

**TOWN OF DEERFIELD
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
July 17, 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.

Candia Road – Pete Schibbelhute & Fred McGarry

Candia Road is a scenic road and requires approval from the Planning Board to remove stone walls and cut trees. Vice Chairman McGarry explains that himself and Pete Schibbelhute met with residents on the road and did a walk through and in the end, it was evident that the residents do not want to see the road change very much but they understand the issue and would like to see engineered plans of what kind of work is to be done. He then explains an idea of doing a level spreader that one property owner is willing to do through an easement with the town on their property.

Selectwoman McHugh asks what a level spreader is and Mr. Schibbelhute explains that they help move water away from the road and that 1 will definitely go in but maybe 2 or 3 if possible. Vice Chairman McGarry states that for plans like this it will cost around \$20,000.00.

Motion: Vice Chairman McGarry makes a motion to expend up to \$20,000.00 for the preparation of plans and the legal work for the construction of level spreaders and easements on Candia Road to correct the drainage issues on the road.

Second: Selectman Barry

Discussion:

They discuss where the easements might be and the extent of them.

Vice Chairman McGarry adds that the property owners are willing to donate the land through easements and are not looking for money.

Mr. Schibbelhute explains why ditching is not an option, the property not wanting to see a lot of cutting of trees being number one. Proper ditching would require the cutting of a lot of trees.

Selectman Barry asks about the water drainage and Mr. Schibbelhute describes how it's not just the road water but water from a piece of property as well that is causing the issue.

Selectman Huebner asks if they have a cost for the implementation of the project and Mr.

Schibbelhute and Vice Chairman McGarry state they do not have that and cannot get it until they have a plan and it can be done in increments if necessary. Mr. Schibbelhute states they could potentially spend up to \$60,000 - \$80,000.00 altogether but until they have the plan they will not know. Selectman Huebner then asks if the Board is willing to spend this kind of money and they are. They would like to stop the ongoing problem.

Vote: Yea 4, Nay 1, Abstained 0 - Motion Carries

Bear-Paw – Cassier Easement (Fred & Amanda Morrisette Memorial Forest)

Caitlin Day with Bear-Paw. Ms. Day explains the easement with Bear-Paw. All the leg work has been completed and now Bear-Paw just needs approval from the BOS for the easement and the funds of \$19,230.00 but looks to be coming in closer to \$18,000.00 which would be coming out of the Conservation Fund.

Motion: Selectman Barry makes a motion to approve the easement and funds from the conservation fund of \$19,230.00 for the Cassier easement with Bear-Paw.

Second: Vice Chairman McGarry

Discussion:

Vote: Yea 4, Nay 1, Abstained 0 - Motion Carries

Municipal Budget Committee – Terry Roy

Terry Roy. 2 items he wants to bring to the BOS's attention.

1. He has scheduled a training with the Municipal Association to train the MBC on 8/1/2023 at 6:00pm at the George B. White Building.
2. He would like to reiterate his offer to meet jointly with the Board after the training to discuss the budget process for the year.

The entire MBC will be attending the training and the offer to join has been extended to the BOS and the School Board. Mr. Roy states he does not have an issue having the meeting posted to YouTube but he will have to check with the Municipal Association to see if they are okay with it as well before he can say it will definitely be recorded.

Chairman Pitman has Vice Chairman McGarry read a letter from Kendra Cohen, dated 7/17/2023, so it will be in the minutes.

"Dear Members of the Board:

I am writing to you as a resident and individual member of the School Board, but I am not sending this correspondence on behalf of the entire Board. I attended your last meeting on July 10th, as I saw Terry Roy requested a discussion about the Municipal Budget Committee be placed on the agenda. Unfortunately, Mr. Roy was unable to attend the meeting and has requested to be placed on the agenda for the meeting today, July 17th, which I am unable to attend. It is my understanding that the nature of his request is for BOS to consider a joint meeting between BOS and MBC during the budgeting process.

