

**TOWN OF DEERFIELD
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
May 3, 2021
MINUTES**

Call to Order

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.

Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

Chairman Robertson asks all to rise and pledge allegiance to the Flag

(Went to public hearing)

Chairman Robertson: Next order of business, and we have two guests that are not on the agenda this evening and I am going to move those gentlemen first so that they can leave.

I think I will start with Evan Roberge from Avatar and this is relative to land use change tax levy that was generated and submitted to us followed by two abatement requests in regard to that.

And, this is in regard to a series of LLC's. One of the members of the LLC's is with us this evening, that being Mr. Rhodes and at this point, the Board is a little confused, Evan, primarily because we looked at it and understood some of the concerns and reasoning but as we looked at it, it didn't occur to us that the property, its status, other than the LLC name, had changed and in fact, I believe some of the properties is going into conservation easement and that was followed up by that, and I don't know if you are aware, there was a quit claim deed filed after the property owner had a discussion with you that basically changed the name back so that the parcels that are contiguous, have the LLC on them now and I am sort of glossing over points here but at this point, I am looking to you for your concerns are to this.

Mr. Roberge: Right, in the RSA, contiguous parcels mean more than one parcel of land, having identical ownership so that is the reason, when he transferred two of those parcels into 70, LLC, they didn't meet the 10-acres or more requirement of being in current use.

So, that is when we went up and talked about it and after that, he decided to make the ownerships identical so it would qualify again.

Unfortunately, once that happens, there is not much we can do afterwards or there is not much I can do. I just follow what the statute says.

Chairman Robertson: Okay.

Mr. Roberge: Another issue could be, when was it, the deed that he did, when was that recorded?

Chairman Robertson: Well, the actual deed is dated April 13th, April, so after.

Mr. Roberge: In Deerfield, they had already run their first issue warrant so that brings up another issue as well. It is out of current use for the first bill. That lot is in question.

Chairman Robertson: Okay. Do Board members have questions for Evan regarding this?

Selectman Dill: I think we need to hear from the other party.

Chairman Robertson: Is there any comment that you would like to give, Mr. Rhodes? I am ready to recognize you at this point.

Mr. Rhodes: Thank you.

Selectman Dill: (Couldn't understand)

Chairman Robertson: We haven't let anyone in for a while now so this is new territory for us, too.

Mr. Rhodes: Thank you.

I would simply correct a statement that Mr. Roberge made earlier.

He referenced 70 Church, LLC. He actually was inaccurate in saying 51 Church, LLC.

I have been trying to reach Mr. Roberge since February. I wrote him a letter on February 25th. Got no response. Stopped him on the road, for this issue, by the way. Stopped him on the road in March and tried to hammer all this out. Got no response. Told him I wanted a meeting. Got no feedback from him.

It was only by happenstance at your March 30th meeting, that I found out that he had levied, had recommended a different value CT which was in fact, entirely bogus. It was just erroneous.

This whole issue need not to have happened if he had been responsive as your representative and just met with me and answered the questions that I put in my February 25th letter and responded to my request to him on Old Centre Road North to meet. I don't know why he refused to do it.

And, immediately, when the request for answers at our April 6th meeting, which only occurred because Mr. Harrington got involved because Mr. Roberge didn't want to meet with me until later in April.

The issues that I had got settled out immediately, corrected the defect that Mr. Roberge was pointing out. Minus fifteen days, this would have been in perfectly good order and nobody would have to waste the time and effort that they have had to for this.

They should have responded so technically, it was filed after April 1st, but frankly, it's almost like entrapment, not being able to talk to the person who's pulling the strings on assessing given a month and a half of lead time and just not being able to meet with him.

I feel that it is in your power to come to a concession in this particular case, under these particular circumstances, (couldn't understand) so that there will be a precedent but I would ask the assessment, the LUCT assessment for LLC, the parcel at 70 Church, be abated because of the whole (couldn't understand) the land use isn't changing, it was a technicality that easily could have been avoided, (couldn't understand) of the technicality easily could have been avoided by a little more professionalism and responsiveness on the part of the assessing company.

Chairman Robertson: At this point, the parcels in question are all under 70 Church, LLC.

Mr. Rhodes: Yes, the two wood lots. They are both under 70 Church, LLC. They both have identical key holders and they both qualify because one, because it is more than 10-acres and the is contiguous and it was done April 30th.

Vice Chairman Pitman: (Couldn't understand question)

Chairman Robertson: We would have to do an abatement which is what we have the request for.

Selectman Dill: Basically, it would be a "no money involved" abatement because the initial amount wasn't paid. It's not like we have to cut a check.

(Members and audience talking over each other)

Mr. Rhodes: There are two abatements. The first abatement from the March 30th meeting, it was just wrong because there hadn't been any change of owner, period.

The second, in meeting with Mr. Roberge, on April 5th, I was able to lay out questions that I had. It was at that meeting that it was discovered, oh, you have a problem and so that's the point which he set the assessment at \$9,000.00. (couldn't understand).

