

**TOWN OF DEERFIELD
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
June 5, 2023
MINUTES**

Call to Order

5:30 – Chairman Pitman called the meeting to order

Present: Chairman Richard Pitman, Vice Chairman Fred McGarry, Selectwoman Cynthia McHugh, Selectman Will Huebner, and Selectman Steve Barry.

Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Motion: Selectman Barry makes a motion to let Selectman Huebner join the meeting remotely.

Second: Selectwoman McHugh

Discussion:

Roll Call:

Selectman Barry: Aye

Selectwoman McHugh: Yes

Vice Chairman McGarry: Aye

Chairman Pitman: Yes

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

Town Clerk/Tax Collector update – Kelly Roberts

Tax Warrant.

Motion: Selectman Barry makes a motion to accept the 2023 dog warrant.

Second: Vice Chairman McGarry

Discussion:

Roll Call:

Selectman Barry: Yes

Selectwoman McHugh: Yes

Vice Chairman McGarry: Yes

Chairman Pitman: Yes

Selectman Huebner: Yes

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

Ms. Roberts explains they will now mail out notices to dog owners with unregistered dogs. She then provides the Selectboard with an update of all the going Ons in the town clerk/tax collector's office. Dogs: Over 1050 licenses issued since the beginning of the year and approximately 380 to collect. They had a successful rabies and licensing clinic and thanks the vet involved. She then makes the Board aware of the cost of mailing dog licenses. \$1.08 per envelope. Based on this she would like the Board to consider for 2024 to increase the dog licensing fees by \$1.00 to offset the cost of postage and dog tags because as of right now they are over budget.

Motion: Selectman Barry makes a motion to increase the dog fees by \$1.00 starting January 1, 2024.

Second: Vice Chairman McGarry

Discussion:

Selectman Huebner asks about over budget and if it's only the postage fees that is causing the over budget. Ms. Roberts states that yes there is more, the actual tags themselves have gone up as well. She states they budget about \$450.00 but that budget line is over spent so they are overspending for the metal tags themselves and the postage has gone from \$0.60 up to \$1.08. Selectman Huebner reviews the costs and asks if it would be better to raise it by \$1.50. Ms.

Roberts explains that the Board approve to raise the fee by \$1.00 here tonight but to go anything

over that they would have to look at the statutes to see what they are allowed to do but most towns have adopted the \$1.00 increase by their governing body. Selectman Huebner states that since this isn't going to be until 2024, Kelly could look into the statute and see what the appropriate amount would be to make it break even.

Selectwoman McHugh asks if they could charge a fee for doing it online on top of the \$1.00 increase. Ms. Roberts explains there is about a \$2.00 base fee for doing it online. She believes in the statute it's \$1.00 and an amount can't be created but she will confirm this and get back to the Board.

Vice Chairman McGarry agrees with Selectman Huebner that it's not imperative to have this done today and to have Kelly look into the statute.

Selectman Barry withdraws his motion.

Vice Chairman McGarry withdraws his second.

Motion and second withdrawn. No vote taken.

Ms. Roberts agree to get necessary information to the Board and then they can approve or deny it. She will not need to present for it.

Vital Records. Ms. Roberts explains that it's picking up due to wedding season. Right now, there is a hold on the process for getting licensed for vital records so currently she is the only one registered to handle vital records. In the meantime, they are working to get Dianne and Nicole's credentials together so one training opens back up they can be trained.

Motor Vehicles. Tittles and registrations. This process is going well and running smoothly. A lot of people take advantage of the online method

She then goes over the amount of people just stopping in without paper work and asking for transactions to be completed which causes a long wait time. She would like to have customers come prepared. She then describes current and upcoming features that help in the registration process on their end. She explains the increases seen during the pandemic and how a bubble occurred.

Tax bill has gone out and she explains the process to this and lets the Board know that, due to mortgage companies over paying based on their estimates, they will be seeing a stack of refund requests. She then explains uncollected taxes amount and how they maneuver through it.

