

**TOWN OF DEERFIELD
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
January 11, 2021
MINUTES**

Call to Order/Roll Call

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

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

Chairman Robertson: The first order of business this evening is discussion with the road agent, Mr. Steve Rollins. I did stop by the highway shed at 6:30 this morning and give Mr. Rollins a copy of some of the questions we had for him in writing.

He was planning on being with us this evening. He didn't know if he was with us now or not.

Steve Rollins: I am.

Chairman Robertson: Good, glad you are here Steve.

Did you have a chance to look at the letter Steve?

Steve Rollins: I did.

Chairman Robertson: I know the Board would like to discuss it with you. Do you want to stay in public session or would you prefer to go into non-public session to talk with us?

Steve Rollins: It doesn't matter to me either way.

Chairman Robertson: It's your choice. If it doesn't matter to you either way, what is the Board's pleasure. Would you rather go into non-public or stay in public?

Selectwoman McHugh and Vice Chairman Pitman both stated that they would like to stay in public if Steve doesn't care.

Selectman McGarry also agreed.

Chairman Robertson: Let's stay in public then and I think that the concerns were numbered Steve starting with the Candia Road washout and I don't know if you could give us an explanation or answer for the itemized things in the letter.

Steve Rollins: Yes. So, the Candia Road washout, you put down that it was 24 hours after the high water before I went down there and fixed it

Chairman Robertson: or sign it.

Steve Rollins: I never did sign it because I got the call from the PD and went right down there, jumped into the loader, went down and back dragged it and grabbed a load of reclaim, figuring that would hold in where it washed out better than just regular gravel plus with all the rain, the gravel was pretty muddy.

So, I rolled that down with the loader and back dragged it so I did it immediately, as quick as I got the call and really, nobody went by while I was doing it. It was like 8 o'clock at night or 7 o'clock at night. It was dark.

The amount of time that it took to drive down in the loader and get it done, was about the same as it took me, well, it would have took me longer to get signs and put them out.

I didn't realize that it was washed out. I had checked roads. I just didn't check that one. I know people that travel that road that usually go down that road but being the holiday, I guess they weren't out traveling but they did call me right after the PD and tell me about it, but I was already on my way to fix it.

It got done as fast as I got the call. It was a half an hour later or less, so.

Chairman Robertson: Did you have to call out anyone from the highway department to help you?

Steve Rollins: I did not. No, it was just the loader and I grabbed the loader from here, after I got it kind of passable with the loader and I grabbed a load of dirt from here. I already had the truck warming up. I fired it up right after I got the call and went down and just took care of it.

I didn't want to ruin anyone else's holiday.

Chairman Robertson: Well, I guess the concern of the Board was, at least one member had a call, probably about the same time that the police called you, if I am not mistaken but we just really like to try to keep an eye on the roads after a big storm like that so that we don't leave it sitting.

Selectwoman McHugh: That was Saturday, right Steve?

Steve Rollins: Yes, Saturday. It was just about dark when the PD called me.

I had checked several of our more heavily, traveled roads. I just hadn't checked that one but that one is very light traffic and it never even crossed my mind that that would be a problem there but apparently there needs to be more ditching on there but being a scenic road, it's kind of a hard one to do.

Chairman Robertson: The second thing that the Board had some concerns about was the Swamp Road beaver situation and we didn't have any concerns about you being out there repairing it and appreciate the fact that you did it on Christmas Day but we were concerned about having more than one person in the cab of that loader and particularly, having someone in there that isn't a town employee or town contractor.

Steve Rollins: And, I agree with you and that was probably a bad choice on my part but it was Christmas Day and obviously, she wanted, she was taking pictures and wanted to see what was going on and I probably shouldn't have let her get into the backhoe and take pictures while I was pulling the dam out and it won't happen again.

Chairman Robertson: Good. We appreciate that and we wanted to talk to you about before but we really want you to stick to employees and contractors that we have a contract with around the town machinery.

Steve Rollins: We didn't have a problem with that before but am I wrong? I don't believe that this was a problem before.

Chairman Robertson: I don't think that riding in the tractor was but we had spoken to you about flaggers and that sort of thing that they need to be our employees or contracted with us.

Steve Rollins: Right, but it was one of my employees so it was at that time but okay.

Selectwoman McHugh: Steve, I had a question about that beaver thing. Is that something you can do before we get the storm like so it doesn't flood out or does it have to be done when it is a problem?

Steve Rollins: Unfortunately, we have screens in front of the culverts so you can't pull them up until they plug up.

Selectwoman McHugh: So, you wouldn't go, say you hear that you will have a bad storm on Wednesday, you wouldn't go tomorrow and pull them all so it doesn't flood out like that?

Steve Rollins: Sometimes we will pull them. Other times we will check them. If they are clean, we will leave them. It depends on how active the beavers are and Swamp Road, those are very active beavers. If you look down there, you will notice that they have just about clear cut the whole area around their dam.

I have a trapper from Epsom that is actually supposed to be going down there and trap them out.

Chairman Robertson: Is that Chris Heath that we had the contract with before?

Steve Rollins: No, it is not. He is from Candia but these are on the Epsom line so I thought I would, plus this guy, from what I understand, willing to do it either for nothing or a very small fee.

Selectwoman McHugh: Do we contract our trappers?

Steve Rollins: No, I don't believe so. From what I understand, you just hire whoever you can get.

I asked John about it earlier this season and we were getting whoever was the cheapest.

Selectwoman McHugh: I just remember Fred when he resigned, I thought he was contracted.

Steve Rollins: Not that John told me. I asked him about that earlier in the spring.

Chairman Robertson: We did have an agreement with Fred, and I know when Fred first left, we had, and I don't know if it was paper or not, we had an agreement with Chris Heath out of Barrington who was doing some trapping for us but ...

Steve Rollins: I believe the guy that Mark gave him the name of was from Candia but maybe I am wrong.

Chairman Robertson: Okay, as long as we have somebody that is going to do an adequate job.

The third thing that the Board was concerned about was the loader contract and I know that you had changed that per conversation with Dick which I appreciate, the Board appreciates.

One thing that we were concerned about though, was typically, when we rented a loader, the loader has been parked at the town shed for the duration of the rental period and has also been available for anyone in the highway department to use as needed and we wanted to make sure that that was indeed how this rental agreement was tenured as well.

Steve Rollins: And, that is how it has been except I did bring it home for one of the long weekends where I did a service on it and then brought it back and Paul has been running it besides me so I guess, if that answers your questions.

Chairman Robertson: We just wanted, basically, wanted to make sure that it was going to be there for the duration and not going back and forth between other sites.

Selectwoman McHugh: Steve, how does that work for filling trucks. That is an awful big machine.

Steve Rollins: Actually, it works awesome because I can load the trucks in two buckets and mix it a lot faster. The trucks aren't waiting at the shed anymore so it is actually working out very well. You could probably ask Paul what he thinks about it as he has been running it and ask the drivers if you want but it is working out pretty good.

I mean, obviously, the little pickup sanders you just load the corner of the bucket like you would do with anything and load them that way.

Chairman Robertson: Other questions for Steve regarding the loader contract?

Selectman Dill: Andy, Dick had his hand up a couple of times there.

Chairman Robertson: I'm sorry Dick, I'm not seeing you on my screen so speak up so I can recognize you.

Vice Chairman Pitman: It goes back to the reclaim. I didn't know when you wanted to talk about that reclaim verses gravel.

Steve Rollins: That is on the list. We will get to it.

Vice Chairman Pitman: Okay.