Chairman Robertson: So, discussion? I will recognize Mr. Roberge.

Mr. Roberge: So, I just want to clarify. I thought I did say 70 Church Street at first. So, there are two things going on right now, the land change on the .9-acres and there is a main (couldn't understand) that I did recommend on the 1.226-acres. Is that the only two things that you are asking questions on now?

Chairman Robertson: I really think that we need the whole picture but (couldn't understand) the 245.

Mr. Roberge: Okay, the main thing is that they didn't qualify on April 1st for current use. (Couldn't understand) the November ownership change and there were two, LLC's. They weren't contiguous. They are now.

Multiple people talking over each other.

Chairman Robertson: The second one was \$8,800.00. One for \$245.00 which Mr. Roberge recommended and the ensuing one for \$8,800.00.

Mr. Roberge: One is for excess land and one is an actual, potential house lot.

Chairman Robertson: I guess, why I understand the deadline and how this started, I think, I personally, have a hard time hitting the property owner for \$8,800.00 given the fact that the land use hasn't changed, the name has been corrected at this point. We are in line (loud beeping). I'm not sure how the rest of the Board feels.

Vice Chairman Pitman: I agree. It's a little embarrassing, if it's true, about not being able (couldn't understand) down that road.

Mr. Roberge: Yeah, let me answer that, too.

So, when someone has an abatement, I mean we have a lot of time to answer it. We don't look at them right away. We are getting several in several towns. He stops me beside the road when I am trying to get to a construction zone, in all of my towns, in this case, it was in Deerfield. It was right off Old Centre Road. I mean, I'm not reviewing any of those at that time so that's what happened there.

Vice Chairman Pitman: Thank you.

Chairman Robertson: So, I guess we will need a motion to grant the abatements.

Vice Chairman Pitman: Do you have the dollar amount so I can include it in the motion?

Chairman Robertson: I believe it would be the \$245.00 and the \$8,800.00.

Motion: Vice Chairman Pitman moves to approve abatements to Mr. Rhodes in the amounts of \$245.00 and \$8,800.00

Second: Selectwoman McHugh

Discussion:

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

Chairman Robertson: I thank Mr. Roberge and Mr. Rhodes for being with us this evening and I would also ask you to leave, if you could.

I'm not exactly sure...

Selectman Dill: We have Ray coming up next.

Chairman Robertson: We do. We will get to these signatures later so we don't hold up Kelly and Ray.

Next up, we have Ray Ellis to make some recommendations regarding the town mowing bids that we received.

Mr. Ellis: So, going over what we have for bids for mowing, as far as the town mowing, Blue Sky is the only one that put a bid in and we had him last year and did a great job for the town so I would recommend giving that to Blue Sky.

Vice Chairman Pitman: Could you give us the amount, Ray?

Mr. Ellis: The amount was \$6,264.00.

Motion: Vice Chairman Pitman moves to award the town mowing bid to Blue Sky Landscaping
Second: Selectman McGarry
Discussion: Selectwoman McHugh: Is that 265 or 254?
Mr. Ellis: It's \$6,264.00

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

Mr. Ellis: Next is the transfer station hill and transfer station.

We received two bids. One from Blue Sky and one from Saint's Lawn Care.

Blue Sky was \$1,760.00 and Saint's Lawn Care was \$1,500.00

Saint's was cheaper. I don't know if he knows what he is getting into. I'm hoping that he does. He's from Pittsfield. I have never seen his work, yet but I think that I want to try him on the transfer station and the transfer hill for \$1,500.00.

This will give us some kind of idea of what kind of work he does and if he is reliable.

Motion: Vice Chairman Pitman moves to award the transfer station and transfer station hill mowing to Saint's Lawn Care for \$1,500.00
Second: Selectman Dill
Discussion:
Vote: Yea 4, Nay 0, Abstained 0 – Motion Carries

Mr. Ellis: Of course, water holes and cisterns, we had no bids. It's been reposted and it closes this Thursday. I believe that we have one bid in already so hopefully we will get that secured after that.

Next would be the athletic fields. We have three on the athletic fields. Blue Sky who was \$4,708.00. Saint's Lawn Care was \$5,500.00 and TNT Landscaping was \$6,500.00.

I talked with Nick, again, because I wasn't always there. I had no complaints and every time I drove by, they looked good and he said that Blue Sky did a great job so at \$4,708.00, my recommendation is to stick with Blue Sky on the athletic fields.

Motion: Vice Chairman Pitman moves to award the athletic fields to Blue Sky Landscaping at \$4,708.00
Second: Selectman McGarry
Discussion:
Vote: Yea 4, Nay 0, Abstained 0 – Motion Carries

Mr. Ellis: And, we have the cemeteries. Now the cemeteries are a little bit touchy. People like them mowed. They like them all picked up for Memorial Day and Blue Sky did a good job last year. I have no complaints from the Cemetery Commission or any of the town's people regarding the cemeteries.