Home Owner Assistant Fund. This is a federal grant for anyone who is behind on their property taxes or mortgage payments. It keeps people in their homes and helps them get back on top. They mailed this information out to all taxpayers and she has been and is working closely with taxpayers using this grant and it has been a great experience. Vice Chairman McGarry asks if there is an income requirement and Ms. Roberts replies, not necessarily, there are basic questions being asked and she has not heard of anyone being denied yet (she does not want to get everyone's hopes up though).

2024 Election Year. 4 elections, 1 town deliberative session and 1 school deliberative session. She would like to Board to start think about a Board of Selectman supported warrant article for funding for the 2024 election season. Selectman Barry states that by putting this on a warrant article and it fails then there is no funding for the elections and we can't pay for them out of the budget if the warrant article fails. He feels it makes great sense to do it that way but it would be risky. Ms. Roberts says she feels he's absolutely right and she did not think of that angle and with that being said she would like it be on the Board's radar that it's coming.

Lastly, Ms. Roberts publicly appreciates the Deputy Town Clerk/Tax Collector, Dianne Kimball, and Counter Clerk, Nicole Curtis, for their outstanding efforts in learning their jobs and they have been awesome to work with. They have on the job for almost 6 months now and in that time, they have received their official state trainings and are both municipal and state motor vehicle agents and are OHRV agents. They have also gone through the state election training with the secretary of state. She states that she would like to offer them a pay increase as a token of their accomplishments. She feels this is normal in the private sector and she can absorb this within the TC/TX budget and she can come back to the Board with a reasonable amount for them to consider and the Board is open to this.

Road Agent – Pete Schibbelhute

Memo from Steve Keach. Mr. Schibbelhute did a walk through with Mr. Keach of the Range Road culvert. He then explains that the road is deflecting and it's in failure. Mr. Keach's conclusion is that the Town should limit the truck traffic on the Range Road culvert. Mr. Schibbelhute's suggestion is for the Board to

start to decide how they want to fix it, as for the money, do they want to set money aside from ARPA and do they have Mr. Keach start a plan for replacing it. He then explains that there are a lot of steps to have this completed and it something they should get going on before it becomes a major problem. Chairman Pitman asks what he means by truck traffic. Mr. Schibbelhute explains ten wheelers, tri-axes and potentially even town trucks. Chairman Pitman asks, loaded or empty and Mr. Schibbelhute states, loaded and empty. Selectman Barry asks about the weight limit and Mr. Schibbelhute states, no trucks. Selectman Barry then asks, so anything over 5 tons and Mr. Schibbelhute states, we'll go with 6 tons like on Blakes Hill Road but he'll double check with Steve and see what he thinks. Selectman Barry corrects himself and states he meant 5,000 pounds so 2.5 tons. Mr. Schibbelhute states, so cars only and signage would have to go up in either direction. They discuss where the culvert is and that there are people that live on this road with big trucks. Mr. Schibbelhute the describes what's happening to the culvert and why it's breaking. Selectman Barry agrees that this is a danger so they do need to limit the trucks and give Mr. Schibbelhute the go ahead to look into what it's going to take to fix it. Mr. Schibbelhute states he'll get a number on the weight limit that Mr. Keach is comfortable with. Selectwoman McHugh asks if Haynes Road is still closed and Mr. Schibbelhute states he has one section closed and he's hoping for a plan from Mr. Keach by the end of the week. Vice Chairman McGarry asks if Mr. Keach spoke to the possibility of a bridge. Mr. Schibbelhute states that more than likely it will be like the Middle Road bridge and he feels Mr. Keach would design it this way as well and he describes how it would be done. Vice Chairman McGarry then asks if they should request a proposal from Mr. Keach to prepare for this and Mr. Schibbelhute agrees and suggests that they probably would not want to put it up for a warrant article as it needs to be done. Chairman Pitman asks him to get a plan and a price. He goes on to say they are working on culverts all over town and he has someone from R & D coming out to look at some of the places with him and get some numbers on those. Selectwoman McHugh asks if it would be easier or faster to put some of the culvert work out to bid to some of the contractors in town and Mr. Schibbelhute states he's been using guys from town do stuff. He asks if she's referring to a specific culvert and she states, no, any culvert and he states he's been calling all guys around town and now it's a matter of gets things squared away to be able to start the work. Selectwoman McHugh then brings up Parade Road and how if there's another big rain part of the road could be lost and she says Rand's corner is the same way. Mr. Schibbelhute agrees and states they have a lot of work to do. Selectman Huebner asks for an update on the list of at least a dozen places that were considered washouts from the big storm that had a couple concerned citizens speak to. Mr. Schibbelhute lets them know that they have been working on them and the one Mr. Verville had brought up has been taken care of. HE explains that there are two guys running around doing as much as they can and he's talked to contractors in town to see when they are available to do work. Chairman Pitman thanks Mr. Schibbelhute for all he does.