Chairman Robertson: Okay. Did you have something else Dick other than the reclaim?

Vice Chairman Pitman: No, I am all good for now, I think.

Chairman Robertson: Okay. The fourth item that we had is communications, particularly the answering machine Steve and it looked like, at least after Christmas, that there were over 55 messages on the machine with 48 new messages listed.

Is this something you have a handle on or ...

Steve Rollins: Absolutely. There was not a single message that wasn't checked. That's the caller ID that you guys looked at. I don't erase the caller ID anymore. Back before I could get the answering machine to work, I used the caller ID and erased it as I checked it but now that the answering machine is accessible, I'm sorry, I haven't had a need to erase the caller ID but if you guys are going to be going in there and checking it, I certainly could do that probably on a weekly basis.

Chairman Robertson: No, I don't think that there is a need to as long as you are getting back to people. The concern was it looked like a lot of messages and a lot of them looked new so we were concerned that folks weren't hearing back from you.

Steve Rollins: Nope, I've been returning them but we do get a fair number of call hang ups. Most of those are sales calls, Google, trying to sell us stuff, probably my car insurance or something like that but most of the calls that are local or whatnot, have all been returned.

Vice Chairman Pitman: To check them, do you have to go there or can you check them from your house?

Steve Rollins: I can do either, or.

Vice Chairman Pitman: Okay, so you don't, so the chances are you can get back to people a lot quicker if you could check from your truck or your house.

Steve Rollins: I do, I do check it from the truck or the house, well from my cell phone which can just about be anywhere but yes. It hasn't been a problem that I am aware of. I mean, plus, when I mailed my mail out to get the position, I put my personal cell phone number on that so everybody has that as well and we also made my personal cell phone number public on the town page. John did that so I think people should be able to find me.

Selectwoman McHugh: Do you have, are you set up with a town answering Steve or is it just the answering machine down there?

Steve Rollins: No, it's actually the town's service. We used to have a machine and we got a new phone and it came with an answering service.

Chairman Robertson: And, this is what you worked with John getting this set up a little while ago.

Steve Rollins: Yes

Selectwoman McHugh: So, John, is that like when you pick up the phone, like I have one for animal control, pick it up in the office, and you can listen to messages on there, right?

Mr. Harrington: That's correct.

Selectwoman McHugh: That is the same one that Steve has?

Mr. Harrington: It is through Consolidated. It's a digital answering service (this was muted)

Selectwoman McHugh: I'm just wondering Steve, if you have an answering machine, and you have that voice, answering thing, the answering machine could be picking up messages before your voice one is.

Steve Rollins: No, only one is hooked up. We don't have the old machine anymore. I believe I have the same system that the rest of the town has. You dial the number and yay, I think it is the same system that the rest of the town has.

Mr. Harrington: (now unmuted)-It's the digital voice service through Consolidated so he can pick it up. He has a number that he calls in with his password. He can pick it up from his home, work, his cell phone and pick up his messages.

Selectman Dill: That seems a lot more efficient than having to go down to the highway shed to get messages.

Selectwoman McHugh: Yes

Steve Rollins: The only thing that would be nice is if it would blink when you went into the building because you have to call in and check to actually see if you have messages but it would be nice if it would blink like the old answering machine so that you could just look at it.

Chairman Robertson: All right. Other questions regarding the answering machine?

Okay, the next thing the Board had as a concern was use of contractors, Steve and not this most recent accounts payable but the one before, it looked like your trucks had gotten substantially more billed time than a similar contractor with two trucks and was well ahead of all the other contractors.

Steve Rollins: The similar contractor with two trucks, both of his trucks were broken down. That's why everyone else got more hours. We had four trucks that particular storm broke down. One town truck and three hired trucks.

One of the other contractor's that has two trucks on, his truck, one of them was down the whole storm and one was down for part of it. I honestly don't remember exactly what portion but part of it.

So, that would explain the hours on that particular storm. Other than that, the hours have been pretty much neck and neck with everybody else.

Chairman Robertson: Well, that makes sense. Questions from the Board members regarding that?

Steve Rollins: I mean, when you have four trucks down and you only have twelve to begin with, that kind of puts it a little tough on the rest of the guys so I would like to also say "thank you" to all the crew for covering everyone else's routes. They did a phenomenal job.

Chairman Robertson: Other Board members with questions or concerns regarding the truck use?

Selectman Dill: No, that makes sense. It's one of those things that pops right out at you when you just look at the numbers Steve, but that makes sense.

Steve Rollins: Yes. All you have to do is ask me. I'm happy to talk to you guys at that time. We don't have to do it this way.

Chairman Robertson: The other concern that the Board had was Cole Road. That iced up quickly. It seemed like there was a couple of days at least before we got some cover on it and it was iced all the way across and that happens in that particular area a lot and

Steve Rollins: It is going to continue to. I mean, it is one of those things that we can treat it and it is going to come right back but, and I know the particular time you are talking about. I actually had a little material on my pickup and I did dust it probably twice in the time you are talking about but obviously, the salt goes right to the bottom and the sand blows off and when you have water coming out of the road and you have water trapped in those ruts and it is a bad spot, it is. It happens all the time so yes, it is one that I do check regularly. It's also one that even on the weekends, the town crew themselves, when they are out riding around, they also check it and it is, the road is gone there, I mean, it's bad.

Chairman Robertson: Yup, and if we can stay on top of it if we have another similar event which looks like we might on Saturday but understood that that section of road is in tough shape. I think the river actually added to it a little bit this last time too.

Moving onto the reclaim material item, I know that Dick, had your hand up earlier and wanted to talk about that, particularly with regard to putting it in the gravel road.

Vice Chairman Pitman: Well, Fred knows more about that but I was going by the pricing and I saw Steve's price list and reclaim wasn't on what Pete showed us but bill was more than gravel was to start with and it should have been in the reverse in my mind. It's just a question that we need to verify.

Chairman Robertson: And, I think that it came up from the, you had given us an invoice dated December 28th, Steve. I think it was tagged on the 18th, gravel but the rate was \$10.62, it looked like. It didn't match up with any of the pricing that we agreed with for gravel or crushed stone or anything like that. The Board had some concern when they saw what that was for.

Steve Rollins: Well, that's what my price is for reclaim but we used reclaim, the reason we used reclaim in those washout spots, well two reasons, one is because we got all that rain and the pile of gravel was nothing but water, it was very mucky and we thought that reclaim in those deep washouts, might stay, might pack in a little better.

I had tried it on that Saturday night on Candia Road and it rolled right down in with the loader nicely so that is why, Carl wanted to try it in the potholes to see on it did on a couple of spots and went around and tried it on a couple spots and I believe that he was quite happy with it.

I wasn't there when he did that. I was actually using the loader up on Saddleback Road, cleaning the ditch up there while he was doing the grading and I believe he put a little bit up on Saddleback where it washed out as well but he seemed to like it, seemed to think it was going to hold better in those washout spots and maybe we wouldn't have to go back, you know, for washouts next time. If we can do it once and get it done, it is worth doing.

Chairman Robertson: Okay.

Vice Chairman Pitman: A contractor in town told me that we had our own and why are we buying it if we had our own, why are we buying it from Deerfield Sand and Gravel. Or was that ours to start with?

Steve Rollins: Well, we don't have any prepared but if you would like, and that was something that I wanted to speak to you about was to get that pile crushed up and ready to go so that we could use our own instead of buying it from me.