Saint's Lawn Care and TNT Landscaping also put bids in.

TNT Landscaping was \$13,500.00. Saint's Lawn Care was \$8,750.00 and Blue Sky was \$10,538.00.

Normally, I would probably lean towards Saint's Lawn Care but I think I would like to lean towards Blue Sky on this one because the difference isn't really that much but I do know what I am getting with Blue Sky and with Saint's Lawn Care coming through Pittsfield, and I don't know how reliable he is yet, I have Memorial Day coming up and the cemeteries have to be mowed and cleaned up and trimmed around all the stones so people can come in and respect their parties.

So, I kind of recommend Blue Sky for that one, only on that subject. Saint's is a little cheaper. Again, I do not know.

Vice Chairman Pitman: How did Blue Sky do it for last year?

Mr. Ellis: Last year, I do not have numbers for. Do you, John?

Vice Chairman Pitman: That's okay.

Selectwoman McHugh: Didn't TNT used to take care of the cemeteries?

Mr. Ellis: They did. They had them for six years. TNT has always come in a little higher. He did last year and the year before and this year, he had some stipulations on his contract which really weren't supposed to be on there.

Chairman Robertson: Further discussion.

Selectman Dill: It's considerably higher on that one.

Mr. Ellis: It is.

Vice Chairman Pitman: I had a question on that one.

Selectman Dill: It's \$1,833.00 difference between those two bids.

Selectwoman McHugh: I was just asking.

Chairman Robertson: If there is no further discussion, those in favor of the motion?

Mr. Harrington: We haven't made a motion yet?

Motion: Selectman McGarry moves to award the cemetery mowing to Blue Sky Landscaping for \$10,538.00

Second: Selectwoman McHugh

Discussion:

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

Mr. Ellis: We could see some change next year and once we have Saint's one year and does a good job, I will feel more comfortable.

That's what I was thinking. The transfer station hill only has to be done one or twice a year but the cemeteries have to be done every week. It will give me a good idea.

Vice Chairman Pitman: John, can you make sure that you send out letter to those that weren't awarded.

Mr. Harrington: I sent letters to both the people who won the bid and those that did not.

Chairman Robertson: Thank you Ray for doing all that work for us on your recommendations. We really appreciate it.

Next, I will recognize Kelly Roberts and I believe she had us review a document (couldn't hear due to shuffling paperwork).

Kelly Reports – Tax Warrant; OHRV, Hunting and Fishing Licenses; Quarterly update

Ms. Roberts: Good evening.

First, I am looking for the Board to make a motion to approve the 2021 tax warrant prepared by the Assessing Department. I will need to take that warrant immediately tonight once you have signed it to begin preparing the billing. The tax due date will be July 1, 2021.

Chairman Robertson: Right. I can get that right out of the way now for you.

We are tasked in the name of the state or directed in the name the state to collect property taxes in the list herein committed to amounting to the sum of \$7,279,629.00 and with interest at 8.0 percent per annum from July 1st, 2021; thereafter on all sums not paid before that date.

Kelly had given us some background. They also have the entire list of properties on that warrant. (couldn't understand) pages.

Kelly had also done some legwork with regard to the property tax amount which for the first bill, billed one of two. The tax rate total was \$9.84. That is essentially half the tax rate.

Municipal being \$1.93, the school \$6.64, state education tax \$0.86 and the county tax being \$0.41. I would need a motion for us to sign the property tax levy for the Town of Deerfield.

Motion: Vice Chairman Pitman moves to sign the property tax levy for the Town of Deerfield as presented

Second: Selectwoman McHugh

Discussion:

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

Okay, continue on Kelly.

Ms. Roberts: Next, I'm asking for the Board's approval and permission to offer OHRV registrations and Hunting & Fishing Licenses. Fish and Game regulates these registrations and licenses. The Town would receive 4 dollars for every OHRV registration and 1 dollar for every fishing & hunting license issued. This is not much revenue, per se, but will more than cover the cost for the paper to print them on, with some leftover for the general fund. I see this as a simple service we can provide our residents that they would appreciate. The Blue Bowl had been offering these but have discontinued. I checked with them to make sure they would be okay with the Clerk's Office offering this, and they were okay with it.

So, I am looking for questions and a motion.

Selectman Dill: Is this a new program from Fish and Game? I just never heard of a town doing it.

Ms. Roberts: There are several towns in New Hampshire that offer this and it's not a new program. You see them a lot at stores.

Selectman Dill: Well, I knew that but not with town clerks, I had no idea.

Ms. Roberts: Yup. It does (couldn't understand) make a list of them.

Chairman Robertson: If we could get a motion so they can do that and have it go in with the paperwork.

Motion: Vice Chairman Pitman moves to sign the paperwork so that the town clerk can offer OHRV registrations and Hunting/Fishing licenses

Second: Selectman Dill

Discussion: Selectwoman McHugh: I am kind of nervous about hunting. I really think that OHRV is a good idea. I'm kind of nervous about us doing the hunting.