Regular Business

Review of Outstanding Minutes 5/22/2023:

Motion: Selectman Barry makes a motion approve the minutes as written.

Second: Selectwoman McHugh

Discussion:

Roll Call:

Selectman Barry: Aye.

Selectwoman McHugh: Yes

Vice Chairman McGarry: Aye.

Chairman Pitman: Yes

Selectman Huebner: Yes

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

Vouchers/Payroll Manifest/Accounts Payable Manifest:

- Payroll Manifest – No payroll this week
- Accounts Payable – \$64,000.03.

Motion: Selectman Barry makes a motion to accept and sign the accounts payable.

Second: Vice Chairman McGarry

Discussion:

Roll Call:

Selectman Barry: Aye.

Selectwoman McHugh: Yes

Vice Chairman McGarry: Aye.

Chairman Pitman: Yes

Selectman Huebner: Yes

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

Signatures/Correspondence:

- Signatures
-Intent to cut. Michael Burke. South Road. 14 acres selected cut.
-LUCT (Land Use Change Tax) recommendation. Map 210 Lot 25. Current use of \$152.00.

Motion: Vice Chairman McGarry makes a motion to approve the LUCT.

Second: Selectwoman McHugh

Discussion:

Roll Call:

Selectman Barry: Aye

Selectwoman McHugh: Aye

Vice Chairman McGarry: Aye

Chairman Pitman: Aye

Selectman Huebner: Aye

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

- Correspondence -No correspondence.

Town Administrator's Report:

John Harrington states he has one item. He would like to update the Board that he has learned, since they voted at the last meeting, that to use the encumbrance money from the striping towards the police department purchases of speed control devices is not possible so the total purchase amount will come out of ARPA. The total is \$12,898.00.

Unfinished Business:

Vote to accept Invest NH Municipal Planning & Zoning Grant - \$25,000.00

Mr. Harrington explains that the Board did not vote at the meeting to accept this funding so they will need to do it tonight.

Motion: Selectman Barry makes a motion to accept the Invest NH Municipal Planning & Zoning Grant in the amount of \$25,000.00.

Second: Vice Chairman McGarry

Discussion:

Roll Call:

Selectman Barry: Aye

Selectwoman McHugh: Aye

Vice Chairman McGarry: Aye

Chairman Pitman: Aye

Selectman Huebner: Aye

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

Conflict of Interest Ordinance

Selectman Barry makes the recommendation that they take the draft as it is with the updates by the town attorneys and accept is the finished product and then wait until they get into budget season to decide whether or not they'll put it on the warrant. Chairman Pitman asks Selectman Huebner if has has a comment and Selectman Huebner states, no, he's willing do to this.

Motion: Selectman Barry makes a motion to take the draft as it is with the updates by the town attorneys and accept is the finished product and then wait until they get into budget season to decide whether or not they'll put it on the warrant.