If that is something that you guys want to give me permission to do, now is a good time to talk about it. I would like to get up there because it does crush faster when it is cold. It doesn't gum up as much and my other thought was, you guys are already renting the loader, so you wouldn't have to pay for a loader to take away.

Vice Chairman Pitman: Can you get us a price to crush a certain amount of yards?

Steve Rollins: It would be the same price, hourly, the same way that I did it for Mark. It would be the same price that I did it for Mark with.

Vice Chairman Pitman: We have budget that they are trying to follow. It is not that we are second guessing you. We have to see what is in our budget and we have no idea today what Mark was two years ago, type thing.

Chairman Robertson: If you can get us a formal proposal Steve, he thought that this was something the Board would certainly consider.

So basically, we have town-owned reclaim. Hasn't been processed. Is this the reclaim that came off of Candia Road?

Steve Rollins: No, that was all ground in place and reused. That's gone.

And the reclaim that we put down for shoulder gravel on Candia Road, you guys bought from me this fall and now all of a sudden, reclaim is an issue which I don't understand but obviously, I want to go and crush ours up and get it done so that we can use it because then we have it on hand. It only makes sense.

Vice Chairman Pitman: Steve, I don't think what you don't realize that we get asked questions. It's not us personally. We get asked questions from other people and we have to bring it forward once it is brought to our attention.

Chairman Robertson: Other questions or concerns about the reclaim?

Selectman Dill: So, where, the material that we've got, it's up at the town pit I assume, where did that come from?

Steve Rollins: That's from when we do a culvert....

Selectman Dill: It's no major job, just from here or there?

Steve Rollins: Most, right, and most of the pile was actually already there so I don't know if that's a road that Mark didn't grind in place, they just tore it up and hauled it back and piled it, I'm not sure but most of the pile was there. We may have added a couple of hundred yards to it this year.

Selectman Dill: So, it wasn't from this year. That was ground and put back into the roadbed on Candia Road when we ground it or wherever we ground it.

Steve Rollins: Yes, it did. We hauled it back to the town shed, well, okay, so back on Candia Road, they started removing the reclaim, hauled a portion of it back to the town shed, which is right next door, and then rebuilt that piece of road and then we took the reclaim off the next piece of road to cover the first piece of road to save on trucking and we just kind of flipped the material on site and when we got to the end of the road, we grabbed the pile at the town shed and finished the road with it to save on time and trucks.

Chairman Robertson: Other questions for Steve about the reclaim?

Hearing none, I think Steve, if you can get us just a hard and fast number for processing what we got, the Board can certainly entertain that.

Other questions or concerns the Board has for Steve while he is with us?

Vice Chairman Pitman: I have one. Steve, I know you can't be on call 24/7, what happens like when Paul took that week off, do you have a backup that you communicate with to help us out?

Steve Rollins: You mean, other people that aren't employed by the town to work for us, you mean?

Vice Chairman Pitman: Well, even if they are, do you set up a schedule so you know that Paul was going to be gone for a week, you have Carl standing by or you have Kevin Fisher standing, what do you do about that?

Steve Rollins: You are talking about plow drivers then?

Vice Chairman Pitman: No, just general.

Steve Rollins: We do the same thing we do when, for example, when, that storm you were talking about the hours, we have four trucks down so we just flipped things around and everyone covers for that one truck that is down whether it be the guy is on vacation or broke down.

I have people that would be willing to come in and run town equipment and I know in the past Alex had a list of people. I'm not sure if Mark did or not, of people that would come in during storm, flood, whatever and work as town employees but part time, I guess.

Chairman Robertson: Yes, we had a per diem agreement with a couple of people who could be called on for brush removal, winter storages, that sort of thing.

Steve Rollins: I have plenty of people that would be willing to do that and if you would like me to put together a list, I would be happy to do that.

Selectwoman McHugh: But Steve, what is your chain of command right now? If we can't get ahold of you, who do we call?

Steve Rollins: Well, Carl is second in command.

Selectwoman McHugh: Carl, okay.

Steve Rollins: I believe it goes by seniority is how it goes, I guess.

Selectwoman McHugh: So, Carl, Matt and Paul?

Steve Rollins: Yup, I believe so. Now obviously, if you need an operator, you will need to call Paul in and Carl, I guess before you call Matt. You know what I mean, I'm not sure quite and it depends on the situation, I suppose.

Chairman Robertson: Other questions or concerns for Steve?

I'm not hearing any Steve so unless you got things you want to discuss further with us, I would thank you for taking the time to be with us and responding to those items.

Steve Rollins: The only thing that I did want to talk about tonight was the crushing but I guess we are going to work on that.

Chairman Robertson: I think you if get us a number, we can definitely work on that.

Steve Rollins: Okay, and I also wanted to give you an update. I meant to do it with John earlier today when I was talking to him but I am not sure if I did or not.

The foundation for the addition to the salt shed, we are going to, it looks like, possibly be pouring footings the middle or end of this week so I just wanted to kind of give you an update on that this week.

Chairman Robertson: It looks like we have some decent weather for it.

Steve Rollins: I guess another thing I would like to update you folks on was, oh, no, I guess that's it.

Chairman Robertson: All right. I thank you for being with us Steve and appreciate you going through that list with us and letting us know your thoughts.

If we are all set, I believe we will move onto our next appointment.

Various Board members thanked Steve.

Steve Rollins: Have a good evening.

Chairman Robertson: Next on our agenda, we've got Robert Sullivan from Cornerstone Place and this is, I believe he wants to speak with us in regard to the letter we sent about parking of vehicles and the line-of-sight obstruction on Church Street as it joins 107.

I don't know if you are still with us Bob.

Bob Sullivan: I made it somehow. I was late. Sorry guys. I am here

Bob Sullivan - Cornerstone Place Parking:

Chairman Robertson: Good. At this point, I would turn the phone or the microphone over to you Bob.

Bob Sullivan: All right. Thank you.

I received the letter and I have been corresponding with John. I went into the office last week and looked at the plans and I told John after I got the letter, I sat out at the stop sign just to see what the real issue was with sight line and I do agree with the, if you are sitting at the stop sign, looking to the left at the Lazy Lion, not only the telephone pole (couldn't understand) but any vehicles that could possibly be parked sideways along, would have some obstruction of any vehicles coming along North Road.

So, I talked to John about what do I have to do to change a parking configuration along North Road, possibly turning the vehicles sideways instead of head on towards North Road and I know that the plans that you probably have in front of you now that I looked at with John, show, I think, four parking spots that were originally, were on the original plans from 15 years ago that if the vehicles were parked in those spots that were approved, I think that the, it would be more of a danger by the vehicles having to back onto the main street to actually pull out of a parking spot if vehicles were parked next to them in those spots.

I don't think that the original plan was probably the best plan for either myself or for the town to approve and I have also looked at some options.

Internally, we were talking last year about putting up a split rail fence along from the telephone pole, along North Road.

The only issue would be where do we stop that split rail so that we still have access off of North Road or do we continue it along, keep the access as part of our ability to come off of North Road at some point in time.

If the split rail does work, it will allow vehicles to properly park and then not have anything encroaching upon sight line issues or vehicles encroaching upon the state right-of-way.

Chairman Robertson: I think, less technical than the plan, actually, what first brought this to our attention was, I don't know if there has been much sightline inhibition there with the smaller vehicles but in particular, there was a truck or two that were parking there at an angle so that you just couldn't see around them. One or two, larger trucks I know generated some calls to various members of the Board and the Board members themselves noticed that you couldn't see around.