Ms. Roberts: I am, it's two applications. The OHRV is one application and I personally, am doing it for the fishing but the fishing and hunting is one application. They are combined.

Personally, I think most people get their fishing and hunting online so we would probably be assisting someone that doesn't have internet access or last-minute requests.

Selectman Dill: It's pretty simple.

Chairman Robertson: You have to have a previous license or a hunting safety ID

Selectman Dill: So, it doesn't come on pre-waxed paper.

Ms. Roberts: No

Chairman Robertson: I would add that I think it's a valuable service since it's not in either store in the community that are issuing licenses.

Selectwoman McHugh: I'm not saying that it's not a good idea but I am kind of nervous about issuing hunting licenses. That's all.

Chairman Robertson: If you get a scale, you can be a deer check-in station.

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

Chairman Robertson: I will sign both of these and send them down to you.

Selectman Dill: Are OHRV's (couldn't hear, talking over each other)

Ms. Roberts: I think we are missing our transactions for 4-wheelers and snowmobiles.

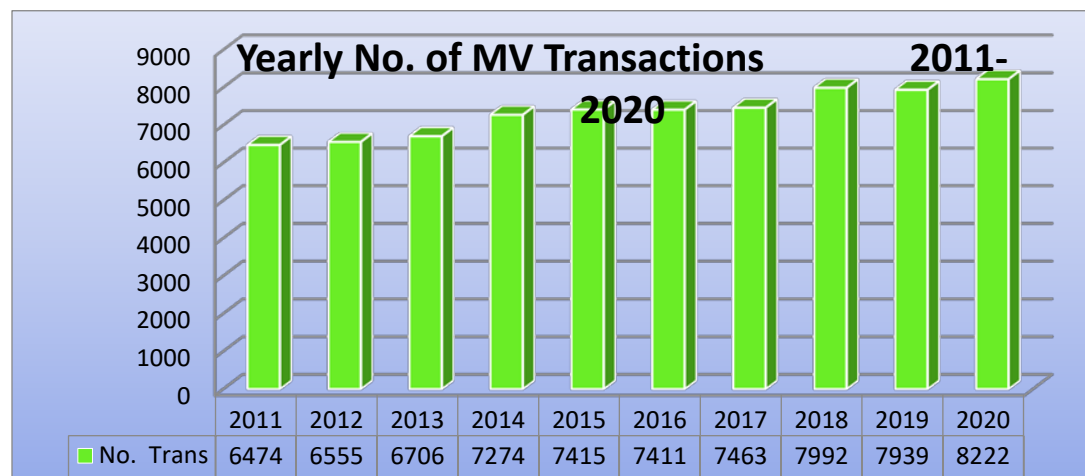
Chairman Robertson: Okay, so those two things are signed for you.

I'm going to do a more in-depth revenue update after the first half issue 2021. I did want to follow up on my last quarterly update.

I had provided graphs depicting revenue trends over the previous ten years. One of the questions that arose, I believe from Selectmen McGarry, was the relationship between the number of motor vehicle transactions over that period of time. We went back and gathered that data for you. I have provided you with a new graph that depicts this information. You can see that the number of transactions are increasing at a slow and steady rate. That is a good thing.

Should we see a dramatic increase in this trend, we may need to consider adding a third window clerk to meet this demand. Please keep this in the back of your minds as we travel forward through the next ten years. I would also like to ask that the graph, if possible, be incorporated into the meeting minutes.

Chairman Robertson: Certainly, we can incorporate that into the minutes and I can assure you that I won't keep it in my mind as I don't intend on being here in ten years.



Ms. Roberts: Next, we sent an email to all boards and committees about a week ago asking for help on an information project for candidates and potential candidates that want to serve our community; whether it be in an elected or appointed position. I am asking that the Board participate in this as well. The Clerk's Office receives multiple inquiries about these various boards, and we want to provide good information.

This would be a collaborative effort on all of our parts. I have begun drafting a document and provided you with that draft to get a better sense of the project and I am asking that you and all boards/committees have their questionnaire back to us by November 1, 2021, to have this finalized for the '22 election and appointment cycle.

Both Kim and I will put together packets for people asking for this information, filing for local office, or are seeking appointed positions so we are excited about that.

Chairman Robertson: I didn't see the draft you sent so I will go through it and get back to you with information on that.

Ms. Kelly: We are also working on another cool project that falls under the archival project umbrella and it's the indexing the Board of Selectmen minutes.

Joanna Waring is the lead on this project and has been doing a fantastic job. We go back to 2012 right now. The index tool will allow us to query Board of Selectmen minutes by keywords and dates. I have provided each of you with a copy of this and was wondering if you had a chance to test it?

Selectman Dill: I do not.

Chairman Robertson: I did not have a chance to test it but it is an excellent idea because I know I have multiple, regular conversations with Mr. Harrington about "what minutes to you think that decision is in or what year, that sort of thing" so this would be extremely useful.