The MBC Rep from the School Board, Zach Langlois, informed the School Board at our meeting on June 7, 2023, that the MBC was proposing a joint meeting. The School Board did not feel it was appropriate or necessary, and Mr. Langlois will be relaying this back to the MBC at their next scheduled meeting. MBC members are, of course, invited and encouraged to attend/watch School Board meetings where the budget is being discussed and drafted, but it is my opinion that a joint meeting is not consistent with RSA 32:17 and 32:22 and defeats the purpose of having two separate and distinct groups reviewing the budget before the town meeting.

I plan to attend the MBC presentation by the NHMA on August 1 and would encourage other BOS members to do the same. I would also encourage the BOS refrain from making a formal decision about a joint meeting until after that presentation.

I have enclosed the relevant chapter on the Budget Committee from NHMA's publication "The Basic Law of Budgeting," for those interested in reviewing. Section D, Acquiring Information for Budget Preparation, is particularly relevant to the discussion and states, "in budget committee towns and districts, all officers and departments are required to submit statements of estimated expenses and receipts to the governing body first. The governing body then submits its own recommendations to the budget committee, together with all information necessary for the preparation of the annual budget, including each purpose for which an appropriation is sought and each item of anticipated revenue. RSA 32:17."

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter.

Sincerely,
Kendra Cohen"

Non-Public Session

Vice Chairman McGarry reads the RSA for which they will be going into the Non-Public. RSA 91-A:3, II

(a) The dismissal, promotion, or compensation of any public employee or the disciplining of such employee, or the investigation of any charges against him or her, unless the employee affected (1) has a right to a meeting and (2) requests that the meeting be open, in which case the request shall be granted.

Motion: Selectman Barry makes a motion to go into the Non-Public under RSA 91-A:3, II (a).

Second: Selectwoman McHugh

Discussion:

Roll Call:

Selectman Barry: Yes

Selectman Huebner: Yes

Selectwoman McHugh: Yes

Vice Chairman McGarry: Yes

Chairman Pitman: Yes

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

The Board returns from the Non-Public and no decisions were made.

Motion: Selectman Barry makes a motion to seal the minutes from the Non-Public.

Second: Vice Chairman McGarry

Discussion:

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

Regular Business

Review of Outstanding Minutes 7/10/2023:

Motion: Selectman Barry makes a motion to approve the minutes 7/10/2023 as written.

Second: Vice Chairman McGarry

Discussion:

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

Vouchers/Payroll Manifest/Accounts Payable Manifest:

- Payroll Manifest -No payroll.
- Accounts Payable - \$102,806.90.

Motion: Selectman Barry makes a motion to approve the accounts payable manifest in the amount of \$102,806.90.

Second: Vice Chairman McGarry

Discussion:

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

Signatures/Correspondence:

- Signatures
 - Breezeline Cable. 1 year contract extension.

Motion: Selectman Barry makes a motion to approve the one-year extension with Breezeline.

Second: Selectwoman McHugh

Discussion:

John Harrington explains that this extension is a result of a year long's worth of work with an attorney and the consortium. This will maintain our current service level for another year.

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

-Oath of office. Wes Golomb. Alternate member on the Conservation Commission.

Motion: Selectman Barry makes a motion to approve Wes Golomb as an alternate member of the Conservation Commission.

Second: Vice Chairman McGarry

Discussion:

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

- Correspondence –Letter from Kendra Cohen read earlier in the meeting.

Town Administrator's Report

John Harrington states he has several items.

1. Get back to the Board with additional estimates from MRI on the wage survey. There are currently 20 employees not counting the Police Department because they have a Board approved wage scale place. The wage scale is constructed at \$400.00 per employee, which brings the estimated cost of the survey to \$8,000.00. If they included the 3 officers positions the new total would be 23 and the survey would cost \$9,200.00. The total of 20 comes from the 19 town employees and one part-time firefighter. The part-time fire fighter is included per the Fire Chiefs requests.

Motion: Selectman Barry makes a motion to move forward with the survey at the cost of \$400.00 per employee without the officers.

Second: Vice Chairman McGarry

Discussion:

Chairman Pitman reiterates the total number of employees and the cost per employee.