Robert Sullivan: Right, right. And I am not there all the time so whatever vehicles are parked in there nights, weekends or whatever, I don't usually see them but that particular day there was one, larger truck was parked further down that I thought, maybe that's why they called on it.

So, option for me would be, you know, do the split rail fence which, you know, I think would look nice. It would actually match the fence that is across the street. It is a picked fence but at least, kind of keep the look that we are looking for with the older building and you know, try that and then mark some, come springtime, mark some parking spots. Maybe even have them so that they are compact vehicles instead of larger parking spots.

I know that we are using five parking spots out there right now. Maybe we shrink it to four. I think we have ample parking on the site right now that we could possibly put some compact spots out front instead and maybe that will work.

Vice Chairman Pitman: Maybe it would be a good idea too Bob, if you could keep the trucks out back until spring because that is basically the complaints that we got was the bigger trucks over there, Bob.

Robert Sullivan: Okay.

Chairman Robertson: If you anything in particular, I believe it was a large, blue truck that was really sort of blocking the sight line there.

Selectman McGarry: I was going to say, Bob brought up a couple of good points with regard to the, what was on the plan that was approved by the Planning Board that ends up having vehicles that if they parked in that manner, would be backing out onto Route 107 and I think his suggestion of having, basically, parallel to 107 parking would definitely be preferable and also having that rail fence there to make sure that people are not driving directly onto 107 there.

Bob, procedurally, because this was a multi-family, this is a site plan that would have to end up going to the Planning Board. It would be basically marking up the existing plan so you are not having to take and hire an engineer or anything like that to do that and just presenting that to the Planning Board and getting its approval and have that on the record so that we have a record of it with the Planning Board.

Robert Sullivan: Okay. No problem. I have no issue with that. When, do I have a deadline for the next meeting or are we going to skip a month to get closer to spring?

Selectman McGarry: Yes, you could certainly wait until you get closer to spring. Obviously, we wouldn't be looking for you to do (couldn't understand) at this point, with the winter weather but the, you can end up calling Jane Boucher who's our secretary and she could schedule you in and we meet every second and fourth Wednesday of the month.

Robert Sullivan: Great, I will make sure that I follow up with the town so that won't be a problem. In the meantime, I will put a letter out to residents and asking any larger vehicles to park on the side or the rear.

Chairman Robertson: Appreciate that Bob and other questions for Mr. Sullivan while he is here with us?

Hearing none, I would thank you for joining us tonight Bob and appreciate you wading through the first part of the meeting to get to your issue.

Robert Sullivan: No problem at all. Thank you. Happy New Year.

Various Board members thanked Mr. Sullivan.

Regular Business:

Review of Outstanding Minutes of January 4, 2021

Motion: Vice Chairman Pitman moves to approve the minutes of January 4, 2021

Second: Selectman Dill

Discussion:

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

Vouchers/Payroll Manifest/Accounts Payable Manifest:

Accounts Payable Manifest for the week ending today, that being the 11th - \$62,715.02

Chairman Robertson: I believe this includes the two items that we removed last week, does it not John?

Mr. Harrington: No, it does not. We were waiting to hear what the discussion was tonight before we put them back in.

Chairman Robertson: Oh, okay.

So, that is missing ...

Vice Chairman Pitman: No, there was a bill in there for the loader for December and January.

Mr. Harrington: I was talking about the two invoices that we pulled last week which was for the reclaim material and the floor refinishing.

Chairman Robertson: Yes, the \$1,504.00 for Deerfield Sand and Gravel and the \$1,700.00...

Mr. Harrington: The new loader bill is a brand, new invoice that you have not seen yet.

Vice Chairman Pitman: Well, there is a bill in there for December and January on the loader.

Selectwoman McHugh: Right, until January 21st and it isn't even the 21st yet.

Mr. Harrington: That invoice came in last week.

Chairman Robertson: So, what is the Board's pleasure? That \$62,715.02 includes \$6,000.00; \$3,000.00 for the month of December and \$3,000.00 for the month of January on the loader rental from Deerfield Sand and Gravel and apparently, does not include what we removed last week for Deerfield Sand and Gravel and for Northern Oaks Flooring.

Selectwoman McHugh: Isn't that just 32 days? If you review the dates on the A/P which was December to January, I thought that was just 32 days and that is \$6,000.00 for that loader?

Chairman Robertson: What you are saying is that we didn't park the loader down there or start using the loader until December 21st?

Selectwoman McHugh: Are we paying \$3,000.00 for two weeks?

Vice Chairman Pitman: I just think it was the way that he billed it Cindy. The bill is for December and January so we are pre-paying him January and we owe him December.

Chairman Robertson: That was my understanding but ...

Motion: Vice Chairman Pitman moves to approve the accounts payable of \$62,715.02

Second: Selectman Dill

Discussion: Selectman Dill stated that, like Cindy, he is questioning when did the loader show up? The question is, what day did we take possession of the loader in December? I am assuming that we had it in mid-December but I don't so I want to know what the monthly billing cycle start and end date is.

Chairman Robertson: So, do we want to adjust the \$62,715.02 figure?

Selectwoman McHugh: Well, are these just start dates like or is that period from December through January 21st?

Mr. Harrington: I don't have the invoice in front of me. I believe he put date ranges down on the invoice. I can certainly send it to the Board tomorrow.

Chairman Robertson: Well.....

Selectman Dill: If it was for the month of December, I am fine with that and pre-paying January. I just want to be sure that we had it in December. That we had it for a 30-day range.

Chairman Robertson: Well, one suggestion might be to pay him \$3,000.00 until we get clarification.

Selectman Dill: I will make a motion, right now we are paying \$6,000.00, right John?

Mr. Harrington: That was what we were billed for. Two-month worth of rental.

Motion: Selectman Dill moves to remove \$3,000.00 from this one until we get clarification on that

Second: Selectman McGarry

Discussion: Chairman Robertson asked for further discussion on the amendment and hearing none.

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

Chairman Robertson: Can you give me a figure John from the \$62,715.02 minus \$3,000.00.

Mr. Harrington: Figuring it out now. \$59,715.02

Chairman Robertson: So, okay, that is our new amount. Is the maker of the motion agreeable to that figure?

Vice Chairman Pitman: Yes

Selectman Dill: Yup

Chairman Robertson: So, we are looking at an account payable for the week ending January 11th, 2021 of \$59,715.02. Further discussion

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

Accounts Payable ending January 6th, 2021 - \$76,664.70 (gross), \$49,748.93 (net)

Motion: Selectman McGarry moves to approve the accounts payable in the amount presented

Second: Selectman Dill

Discussion:

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

Default Budget:

Chairman Robertson: We have the calculated budget which has been reviewed by the Department of Revenue Administration I believe John. They don't necessarily give placid approval but they at least look at it and make sure in their eyes it is legal, is my understanding and the total operating budget for our default budget is \$4,006,418.00.

Mr. Harrington: That is correct.

Motion: Vice Chairman Pitman moves to approve the default budget number as presented

Second: Selectman McGarry

Discussion:

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

Chairman Robertson: Next item of business is COVID-19 sick leave and family medical leave of absence rule changes.

Essentially, there were changes made that made benefits more liberal because of COVID-19 for employers with under 500 employees had to stick to.

The emergency sick leave and the expanded medical leave request requirements went away on 12/31 and have not been reinstated and the information that John gave us walks through the town's options.

We can voluntarily choose to continue with the Family's First Corona Virus Response Act 2020, FFCRA or we can leave it expired and move along and hope that we don't run into any difficulties with any of our employees.