Selectman McGarry: I just checked on the dates and some popped up so I thought that was pretty cool.

Ms. Roberts: And we will go all the way as far as we can take it so we can find the obscure information like from the 80's or something so we are excited about that.

It's not public right now. When we get it into a good place, we will open it up to residents as well but you guys can use it now.

Kim is hard at work on a big Annual Report project. She has been working on preserving and scanning them. We've put out a call out to the community. We are trying to get a complete set of annual reports and we put out to the community our missing years and we are asking people when they are doing their spring cleaning if they have any.

In particular, we are looking for annual reports before 1871 (if they existed that far back), 1873-1886, 1888, and 1890. So, if you may know of anyone that might have these, we are on the lookout for those.

Chairman Robertson: Have you contacted Paul Smith?

Ms. Roberts: He has dropped off.

We have received a positive response and people are definitely wanting to help us with this and they are looking through their homes.

Chairman Robertson: I know Keith Rollins had a complete (couldn't hear) and I am sure that you are aware of the library collection at UNH.

Ms. Roberts: Yes. Kim has cross-referenced that. We will let you know when it is complete. We're excited about that.

In that vein, I visited town historian Joanne Wasson last week at her home and I gave her duplicate copies of town reports we had been storing for the historical society. These were in excess of what we have preserved for the permanent record. She was grateful and we will continue to keep the historical society in mind as we go through these documents with historical value but are beyond our legal retention schedule.

This past weekend was the Town deliberative session and it was sparsely attended, with only 60 in attendance.

I have provided the Town Administrator with the meeting minutes and now I will be turning my attention to the June 8th election.

I will do my part to get the word out that absentee ballots can be requested I am concerned that the lack of participation at the deliberative session could spill over to the election. I will do my part to get the vote out. I also want to remind everyone that absentee ballots can be requested at the Clerk's Office, and COVID concerns are a valid reason for a request.

And, finally, the best part of the presentation is I would like to congratulate Miss Sophie Boucher. She is the official winner of Deerfield's Top Dog Contest. She is an adorable pug and she is Deerfield's new Top Dog and you may have seen her cute little face featured in the Town's last newsletter. Her human owners have come in and received the official certificate and basket of toys and goodies.

Chairman Robertson: Very good. Thank you, Kelly.

Ms. Roberts: Thank you.

Selectman Dill: Kelly, what is the last date for absentee ballots for that election?

Ms. Roberts: General speaking, it would be the Monday before but they can still be delivered at the polls so if someone is uncomfortable because of COVID, concerns of COVID, we will accommodate them.

Selectman Dill: Do we have, we don't have them available yet? I assume that they will be soon.

Ms. Roberts: So, we have to wait for the school to have their deliberative session and literally the Monday after the school deliberative session, ideally, I'll get the warrant back from the school. We'll submit it to LHS and hopefully, we will have the proof by the end of that week. It's a very tight turnaround.

Chairman Robertson: Great. Thank you, Kelly.

Vice Chairman Pitman: Thanks Kelly.

Ms. Roberts: You're welcome.

At this point, I am going to ask Kelly and Ray if they could leave us because we need to go into non-public.

I don't know, were you staying as you have additional comments, Ray?

Mr. Ellis: Well, there was something that was going to be brought up later on, so.

Mr. Harrington: We can bring that up now.

Chairman Robertson: Okay. Let's do that.

Mr. Harrington: In my town administrator's report, I was going to bring up a proposal to repair the retaining wall outside the GBW; the town clerk door, I don't know if anyone has been around that side of the building lately but the existing, wooden retaining wall has rotted away and the hill is falling into the parking lot.

Ray did some estimating and got a proposed cost of about \$1,500.00 to replace that rotted wood retaining wall with a decorative cement retaining block wall.

We would ask the Highway Department give us a hand picking them up and also placing them as each of the blocks is pretty heavy and we would need the excavator and one of the dump trucks but I wanted to ask the Board of Selectmen if that was something they wanted us to pursue to keep that hill from falling any further to the ground.

Vice Chairman Pitman: You mean the backhoe, not an excavator.

Mr. Harrington: Yes, that's correct.

Mr. Ellis: Each block is about 1,400 pounds a-piece.

Selectman McGarry: What are they, large, precast blocks?

Mr. Ellis: Cinder blocks

Chairman Robertson: I think that it is a good idea. I think that we have an interest to keep that hill from not dropping police cars.

Mr. Harrington: Oh no, not that hill. It's the one right outside this door.

Selectwoman McHugh: Is there anything in this hill?

Mr. Ellis: Yes, there is.

Vice Chairman Pitman: I would worry about electric lines.

Mr. Ellis: There is a buried tank in that hill. It was used back years ago when we had the water and the pumps and everything was inside.

It's, over the years, has rusted through so they no longer use it but no one has ever dug the whole hill up and pulled all that out. I think even the old compressor is still in there.

Selectman Dill: So, do we dig the whole thing up now?

