from down by the lake and the vice chairman asked what happens now that the ZBA has gone against the town's full-time employee?

Mr. Harrington stated that he was talking to Rick about that last week. He thought that option at this point would be that he could actually sue the ZBA if he felt strongly enough to hold his position or go against their position.

It came out that night, if it hadn't gone the way that it did, that group was prepared to sue the town because of Rick's decision and Mr. Harrington agreed.

Mr. Harrington continued that he thought that at this point, unless he had misunderstood Rick, legal action would have to take over one side or the other if they don't agree with the decision.

Chairman Robertson added that the land owner could appeal or we and Rick could appeal and the vice chairman thanked the chairman.

Chairman Robertson asked the Board if they wanted to meet with Rick to talk about that and Vice Chairman Pitman stated that they could as it wouldn't hurt.

Chairman Robertson stated that maybe if they could have Rick at their next meeting to discuss that and Mr. Harrington stated that he would let Mr. Pelletier know.

Unfinished/New/Other Business:

Chairman Robertson stated that he would start by saying that during the last meeting, he agreed to have a conversation with Mike Courtney of Upton and Hatfield. Talked with Mike a couple of times. He was tied up in trials last week from Tuesday to Friday. They had an appointment to meet at 1:30 pm today for our meeting to get some questions answered and Michael ended up at home taking care of his children because they had COVID positive tests at their preschool so he contacted him and canceled the appointment. They are going to meet tomorrow and at which point, they will be reviewing the concerns at that time.

There are a couple of options there if the Board wants to know what he recommends prior to next Monday, they could possibly schedule a short meeting on Thursday evening or they could wait until the following Monday.

Vice Chairman Pitman asked what the results would be for, the land and the chairman stated that no, this was in regard to some other concerns that they had and the vice chairman stated that maybe they could have a meeting on Thursday then instead of waiting until Monday.

Chairman Robertson asked Mr. Harrington if they would have time to schedule that, to post that and he said that he could post another ZOOM meeting.

The chairman asked if the Board was in general agreement that it was a good idea and all agreed it was.

Chairman Robertson stated that he was going to meet with Michael tomorrow and the Board will meet on Thursday to just talk about that and for those listening, it will likely be the meeting opening and going into non-public session.

Vice Chairman Pitman thanked him and stated that it was great.

The chairman asked for other new business at this point.

Selectwoman McHugh stated that she had a question. With Kelly opening her part of the office down there and that is really great that it worked out for her, how does Assessing and the Building Department work now. There is no access to them.

Mr. Harrington stated that they have a walk-up window which is open every day. They have not taken it out.

The vice chairman stated the building inspector and Mr. Harrington stated that they have had their own walk-up window simultaneously with the town clerk. The vice chairman stated that he had no idea.

Selectwoman McHugh stated that someone threw the idea at her but couldn't they switch them to down to where Ray's office is so that they have their own outside door and people would have access to the building inspector from 8-4 rather than 2:30 pm. You know Ray's office, and she knew that some of it was storage.

Mr. Harrington asked if she meant to relocate the building inspector down there and Selectwoman McHugh stated yes and added the building inspector and assessing so someone could come in and talk to people rather than to stand outside and freeze at a window because she has been in there to talk to the assessing office before and it has taken awhile.

Mr. Harrington stated that the only issue would be trying to relocate all of Kris Robert' files which are quite numerous. She has to access those to answer questions.

Selectwoman McHugh asked if it were the file cabinets all around her to which Mr. Harrington stated that they were all assessing. She asked if they couldn't relocate those?

Mr. Harrington stated that anything is possible. Ray's office is quite full so they would have to completely clean out Ray's office first before they could move anything down there.

Vice Chairman Pitman asked Selectwoman McHugh where would Ray go and she thought that he could just swap. She thought that even if he took half of that then Kelly would have a little more space if she needed it.

Mr. Harrington stated that the square footage of Ray's office is half of what the assessing office is so to put both of them in there with all of their files, he didn't know how practical that would be. There are also two oil tanks in there for the furnace that take up a lot of space in Ray's office.

Chairman Robertson asked what the Board's pleasure was at this point? Do they want to consider that?

Vice Chairman Pitman stated that it is too bad. He has heard from other building contractors that wish that they could have more than window contact with Rick. He realizes that he goes out sometimes but that is his job so maybe that is the big thing at this time of year when building slows down, it won't be a problem.

Mr. Harrington stated that another alternative, he is just thinking off the top of his head, given Cindy's comment, is that Rick could temporarily locate to one of the Parks and Rec classrooms which has outside access.

Selectwoman McHugh stated that it just wasn't Rick, it was assessing too.

Mr. Harrington stated that assessing would be a much bigger job because all those file cabinets would have to be emptied first, then bought down, then filled back up again.

Vice Chairman Pitman stated that Rick must get more visitors to which Mr. Harrington stated that he would have to check with them. It would make sense because a lot of the trade people are in there for building permits and mechanical permits.

Chairman Robertson stated to Mr. Harrington that maybe at this time, that he should talk to Rick and Kris and see if there is a desire on their part to have more direct access to the public than they currently have.

Mr. Harrington stated that he would check with them and the chairman stated that then they could revisit it.

The chairman asked for other business, new or other.

Hearing none, at this point, he would move to Citizen's Comments.

Citizen's Comments:

Enroll Rhodes – Church Street.

He stated that first of all, he would like to congratulate them all for the cleaver use of the funds to permit public access to the clerk's office. Well done.

He also appreciated the list serve issue being brought up. He was just wondering if it were a technology matter or a budget matter as a stumbling block to get this done. He didn't know how much it would cost to put in a listserv but he

looks at a place like Concord and if you go look at their website, there is sort of nothing that you can't voluntarily subscribe to.

Obviously, Concord is a little bigger than Deerfield but it is the technology that is certainly out there to do something like this so he was wondering if the site is the issue or money is the issue? What would help this move forward?

He would be curious to know a little more.

Chairman Robertson stated that their understanding from Mr. Harrington's explanation tonight is that it is a little bit of both. They can certainly continue to see what is available and he believed that John is doing that with Steve Jemele at this point.

Mr. Rhodes stated that he gathered that and thanked them for that.

The chairman asked for other citizen's comments at this time.

None heard.

Motion: Vice Chairman Pitman moves to adjourn

Second: Selectman McGarry

Discussion:

Vote: Yea 4, Nay 0, Abstained 0 – Motion Carries

Next Meeting: Thursday, December 10, 2020 at 5:30 pm

*The Minutes were transcribed and respectfully submitted by Dianne L. Kimball, Recording Secretary
Pending approval by the Board of Selectmen*