I believe that we could also change our mind if we had a particular situation but I don't think that we need a motion or to take particular action on this unless the other Board members feel that we should definitely reinstate it on a voluntary basis.

Vice Chairman Pitman: I think that we should go with expired. If it is expired, it is expired.

Chairman Robertson: And, I believe that is what a number of other communities are doing and if for some reason we had an egregious situation with an employee or employees, I believe that we could respond to it as it came before us.

Vice Chairman Pitman: I think that we could detail with one on one if we needed to.

Chairman Robertson: Is the rest of the Board in general agreement?

Multiple members of the Board responded yes.

Chairman Robertson: Okay, all right. I don't have anything in Signatures or Correspondence so at this point I would look to the town administrator's report.

I don't know if you want to talk about the two invoices, we had pulled from last week too, John because I know you had given us backup information.

Town Administrator's Report:

Mr. Harrington: Right. First order of business and I know that it is coming later in the agenda but I wanted to remind the Board if the Board could make final decisions on the warrant articles this evening.

We have two MBC meetings tomorrow. A working session from 6:00 pm to 7:00 pm where the MBC will be reviewing warrant articles from the town side and the school side before going in and opening up a public hearing at 7:00 pm which will invite the public to comment on budgets.

Once those are decided, and there are DRA forms that need to be signed but prior to getting those DRA forms prepared, I would need final warrant articles from the Board so if I could impress upon you finalizing those warrant articles, that would be appreciated.

Next, I wanted to talk to you about the floor invoice that Andy just mentioned. I sent you some backup. The Board had questions on that last week. If you have had a chance to review some of the materials, that invoice represented the second half of the floor refinishing.

I included the minutes from December of 2018 when the Board discussed with Matt Fisher, when he presented the whole plan to the Board and the Board agreed that was the way we were going to proceed and the last page of the material that I sent you, shows the three bills that were paid towards the floor. The last being the one that was discussed last week for \$1,777.50. That is the second half to the invoice for the same amount paid December, 2019 for the first half of the floor refinishing.

If you have any questions on that, I would be happy to try to talk to you on them.

Selectwoman McHugh: When is the floor scheduled to be done?

Mr. Harrington: I believe we have Matt Fisher on the phone if he would like to respond to that question.

Selectman Dill: John, could I just ask you a question and could you temporarily mute the 463 number that is there? The breathing keeps overcoming the rest of the audio.

Mr. Harrington: Okay, got it.

Matt, did you want to respond as to when the floor will be scheduled to be finished?

Chief Fisher: Sure. I'm scheduling for a February refinishing of the floor with Northern Oak.

Vice Chairman Pitman: So, Matt, is this money that we owe him on the past contract in 2018 or is this for what he is going to do in February?

Chief Fisher: So, what we had decided to do is pay half in 19 and the second half would be paid in 20, well, using the 2020 funds so if this bill is approved, I guess I would recommend holding, at least hold the check until the floor is refinished.

Vice Chairman Pitman: I just don't know why we don't just bring it up when he does it unless there is a reason John. We have already come out of 20's so...

Mr. Harrington: Well, it is possible for Rita Donaldson, our Finance Director, she will back invoices that come in later back into 2020. That is done all the time.

Vice Chairman Pitman: Okay.

Motion: Vice Chairman Pitman moves to pay the bill to refinish the second half of the floor

Second: Selectman Dill

Discussion: Selectman Dill: So, we are able to use this out of the 2020 funds for the existing contract?

Mr. Harrington: Ah, it's not an encumbrance, it is just an invoice coming in late in the year. By the time that it is actually transacted and approved by the Board, it will be paid in 2021 but she will back it in to 2020 so that it is actually is an expenditure out of 2020.

Selectman McGarry: And, Matt is going to hold it until the work is done?

Mr. Harrington: Pete will hold it.

Selectman McGarry: Oh, Pete will hold it. Okay.

Chairman Robertson: Further discussion.

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

Mr. Harrington: And, two more items.

One is notice from the Heritage Commission with their recommendations to the Board that they would recommend at this time to hold off on any warrant articles pertaining to the town hall windows and not include it in the 2021 warrant, if you all saw that notice.

And the last thing I wanted to mention, again it will come up during your warrant discussion. I sent you a sample warrant or a proposed warrant from the Cemetery Trustees regarding the Dowst-Cate Cemetery work preparation to get that cemetery up and running.

And, that will be it from me tonight.

Chairman Robertson: Questions for the Town Administrator?

Vice Chairman Pitman: Can we cut that; can we talk about that later Andy. Make that a smaller amount warrant article? Do we have the power to do that?

Chairman Robertson: Yes, that is our next order of business is the warrant articles so let's move directly to that and we will be able to handle that in the order it comes.

I think the Board has expressed an interest in keeping the number of warrant articles to a minimum and having very little expenditure beyond the budget request.

Unfinished Business:

a. 2021 Warrant Articles:

Chairman Robertson:

Warrant Article 1: We have already approved our budget request. It is what it is.

Warrant Article 2: We are looking to appropriate the sum of \$200,000.00 for road reconstruction. We had also discussed putting some language in there with regard to tree removal or ash tree removal.

Selectman McGarry: Right

Selectman Dill: I think we should just stick with tree removal, not specify the species.

Chairman Robertson: Okay

Selectman Dill: But my thought is that it is mostly ash is what we are going to be removing.

Vice Chairman Pitman: Right, we just want to say "tree" so that we are covered and Selectman Dill agreed.

Chairman Robertson: Right. Could I get a motion on Warrant Article 2?

Motion: Selectman Dill moves to approve Warrant Article 2 as presented

Second: Selectwoman McHugh

Discussion:

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

Chairman Robertson: So, we will recommend Warrant Article 2 and include it on the warrant.

Warrant Article 3. This is to see if the town will vote and actually, I am going to skip Warrant Article 3 now and move to the Dowst-Cate Cemetery warrant article or proposed article because it is obviously more money and would come before the other two warrant articles there.

Basically, what they are asking for is \$75,000.00 to put into an expendable trust fund for expansion and development of the Dowst-Cate Cemetery. There is some explanation with their proposed warrant article language and I don't know what the Board's pleasure is with regard to this.

Vice Chairman Pitman: I would like to cut it to \$35,000.00.

Selectman Dill: Do we know what that accomplish Dick?

Vice Chairman Pitman: An awful lot of excavator time if they starting digging.

Chairman Robertson: What they are looking at is to prepare an additional two to three acres of property there but I think....

Vice Chairman Pitman: We are trying to do away with these warrant articles. It would be nice to have something in there and if someone has some free time, \$100.00 an hour with their excavator to get them started, we could do a lot of work.

Selectwoman McHugh: Is this something that we have to do this year?

Chairman Robertson: Well, I believe the Cemetery Commission feels we do. I think we are approaching a very limited number of gravesites left in our existing cemeteries and this is a concern of theirs.

Selectman Dill: (couldn't understand) have about 250 left to sell in Old Centre Road. I understand the concern that we are running low.

Chairman Robertson: I don't believe we have got a full 250 left on Old Centre. There was 250 when the work was done. Some of those have been sold I believe.

Vice Chairman Pitman: Right. I agree with Cindy and that we don't have to rush into this. It would be nice to get something established and get ready to get started.

Chairman Robertson: So, was that a motion Dick that we amend this to \$35,000.00.

Vice Chairman Pitman: Yes.

Motion: Vice Chairman Pitman moves to approve the warrant article for the Dowst-Cate Cemetery work to \$35,000.00

Second: NO SECOND PRESENTED

Discussion: Chairman Pitman: I am not hearing a second. Do you want to take a vote to approve this or is there any other amendments to be offered?