Mr. Ellis: Well...

Selectman Dill: Because eventually, it's going to collapse and make a bigger hole?

Mr. Ellis: Well, that would be my understanding, it would eventually, yes.

Mr. Pelletier: That's a big undertaking.

Selectwoman McHugh: And then you have this hole.

Mr. Pelletier: The water line still comes through that pit and your electrical.

Cindy, not sure where that comes through there. The tank itself is in a concrete vault with a steel tank just the face of it sticking into the face of the concrete vault.

Chairman Robertson: I'm comfortable just going with the repair of the retaining wall.

Motion: Vice Chairman Pitman moves to purchase the concrete blocks and fix the retaining wall

Second: Selectman McGarry

Discussion:

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

Mr. Ellis: Thank you.

Chairman Robertson: And now you can leave us.

Mr. Ellis: Have a great night.

Selectwoman McHugh: Thank you, you too.

Mr. Harrington: Okay, give me a minute to get into non-public.

Chairman Robertson: We need to go into non-public under RSA 91-A3, II(c) Matters which, if discussed in public, would likely affect adversely the reputation of any person, other than a member of the public body itself, unless such person requests an open meeting. This exemption shall extend to any application for assistance or tax abatement or waiver of a fee, fine, or other levy, if based on inability to pay or poverty of the applicant.

Motion: Vice Chairman Pitman moves to go into non-public session under RSA 91-A3, II(c)

Second: Selectman Dill

Discussion:

Vote: Yea 5, Nay 0, Abstained 0 – Motion Carries

Mr. Harrington: Give me a moment to put everyone in the waiting room.

Chairman Robertson: Okay, we are out of non-public session. At this point, I would note for the record that no action was taken in non-public session and would look for a motion to seal the minutes.

Motion: Selectman Dill moves to seal the minutes from the non-public session

Second: Selectwoman McHugh

Discussion:

Vote: Yea 5, Nay 0, Abstained 0 – Motion Carries

Regular Business:

Review of Outstanding Minutes of April 26, 2021

Motion: Vice Chairman Pitman moves to approve the minutes of April 26, 2021

Second: Selectman Dill

Discussion:

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

Selectman Dill: I want to apologize to the person that does the minutes. They keep trying to have people speak into the microphone because I see a bunch of "couldn't understands" and that's not helpful. I apologize.

Vouchers/Payroll Manifest/Accounts Payable Manifest

Accounts Payable Manifest dated May 3, 2021 - \$1,048,945.79

Chairman Robertson: Obviously, a good chunk of this is going to the school district.

Motion: Selectman Dill moves to approve the Accounts Payable Manifest in the amount read

Second: Selectman McGarry

Discussion:

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

Payroll Manifest in the amount of \$68,640.40 (gross); \$45,950.24.

Motion: Selectman Dill moves to approve the Payroll Manifest in the amount read

Second: Selectwoman McHugh

Discussion:

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

Signatures/Correspondence

Chairman Robertson: We have the abatement request and land use tax change warranty which we decided not to move forward with the land use change tax on the end use for 70 Church Street, LLC that Mr. Rhodes addressed this evening as well as Mr. Roberge. I will set that aside.

Selectman Dill: So, we don't have to vote on it because on the abatement we are not taking action.

Chairman Robertson: Well, we, if we are not going to levy, if we are not going to levy the current use change tax then I guessing probably we wouldn't need to vote on the abatement.

Vice Chairman Pitman: Why didn't we vote when he was here?

Chairman Pitman: We did vote on the abatements so, and I'm not sure if I got ...

Mr. Harrington: There is two abatements. The \$245.00 one is a computer fix and doesn't represent any money. It's highlighted on one of the ...

Chairman Robertson: Yeah, I'm looking and there is no amount on the second one but it is the

Vice Chairman Pitman: Where did we get the \$8,800.00 figure?

Chairman Robertson: These actually, that was what the second land use change tax that Evan had calculated was but actually, we need to new abatement applications because both of these abatements, these are the original ones, are for 51 Church Street, LLC and the owner of record has corrected it to 70 Church, LLC so...

Mr. Harrington: I can have them next week.

Chairman Robertson: So, we will have to sign it next week, the new abatement applications.

Those are the only three things in this signature file.

Moving onto Correspondence. We have a letter from the U.S. Department of Commerce Census Bureau addressed to me telling me that, this is a past due notice, was not filled out for 2021 Government Unit Survey on the Community and I will currently sign it.

It was the first time that I have seen the notice so...

I will make sure that I log on and complete, I'm not sure what I'm supposed to certify but apparently there is a survey I there.

We have a letter from the Town of Deerfield Fire and Rescue Department from Fire Chief Matt Fisher and stating that the Board of Selectmen has notification of the following promotions effective May 1st, 2021.

I am going to skip the intro here.

"It is my pleasure to announce the following officer promotions.

John Dubiansky to Assistant Chief – C-2 and Christopher Gallant to Deputy Chief – C-3."