Second: Vice Chairman McGarry

Discussion:

Selectwoman McHugh asks if this is going to be put aside until the elections come around again to see if they'll put it on the ballot and Selectman Barry states that is his idea as he's comfortable with the language that exists in it right now so he'd like to approve it but wait until they are putting together the warrant to decide whether or not they are going to put it on there.

Selectman Huebner states that he's studied this quite heavily this week and he feels this existing document has merit and should be approved tonight if the others agree. He then states there have been citizens comments that they have considered and they have received feedback from Bart on those and he's given feedback for the Board to consider as well and he's incorporated as much of that as he deemed worthy. He goes on to say this is why he agrees with Steve because he feels they have done their due diligence to come up with a good ordinance draft. He feels it should then be posted on the website as their approved so the public can see what it is and make any further comment that they wish. He states the only thing he disagrees with is that it should not be a question of whether or not it should go on the ballot but it should go on the ballot. Vice Chairman McGarry agrees that putting this on the town website is a good idea so the public can see it and they can get some additional comments if any.

Chairman Pitman expresses concern about posting it because they are approving so they might not be able to change it per public comments. Selectman Huebner states that they can approve it as a draft and then revise it if they deem it necessary based on further input from the public but he feels the public has a right to know what the draft says.

Selectman Barry states he feels they have done their due diligence and he would like to approve it and if it comes down to deciding, at the other of the year, they can amend it based on comments they've heard but for now he feels they should stand by it.

Selectwoman McHugh states she still doesn't understand why they are doing it after the town attorney advised them that they shouldn't and Selectman Barry says he has a big-time problem with it also. Chairman Pitman states they've got a chance to vote and Vice Chairman McGarry states they certainly had a vote at the town meeting with the population saying they should have this.

Chairman Pitman asks if they are ready to vote and Selectman Huebner asks if this is the vote to approve the draft and put it on the website and Chairman Pitman and Vice Chairman McGarry say yes. Selectman Huebner then asks if they have a motion. Selectman Barry states he made the motion to approve it and Chairman Pitman states that Vice Chairman McGarry seconded it.

Roll Call:

Selectman Barry: Aye

Selectwoman McHugh: No

Vice Chairman McGarry: Aye

Chairman Pitman: No

Selectman Huebner: Aye

Vote: Yea 3, Nay 2, Abstained 0 - Motion Carries

New Business/Other Business:

Vice Chairman McGarry brings something that has been troubling him for some time and decided that maybe it's time to propose it to the Board. He states they do not have to take action on it tonight but he

feels they really need to have a wage and salary survey for all town positions. It seems at times they have individual department heads or whatever that put forward to increase their salary with some recommendation but they don't have an actual salary schedule as such for all the salaried positions in the town and he feels they should really have something to that effect. He states that typically they would have a separate company do the survey and come up with recommendations which they can then look at and adopt if that's the Board's pleasure. He goes on to say that after listening to some of the comments Pete has made, he's not sure whether or not this survey could include other communities with a population size similar to Deerfield's but also looking at the size of the highway crews and the actual miles of the roadways in similar towns. He states that area wise Deerfield is the largest town in Rockingham County and he's not sure how the two-man crew plus the road agent, there is a third position, and how this compares with other towns of similar size or even smaller. With all the roads in Deerfield he's starting to question whether or not they have enough staff to actually properly take care of all the roads. Selectman Barry states he absolutely agrees. He feels they should have a professional study done to give them a wage ratio for something along the lines where they would not be guessing and he believes they could probably get the same figures on what they would look to have with all the roads in town. Selectman Huebner explains how his business uses a salary survey to get a benchmark for what certain functions and skill sets are commanding in the market that they are hiring in but of course it's different throughout the country so it needs to be a local survey but he feels this data likely exists already they can simply join a municipal committee of some kind that is already getting data for other towns. He's not sure a new contractor needs to be hired to do a bunch of research but he's not sure some sort of municipal committee even exists. In the end he would not like to see the town spend a lot of money on research but he wholeheartedly agrees with Vice Chairman McGarry but wants to encourage the Board to not reinvent the wheel if the wheel already exists somewhere. Vice Chairman McGarry then asks Mr. Harrington to look into this. He would like to see something to the effect of, patrolman one with a salary range of a to z and same for all salaried employees. If the municipal committee does not have this information he asks if Mr. Harrington will check with the finance director about her firm doing this type of work. Mr. Harrington agrees to look into it. Selectman Huebner states he's used to seeing not just a salary range but there's a median and a first quartile, second quartile, third and fourth quartile based on the performance of the employee and he feels this is the ideal way to administer salary for a town like Deerfield. To make sure that the town is not underpaying or over paying. Chairman Pitman thanks Vice Chairman McGarry and then asks if there's any more new or other business.