Selectman Dill: So, if we don't approve it, is it going on as a zero-dollar amount or is it not just going on?

Chairman Robertson: If we don't approve it, we don't add it. It would have to come back with a petitioned warrant article. This is them requesting us to add the warrant article.

Selectman Dill: Okay. I just wanted to clarify that.

Chairman Robertson: Nope, they have the option, a day or two left, to get signatures and present it as a petition warrant article if the Board does not add it.

So, at this point, I would ask if there is anyone that wants to make a motion to add the warrant article?

Hearing none, I would say John, that the Board's demeanor is as such that we do not wish to support a warrant article for cemetery expansion this year.

Mr. Harrington: I will pass the word along. Thank you.

No vote taken.

Chairman Robertson: Now we can go back to the other two warrant articles that were listed.

We had requests from the Northwood Lake Watershed Association to appropriate a sum of \$8,000.00 for control of milfoil and invasives in Northwood Lake. This has pretty much been an annual ask and we have typically included it, leaving it up to the voters to decide as to whether they want to support that or not.

Motion: Vice Chairman Pitman moves to approve the warrant article to add \$8,000.00 for control of milfoil and invasives in Northwood Lake

Second: Selectman McGarry

Discussion:

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

Chairman Robertson: So, we will add Warrant Article Number 3 as proposed.

Chairman Robertson: Warrant article 4. Is essentially the same warrant article looking for \$2,500.00 to be used by the Pleasant Lake Preservation Association to increase the number of hours for trained attendants to provide curtesy boat inspections at the public access ramp and these are essentially the folks that are there during boating season, checking crafts for milfoil and any other aquatic nuisance or invasive species that might be on watercraft entering the lake?

Motion: Vice Chairman Pitman moves to approve Warrant Article 4 for the Pleasant Lake Preservation Association

Second: Selectman McGarry

Discussion:

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

Chairman Robertson: Next I'm going to move to, we had a request from Fire Chief Fisher to include several warrant articles that we had discussed not including in general terms in previous meetings.

If either John or Matt is still with us that has the specific warrant articles, I actually double printed the regular warrant articles and did not print the print out the fire department warrant articles.

Mr. Harrington: Matt is still with us.

Chairman Robertson: Is that something that you could address Matt the specific articles that you would like to include?

Chief Fisher: Sure. So just as an overview. The first two are warrant articles that have been supported by the town for a number of years now, the first one being \$50,000.00 for fire truck replacement and equipment replacement.

The second one is \$10,000.00 every year for EMS equipment.

The third one is a new warrant article and I guess a back up plan, if you will, if the budget weren't to pass, to see if the town would add some additional funding to the part-time line for some more hours during the week.

Chairman Robertson: And what was the specific amount of funding you were looking for Matt?

Chief Fisher: So, keeping with the same as past tradition, the first warrant article I am looking for support would be "To see if the Town would vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$50,000.00 to be placed in a previously established fire and apparatus and equipment capital reserve fund."

Chairman Robertson: Yup. And \$10,000.00 for the EMS equipment fund?

Chief Fisher: Yup.

Chairman Robertson: And what was the dollar amount for the part-timers?

Chief Fisher: \$31,200.00 which is the same amount requested in the budget.

Vice Chairman Pitman: Cindy, what is your thoughts? Go ahead Andy.

Chairman Robertson: I'm sorry, I had another little audio blip there. Did you say \$30,200.00 for the third article Mark, Matt?

Chief Fisher: 3-1-2-0-0.

Chairman Robertson: Oops, I was \$1,000.00 off.

Okay, let's us start with the first one and that would be the fire truck apparatus and equipment, the \$50,000.00 warrant article. What is the Board's pleasure in regard to this?

Vice Chairman Pitman: Take a year off.

Selectman Dill: Yup

Selectwoman McHugh: I thought that we had already discussed this and were taking the year off on some of these?

Chairman Robertson: We had discussed them generally but we hadn't taken a final motion to include them or not and we need to do that before the budget committee can move forward.

Selectwoman McHugh: As much as I hate to, I say that we need to wait another year. (couldn't understand)

Vice Chairman Pitman: We just have to stop.

Selectwoman McHugh: I know that it is important.

Chairman Robertson: So, is the general consensus of the Board is that we do not support the \$50,000.00 fire truck and apparatus warrant article? Am I hearing that correctly?

Vice Chairman Pitman: Correct.

Selectman Dill: Correct

Selectwoman McHugh: I just can't support it.

Chairman Robertson: Anyone on the Board disagree?

(No one spoke)

So, we will not support the \$50,000.00 Fire Truck and Apparatus warrant article.

Moving onto the second one that the chief has presented which would be \$10,000.00 for the EMS Equipment Fund.

Vice Chairman Pitman: Can we wait a year on that Cindy?

Selectwoman McHugh: Yes. I am for waiting for all three.

Mr. Harrington: Andy, just clarification. I understand you are not supporting Matt's proposed number 1. Are you indicating on the warrant or not on the warrant?

Multiple members stated "not on the warrant" was the indication.

Mr. Harrington: Okay. Thank you.

Chairman Robertson: So, what is the Board's pleasure with regard to the EMS Equipment Fund. It is unanimous agreement that they will not support that either?

Selectman Dill: Correct.

Chairman Robertson: Anyone opposed?

Selectman McGarry: I will voice opposition on that.

Chairman Robertson: Okay. So, it is still fairly lopsided and we will not be putting the EMS Equipment Fund on the warrant either, John.

Mr. Harrington: Okay, thank you.

Chairman Robertson: Which brings us to the backup contingency plan, if the budget fails, to fund part-time fire staff and that amount is \$31,200.00.

Vice Chairman Pitman: Is that a good idea Cindy, or not?

Selectwoman McHugh: No, I am not for any of them. Sorry.

Vice Chairman Pitman: Okay, you are our fire connection.

Selectman Dill: I am going to speak in favor of this one. I think that this is a smart move in my opinion but this would read, "in case of Warrant Article 1 failing", this would kick in if it passes, correct?

Chairman Robertson: Yes. It would.

Selectwoman McHugh: Only if it fails.

Selectman Dill: Only if it fails.

Chairman Robertson: Actually, I am going to ask for a motion.

Motion: Selectman Dill moves to approve adding the part-time fire department staff funding to the warrant and this will kick in if Warrant Article 1 fails.

Second: Selectman McGarry

Discussion: Chairman Robertson stated that he was going to side with Alden on this. This is a little bit of a different animal than just setting a static amount of money aside in case we need to buy fire equipment so I would support this as well but further discussion.

Hearing none.

Selectwoman McHugh: It is going to read, "if it fails" correct?

Selectman Dill stated if Warrant Article 1 fails.

Selectwoman McHugh: Okay

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

Chairman Robertson: That appears to be unanimous, John

Mr. Harrington: Thank you.

Chairman Robertson: Okay, the last that we can actually discuss a little bit because the budget committee is not going to weigh in on this but John did provide us with a sample warrant language to change the road agent position from an elected position to an appointed position. I believe that we all have a copy of it. I can read it.

"Basically, to see if the town will authorize the select board to appoint one or more highway agents pursuant to RSA 230 (?) that shall have additional duties as the select board shall prescribe in accordance to RSA 261:63.

The appointment authority shall continue in effect until change by a majority vote at an annual or special meeting."

I don't know what the Board's pleasure is in regard to that.