He mentions at the bottom that in the coming week, both members will be given their respective roles or additional roles and responsibilities will be assigned and identified.

It requires no action, just notification to us.

Vice Chairman Pitman: What's the policy of (couldn't understand) not a resident?

Chairman Robertson: That I'm not sure.

Vice Chairman Pitman: Is there any liability? Chris is a great guy and well trained as a lieutenant but he doesn't live in Deerfield.

Chairman Robertson: I don't think there's any particular liability. Our worker's comp and general liability which certainly applies to anybody on the volunteer but it may cause some commotion in the community.

Vice Chairman Pitman: I was just thinking about coverage if the other two are tied up. Is he full-time anywhere else?

Selectwoman McHugh: Exeter.

Vice Chairman Pitman: Exeter.

Chairman Robertson: Well, we can certainly ask. We can invite our chief in and ask him about it.

Vice Chairman Pitman: Like I said, I know that they are qualified people but are we sticking our neck out?

Chairman Robertson: I don't believe we're incurring any liability. Our worker's comp and general liability would but we may be sticking our neck out with members of the volunteer fire association.

Vice Chairman Pitman: Do we have time next week to have him?

Chairman Robertson: Yeah.

Mr. Harrington: Would you like the fire chief in?

Chairman Robertson: Next, we can move to the Town Administrator's Report.

Town Administrator's Report:

Mr. Harrington: Well, I have already gone over one item which was the retaining wall so I will skip that.

An answer to a question from last week about Parade Cemetery. I believe that Cindy asked who did the Cemetery Trustees rely upon to take out those trees that they had removed and the trustee that I emailed relied on what they saw and the professional opinion of Jared Messina to determine what trees to take down.

They were dead, diseased and multiple expensive accidents just waiting to happen.

Selectwoman McHugh: And, I just wanted to ask that question because I thought when they came in here before, they were getting, they had an arborist, looking at them. That's why I asked who the arborist was. I hadn't seen any name.

Mr. Harrington: For those who have not realized this yet, the Highway Department has started on their summer schedule of four, ten-hour days, Monday through Thursday.

Cindy, an answer to a question that you had last week about the \$90,000.00 that DCS had and could that be used towards the ventilation.

Vice Chairman Pitman: No, it was me.

Mr. Harrington: Sorry, Dick, Cindy. If you are referring to the \$90,000.00 of the federal funding designated for the school district, that would be unavailable for the town. They are separate funds. We have our own federal funding. They can't share their money with the town.

Vice Chairman Pitman: I thought that it was the impact fee money?

Mr. Harrington: Impact fee money would have to go for the school district's perceived impact from increased population not the town's impact from increased population.

Chairman Robertson: Yeah, we would have to (couldn't understand)

Mr. Harrington: That has previously been investigated and we've met several times with the school administrative personnel. Even after school hours, those spaces are heavily used by different groups in town.

The space that we would need to house the population of the after-school program is just not available at the school.

Vice Chairman Pitman: So, we aren't going to have that program until the ventilation system is cleared?

Mr. Harrington: Right now, as it stands, unless something changes, it's not recommended. As I said before, the HVAC professional that came in indicated that the building is not to code as it is and to put children in the space...

Selectwoman McHugh: Right now, we have four classrooms down there. There is not four classrooms at the school that we could use after school for Parks and Rec?

Mr. Harrington: Not with the open space that they need. I don't know now but my understanding is that things have been really spread out with desks to keep social distancing. I don't know if teachers would be happy with people coming in and moving around the room to accommodate kids. I'm just guessing,

Chairman Robertson: The last conversation we had regarding this; the school has no interest in having the after-school program at the school. They were pretty clear on that.

Selectwoman McHugh: I realize that but its space that could be used. We're not rich here so and these families are in trouble without an after-school program so you would think that one would want to wash the hand of the other, I guess.

Chairman Robertson: Solid reason.

Mr. Harrington: Alden, I believe that you asked a question last meeting about NH Electric Coop. Am I correct with that one?

Selectman Dill: Yup.

Mr. Harrington: I did include in all your packets, information and I scanned the information as well, information that I found on their website.

It appears that they do have a program starting. It's located in just a few northern communities right now.

Selectman Dill: And western.

Mr. Harrington: And western, thank you. There website does provide an avenue for any interested current NH Coop customer to indicate their interest in possibly getting internet service in their area.

They are in the very early stages of this. They are gathering interest around the state and they will move forward from there but I do not believe in any other area other than those listed in the article that I shared with the Board.

Selectman Dill: Thank you.

Judging by their feedback, there are a bunch of people who could send their info to the Coop ... I think more people would (couldn't understand).

Mr. Harrington: And that was it for me this evening. The last item was the retaining wall.

Unfinished Business:

Selectman McGarry: Yes, John mentioning about the Cemetery Trustees, I kind of asked a while back about whether the Cemetery Trustees had looked at the cost that we are charging for a cemetery plot and to see if they should be adjusting that.