Selectwoman McHugh states that the town had stocked piled some sand and gravel a few years back in case of an emergency and she would like to know if there is still some stockpile. Mr. Schibbelhute steps to the mic and explains that the town has its own gravel that is like bank run gravel down in the pit. He goes on to say that at the town shed there's about 2 to 3 full loads of inch and a half gravel and 3 full loads of 3 quarter stone and there's rap at the town pit. He explains there's other stuff at the town pit that needs to be processed and he states the town pit is an issue in itself and something needs to be determined how it's going to be managed. It is agreed that there are a few loads available right in town and if more is needed, he can get it and Selectwoman McHugh just wants to make sure he doesn't get stuck so having a few loads around is good and that when it comes to buying gravel, they'll get it from whom they awarded the bids to. Mr. Schibbelhute explains that he did have to buy stone from Steve because Manchester was closed prior to Memorial Day. He goes on to explain that erosion stone is needed on Nottingham Road and if he buys it from Manchester Sand and Gravel it won't match the stone they already have there.

Citizen's Comments:

- Kathy Shigo. Cate Road. Ms. Shigo asks about the Town Hall and a decision being made about closing it due to the insurance. Mr. Harrington states that the Board did make a decision to require private parties to buy liability insurance for their event. She asks, so if someone wants have a baby shower or something there, they would go to Mr. Harrington for the insurance and he states, no, you would go to your own insurance company or purchase it from a separate

company. He states you'll then get a certificate of insurance with the town of Deerfield listed as an additional insurer on it and you would present it to the town with the lease agreement signed as well. And the town can not cover this for people.

- Harriet Cady. Ms. Cady asks if the town buys the book from the New Hampshire municipal anymore because this provides all the town wage ranges and population. Mr. Harrington states he has not purchased any book like that. She feels the town already pays dues for this and should not pay for an outside consultant.
- Erroll Rhodes. Church Street. Mr. Rhodes brings up the denial for the tax exemption requests from the Boy Scouts and 4-H for their properties at the fairgrounds. He states he guesses he read the correspondence and package the Board had received and he feels the RSA that the assessor quotes does not support what they recommended. He goes on to say that he is not aware of any law or RSA or ruling that allows anyone to strip out an asset from a charitable organization for the purpose of taxation which he thinks the assessor has done. He would like to know if the Board had received any advice that allows a town to pull out an asset from an entity in order to tax it for a property tax purposes and he would be grateful to know if they have that.
- Mike Burke. South Road. He would like to know what steps he now takes since they have signed off on the intent to cut. Mr. Harrington states that the signed document will go back to Christine Roberts tomorrow morning and he can give her call tomorrow about it and she can help him in the next steps.

Adjournment:

Motion: Vice Chairman McGarry makes a motion to adjourn.

Second: Selectman Barry

Discussion:

Roll Call:

Selectman Barry: Aye

Selectwoman McHugh: Yes

Vice Chairman McGarry: Yes

Chairman Pitman: Yes

Selectman Huebner: Aye

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

Next Meeting: June 19, 2023 at 5:30 pm

*The Minutes were transcribed and respectfully submitted by Randi Long, Recording Secretary
Pending approval by the Board of Selectmen*