Motion: Selectman Dill moves to place the above-mentioned warrant to vote to make the highway agent or agents, an appointed position

Second: Selectman McGarry

Discussion: Selectwoman McHugh: You couldn't hear the beginning because it was all broke up.

Mr. Harrington: Would you like me to reread it?

Selectwoman McHugh: Yes please.

Mr. Harrington: To see if the town will authorize the select board to appoint one or more highway agents, pursuant to RSA 231:62 and that shall have additional duties as the select board shall prescribe in accordance with ~~RSA 261:63~~ RSA 231:63. The appointment authority shall continue in effect until changed by majority vote at an annual or special meeting.

Selectman McHugh: Thank you.

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

Chairman Robertson: That would appear to be unanimous as well John.

Moving onto New Business or Other Business.

New Business/Other Business:

Chairman Robertson: I will mention that John and I both listened to the preliminary hearing regarding the Fitch/Estrella property which I believed was in the Rockingham Court House, John but I couldn't be sure because we logged into the middle of it.

Both attorneys presented arguments. I will say, I am no legal scholar or attorney but the judge seemed thoroughly disinterested in the entire matter. Finally said that she had to read more of the material presented and she would get back to us in the future with the ruling.

Selectwoman McHugh: When was that?

Chairman Robertson: That was this morning at 11:00 am. and I believe that we had been given that date and time a while ago, probably back into November.

Vice Chairman Pitman: So, did you go to the court house somewhere?

Chairman Robertson: No, this was all on Zoom.

Vice Chairman Pitman: Oh, okay.

Chairman Robertson: And, basically the attorneys talked. I believe the only input beyond the attorneys and the judge were the attorney asked John if he could give him the date that he received the letter from their attorney and that was it.

Mr. Harrington: Actually, I said two words. "That's correct".

Chairman Robertson: As I said, no decision was reached. The judge that she'll rule on this after she reads the written material presented by the attorneys.

Vice Chairman Pitman: Wonderful. Thank you.

Chairman Robertson: Other new business or other business?

Vice Chairman Pitman: I have one. No, go ahead if there is someone else.

Selectman Dill: I just wanted to say, real, quick since we had Joanna and Kelly here. I am reading a thread that you guys had put through and it looks like we are a go for regular deliberative session date, correct?

Chairman Robertson: Yes, I had actually reviewed that and Kevin Verville had contacted me earlier in the week. The way that the time lines are set up and the requirement for public hearing, the House is not going to waive rules on anything.

They are going to follow their regular hearing dates as well and the time line is as such that it does appear that it wasn't going to do us any good at all.

Selectman Dill: Okay, that was where I had read it through and you had forwarded it as well so we are a go for that, correct?

Chairman Robertson: Yes, and I know that the moderator and the assistant moderator and everybody else are still planning on the date that we had scheduled which was the 30th and I believe that everyone is aware that the school has decided they do not want to have a joint meeting on the same day with us and they have scheduled for February 6th.

Selectman Dill: I was not aware of that.

Mr. Harrington: Andy, if I may? After you are finished with this discussion, I want to make a comment on the warrants if we can go back to that briefly?

Chairman Robertson: Certainly.

Other new or other business?

Selectman McGarry: Mine was going to be on the warrant and where are we on the police station?

Vice Chairman Pitman: Thank you, Fred.

Chairman Robertson: That is going to depend entirely upon the pleasure of the Board, I would guess at this point.

I, quite frankly, don't see how we can support a warrant article for two reasons.

One, I don't think it has a whole (couldn't understand) of passing this year and the second reason, is, I don't think we have a viable plan we can present to the voters at this time either.

The work that we had done with Kyle Barker is obviously, to my mind, about 95 percent more than we got into that project thinking that we would spend although as mentioned, in this given year, I don't think that 1.4 or 1.6 million for a police department would fly either even if we could get someone to stick to the original numbers.

I don't know how the rest of the Board feels.

Vice Chairman Pitman: Can we work with this new company out of Rochester so that we can get a good number Andy because that other guy should be (couldn't understand).

Chairman Robertson: I think we can. That is part of the reason that I sent that information around it is Groen Builders of Rochester and if you look at material I sent, they have actually proposed and built a number of similar-sized facilities as what we are looking for in similar-sized towns.

My next intent is to very definitely get in touch with them and get some hard and fast numbers but I don't know what the rest of the Board's feeling is but I think for the same reason that we deep-sixed a number of our usual EMS and Fire type warrant articles that we reluctantly and regrettably need to consider not including a police department building article on this warrant.

Selectwoman McHugh: I agree and I don't really think that we are prepared. You need a plan and we are going to have to work at it most of the year to get it ready and it is just not prepared right now.

Vice Chairman Pitman: At least we have something to work with now instead of ...

Selectman Dill: The numbers that we were seeing, we were back to like the 40 percent getting ready level and I am glad that you were able to find another company and I think that Cindy is right, we are going to spend a while working on that with the new company.

Chairman Robertson: I know that construction prices have certainly changed over the last three or four years but one of the things that struck me is that they had built a rather large and rather nice safety services complex for rescue, fire and police and delivered without overruns at 2.3 million and that was at the end of 2018 so looking at 2.4 million for a 5,000 square foot police department ...

Vice Chairman Pitman: We need to relieve them of their duties immediately. They were just foolish.

Selectman Dill: So, do we need to make a motion or what do we have to do to see what this new company can get us for a plan?

Chairman Robertson: Well, I think the first step is for me to meet with them and anyone else that wants to and show them the preliminary information that we have, what came out of our study committee, what we are looking for and get them to give us, you know, an estimate and some numbers. It clearly would still go to bid but

Selectwoman McHugh: Andy, what does the committee think of this new company? Have they talked about it?

Chairman Robertson: We have not met as a committee for over a year.

Vice Chairman Pitman: I think it would be great Andy if you would step up and at least meet with them and show them what we have for plans and we could go from there as a group.

Selectman Dill: I think that Dick's right. We need to stop with the current company. It is not going in a favorable fashion with us.

Vice Chairman Pitman: And we will have some many negative votes. It would be crazy if that ever got out around.

Chairman Robertson: And we don't have any contractual ties to the architect that we were using. He had come into the committee originally on a gratis basis and then we had paid him for the plans that we had hoped to use in a competitive bid process but one of the things that I want to just get a handle on is what folks at Groen of Rochester think about a building that size and given our site and if they come back and say that it is definitely a 2-million-dollar building, there is no way around it, we might have to regroup. I have a feeling that they are not.

Vice Chairman Pitman: I think that you are on the right page Andy.

Selectwoman McHugh: Thank you for finding that.

Mr. Harrington: Andy, I just wanted to mention to the Board, as of today, I have received two, petition warrant articles, both approved by the supervisors of the checklist, one of which includes a renewable energy article and I did

have a request from Wes Golomb to speak to the Board briefly tonight on that if you if you would like to grant him some time.

Vice Chairman Pitman: I would just like to finish up on the others.

We have a veteran that has offered to take care of the flag at the town hall since has been neglected as far as full staff and half-staff. I don't know whose responsibility that is but I told him that I would bring it to the Board.

Chairman Robertson: Okay. To my mind, if we have a volunteer who would be interested in managing the flagpole and the flag raising, that would be a wonderful thing. I don't know how the rest of the Board feels.

Multiple members of the Board agreed.

Selectman Dill: Thank you for stepping up Niamh.

Niamh: That is me and I would love to take that on as a personal duty and respect for this town.

Chairman Robertson: We very much appreciate that.

Vice Chairman Pitman: That is all that I had for now.