Chairman Robertson: They, I can jump in on that. The Cemetery Commission looked at that and we are thinking very shortly we are going to have recommendations for a new, higher rate. Significantly higher but not out of the park but they basically did a community survey on other communities similar to what we have for cemeteries and provide for service and will bring back a recommendation.

That hasn't been changed for several decades.

Selectman McGarry: I figured that would be the case.

Chairman Robertson: Other, Other Business?

New Business:

Okay, under New Business we have Town Hall availability and I believe that this was spurred by a call that John got from folks not the Heritage Commission, from the Historical Society wanting to know when they can have use of the town hall again.

Mr. Harrington: In my conversation with Priscilla Watts, she was requested it for their immediate small group, only the three ladies that go in to do most of the business part. They weren't going to be looking for large group meetings but they needed access to their records and computers and the museum.

Chairman Robertson: I wouldn't have a problem with giving them access, particularly now that we are in the season where we need to heat the building.

Selectman McGarry: Yes.

Vice Chairman Pitman: That's where their office is. We can't deny them access to their office.

Chairman Robertson: Is the Board in agreement that we let them.

All members stated yes.

Chairman Robertson: You can let her know that it's fine. Give them a key if they don't have one.

Mr. Harrington: They have a key. They've just been following the recommendations of the Board and not going in.

Chairman Robertson: Let them know that we appreciate that too.

Mr. Harrington: I will.

Chairman Robertson: Other business?

Hearing none, I would note that we have conducted our non-public business and if there is nothing else from the Board, I would look for Citizen's Comments.

Citizen's Comments:

Ms. Cady – Old Center Road.

Good evening.

Mr. Harrington: Hello?

Ms. Cady: Hello?

Mr. Harrington: We can hear you.

Ms. Cady: Thank you.

I have a few comments. I wasn't on for the state park, I mean the skate park comments. I assume there wasn't much because when I got on, the public comments were done but I wondered who handles the liability and where would it be?

Chairman Robertson: The liability for skateboarders on public roads is solely their own. We did discuss that with counsel.

Ms. Cady: And it's on public roads?

Chairman Robertson: Skateboarding would be as much as a horse or a bicycle or a pedestrian on a public road.

Ms. Cady: Okay. I didn't hear the amount of the tax warrant, \$7 million something? Could you give me that figure?

Chairman Robertson: I don't have that information in front of me. I don't know if Mr. Harrington does?

Mr. Harrington: The dollar amount is \$7,279,629.00.

Ms. Cady: Thank you. And if we divide that by \$1,000.00, we end up getting how much we have to spend in order to raise the tax rate \$1.00?

Chairman Robertson: I have not calculated that. Could be possible but ...

Ms. Cady: That's what it usually amounts to.

Okay.

I would like to ask that the Cemetery Trustees or the selectmen adopt a policy of when items must be removed from the graves.

Chairman Robertson: We will take that under consideration.

Ms. Cady: I had a problem with a \$27.00, not in Deerfield, I'm sorry, but it was with Blue Sky removing a \$27.00 silk flower as well as the planter that I had, being taken from my husband's and son's grave so I would like to see policies in place in towns when people must remove the stuff from the graves.

Then I, because of the town meeting and what was a misinformed person on the warrant article regarding how voting districts are set up...

Chairman Robertson: You know, I'm really not interested in discussing that under public comments in the Board of Selectmen's meeting. That's a completely different (each talking over each other).

Ms. Cady: The reason that I am making a public comment, it's very easy to explain how it's done by putting a page in the town report showing that once the census is done, it's divided by the 400 seats of the

Chairman Robertson: It would be easy to do but it wasn't a warrant article that had had to do with this warrant.

Do you have comments relative ...?

Ms. Cady: I understand that it doesn't have anything to do with the Board but it would be good to have it explained how it's done because apparently people don't understand or know how it's done.

And then the third, fourth thing is when I look at the website for the town, I looked at the library at the request of Mal Cameron and he agreed with me, I called him afterwards, it didn't have what it said that it had but anyways, the same is true, the town website every once in a while, you run into something that says "in 2015" or it's just out of date and today I was looking and I thought, we haven't had a Cable Committee for, I was on it, so I know we haven't had a meeting, its got to be at least five years.

Why its listed Cable Committee on the town's website, I don't know.

Chairman Robertson: Well, neither do we but we will look into it.

Ms. Cady: I just think that some how or other we need to be current on our websites.

Chairman Robertson: Yup, I agree with you.

Ms. Cady: I don't know who has charge of keeping them current but Mal had a question on it and I thought while I was at it, was going to go the town and say that I discovered a 2015 something and I know if I speak to John that he'll fix it but I just thought, I don't think that this is something people should have to be looking at.

Chairman Robertson: So, noted and at this point, Ms. Cady, I am going to move on and see if there are any other members in the community that has citizen's comments and are waiting.

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

Second: Selectman McGarry

Discussion:

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

Next Meeting: Monday, May 10, 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*