Chairman Robertson: With regard to the energy warrant article, do we want to give Mr. Golomb a couple of minutes?

Multiple members stated yes.

Chairman Robertson: Wes, are you with us? We would welcome a brief presentation on your proposed warrant article.

Wes Golomb: Thank you. I am here on behalf of the Energy Committee in support of the Renewable Property Tax Exemption that is proposed.

I guess it was certified today.

The text of that petition comes directly from the State of New Hampshire website and it includes solar, both thermal and photovoltaic, wind, central wood-fired heating systems, not wood stoves and fireplaces, sorry guys.

The goal in the exemption is to create a "tax-neutral" policy and this is straight from the state's website. The goal of the exemption is to create a "tax neutral" policy within a municipality that neither increases an individual's property tax or decreases the municipality's property tax revenues.

By implementing it, as a tax neutral policy, home owners will not have a disincentive of higher property taxes for installing a renewable energy system and since there is no net reduction in municipal tax revenues, other tax payers in the municipality are not affected.

Again, that is straight from the state website about it.

Some background. Some 25 states currently have an exemption like this and in New Hampshire, 10 towns in our area have already adopted this and 118 throughout the state and this isn't just good for the people who have solar, it is good for the whole town and here's why.

According to Synopsys Energy, solar saves power companys money and these savings benefit all customers, everybody with reduced rates.

In Deerfield, there are 92 homes with solar energy. Most of these were installed and maintained by local companies that employ local residents.

A clean energy New Hampshire report in 2018 stated that there were 17,000 renewable energy jobs in New Hampshire.

Net meter PV systems puts surplus energy onto the grid at peak loads in the summer exactly at the time when the most energy is demanded. The utilities get that energy at a discounted rate and helps to stabilize the grid. It helps us all in eliminating power outages and the following information is from the New England ISO, the grid operator.

From 2014 to 2019, solar created 1.1 billion dollars in savings in New England and 83 million in New Hampshire. Local solar produces 52 million kilowatts of electricity, the equivalent of 7,000 homes.

This proposal costs us nothing and hurts no one. In fact, it benefits everyone in Deerfield and on behalf of the Energy Committee, I would encourage the Select Board to openly, wholeheartedly support this petition. Thanks a lot.

Chairman Robertson: Okay. Thank you, Wes.

What's the Board's pleasure with regard to the warrant article. This is going to be on the warrant regardless of whether we approve it. It is a petitioned warrant article that the Supervisors of the Checklist have verified as appropriate but does the Board want to recommend this warrant article?

Vice Chairman Pitman: I think that we should take a vote. I say yes.

Selectman Dill: Can we do those in one big shot, if we vote on, if we recommend warrant articles or not?

Chairman Robertson: Well, we have recommended the monetary ones this evening.

Vice Chairman Pitman: (couldn't understand) but the selectmen are okay with it.

Chairman Robertson: This is essentially just us endorsing it.

Mr. Harrington: Andy? Typically, there is no notice on a petition warrant article from the Board of Selectmen approving or not. Approving just put them on the warrant just to clarify.

Chairman Robertson: I am trying to remember if that is a legal requirement or not. You're right John. I think we may have gotten into hot water for recommending petition warrant articles previously.

Vice Chairman Pitman: I take back my yes.

Chairman Roberson: For now, anyway, it will be on the warrant and maybe we can look into whether it is appropriate for us to recommend that or not but not on the actual warrant as it's printed.

Wes Golomb: Thanks, thank you for your time.

Vice Chairman Pitman, Selectman McGarry and Chairman Robertson: Thanks Wes.

Chairman Robertson: Other new business?

Selectman Dill: Sorry, I was trying to unmute myself. What is the other petition article that we have John?

Mr. Harrington: It's for redistricting. That has come up in prior years.

Chairman Robertson: If there is no other business, or no other new business, at this point, and hearing none, I would move to Citizen's Comments.

Citizen's Comments:

Harriet Cady – Old Centre Road:

I have one question is, the checks that you voided two weeks ago and now tonight has been explained to you, will you be encumbering that money from money from last year's budget or you didn't approve them tonight so I assume that they will come back to me to be signed.

Chairman Robertson: That I would turn to the town administrator to answer because I'm not sure of the exact accounting principles at this point. Can we take those back to 2020 John?

Mr. Harrington: That is typically what Rita will do. Those would be considered 2020 invoices, just coming in late after the start of the year, so she will likely just back those into the 2020 expenditure year in that budget.

Vice Chairman Pitman: Basically, an accrual basis instead of a cash basis. You can make a list and put them back

Mr. Harrington: Right.

Chairman Robertson: Very good. Thank you.

Ms. Cady: Okay. Also, a second question. I have one more after this. You have a budget committee hearing tomorrow night according to legal notice?

Vice Chairman Pitman: So, we hear.

Mr. Harrington: There are two.

Chairman Robertson: As far as I know, the budget committee is meeting.

Ms. Cady: It's not for a public hearing on the budget yet?

Chairman Robertson: That I don't know. I don't have the posting in front of me. I know that there is a budget committee meeting tomorrow.

Mr. Harrington: There are actually two meetings Mrs. Cady. The first from 6:00 to 7:00 is a working meeting for the MBC.

The 7:00 to 8:00 or 9:00 is for the public hearing and I believe that they are talking about the budgets, both town and school.

Mrs. Cady: Okay. This is my question. Normally, we attend a public hearing. I am assuming that you are going to do it by Zoom but when we attend it, there is a pile of materials for us to review as we go through or they go through the budget.

Mr. Harrington: The school sent me a packet to post online which will go up tomorrow. I will be putting the town's material online tomorrow. I needed to wait for the warrants.

I would be more than happy to print a hard copy set for you so that you could follow along, if you like.

Mrs. Cady: I would appreciate that. For the school and the town?

Mr. Harrington: Yes, I can do both.

Mrs. Cady: And then, tonight, you mentioned that today you had a court hearing this morning. I haven't heard any of that discussion in a meeting and so I am wondering what it was about but also the case number as I could go online and watch the case.

Chairman Robertson: Yes, this was a hearing and I don't have the case number in front of me but I believe that Mr. Harrington could probably get that for you, as well. I believe that it was part of the Zoom login.

Mr. Harrington: I can do that and I can give that to you tomorrow Harriet.

Mrs. Cady: Okay, what was it about?

Chairman Robertson: It was in regard to a property matter.

Vice Chairman Pitman: We need to move on.

Chairman Robertson: We have had no resolution yet.

Mrs. Cady: I heard that you had no resolution.

Chairman Robertson: (couldn't understand) more information.

Other citizen's comments at this time?

Mr. Harrington: Andy, you have someone else on the line.

Chairman Robertson: Who do we have?

Will Huber: I am Will Hubner. I am the president of the Pleasant Lake Preservation Association and I just wanted to express my gratitude to the Board for your continued support of our PLPA.

Vice Chairman Pitman: Thank you for stepping up. (couldn't understand the rest)

Chairman Robertson: It is very much appreciated. Thank you for your comments, sir.

Other citizen's comments?

Motion: Vice Chairman Pitman moves to adjourn at 7:00 pm.

Second: none heard

Discussion: Chairman Robertson stated that he heard Fred so either everyone else has left or is in agreement.

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

Chairman Robertson: Thank you for your attendance and if you feel inclined, there is a budget meeting and public hearing tomorrow evening.

Selectman Dill: Cindy and I were muted, that is why you didn't hear us.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, January 19, 2021 at 5:30 pm

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

Final minutes as amended by the Board of Selectmen on 1.19.21