Selectman Huebner states he needs more information about what this is. Mr. Harrington explains how the topic came up and the benefit of a town wide wage survey. MRI is the first vendor Mr. Harrington has reached out to, the Town already works with them, and they will provide a full report at the end of the survey. Selectman Huebner then asks about the numbers Mr. Harrington had presented before and Mr. Harrington states that came from public information from the Municipal Association and those numbers were based on the 2020 census. This survey would be Deerfield specific and the numbers would be reached by comparing positions throughout the whole state and they will provide a recommended range of pay for each position. They will recommend a step program based on the results as well. Mr. Harrington will also ask for the detailed information be provided with the results.

Chairman Pitman asks if the Board if they would like to motion to be a proposal now and Selectman Barry agrees.

Mr. Harrington states he will work with MRI and will ask them to provide the details of what they would be purchasing for the survey.

Vice Chairman McGarry, the second, is okay with the change to the motion.

Vote: Yea 4, Nay 1, Abstained 0 - Motion Carries

2. Mr. Harrington states the that he recently learned that there are no members on the Forestry Commission and there hasn't been in several years as there has been no interest from residents to run for the commission. There is a large acreage of forests in town and he feels that a Forestry Commission is crucial for the oversight and management of the town forests. He states that the Board has 2 choices, appoint 3 to 5 members to sit on the forest commission if no one has come forward to be elected or the commission can be assumed by the Conservation Commission as determined by a vote at town meeting. Selectwoman McHugh asks if there is a way to advertise this better as she doesn't feel people realize this is something they can get involved in. With better advertisement people might want to step up and run for the Forestry Commission. Mr. Harrington agrees to post the vacancies with the Forestry Commission.
3. The Board of Library of Trustees is interested in working with the BOS on developing a memorandum of understanding that would detail the roles and responsibilities of each particular body. They wanted

it mentioned tonight to see if there was any interest with the BOS about doing this and the BOS agrees they are interested. Mr. Harrington will schedule the meeting.

4. The results of the speed study done by the Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission (SNHPC) have come in and Mr. Harrington has provided a copy of it to each Board member for review.
5. The New Hampshire Division of Forest and Lands project review of the Gulf Road project has a fee of \$25.00 and the Pleasant Lake Planning Commission has asked the Town to pay it. They will be for every wetland permit and is only payable if there are potential hits that require review by the New Hampshire National Heritage Bureau. They do project reviews, in very short term, that search for threatened endangered plants or wildlife in the project area.

Motion: Vice Chairman McGarry makes a motion to pay \$25.00 for the review by the New Hampshire National Heritage Bureau on the Gulf Road project.

Second: Selectman Barry

Discussion:

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

6. Mr. Harrington lets the Board know that Mr. Ellis is still waiting on additional quotes for the library roof and he will most likely have them by the next BOS meeting.

Unfinished Business

Selectman Huebner asks Mr. Harrington what the progress is with finding a new Road Agent. He has heard that there have not been any applicants so he feels this means the Town should be casting a wider net. Mr. Harrington has to step away for a moment so they put this topic on hold.

Selectman Barry brings up the Public Notice – BOS/Public meeting on budget and asks if there are any comments from the BOS and if it can be put out to the public to see if there is any interest and then set up a meeting date. Vice Chairman McGarry goes over the minor edits he had done. One being, it's required. Vice Chairman McGarry doesn't feel this is correct and should read more something along the lines of welcoming people to attend. Selectman Barry feels they are past that point and by stating it's required more people would come to the meeting. Selectman Huebner disagrees with this as well and then goes on to speak about some of the edits to the rhetorical questions he feels are necessary. Vice Chairman McGarry provides a solution to this and Selectman Barry states he is open to all the changes as this was just a starting draft to get something rolling. They all agree they provide feedback and Selectman Huebner will work with Selectman Barry to rewrite it and have it ready for the next meeting.

Selectman Huebner brings the Road Agent back up now that Mr. Harrington has returned. He reiterates casting a wider net that might help bring in more candidates for the position. Mr. Harrington states that the only avenue they have not tried is newspapers. He states that he is willing to do it if the Board will approve using funds to do so. Selectman Huebner would like to advertise in as many newspapers as possible and Mr. Harrington states it is expensive and that is why the town has moved away from advertising and posting public notices in newspapers but he is willing to if allowed by the Board. Mr. Harrington then agrees to research the pricing and present it to the Board before the decision is made. Selectwoman McHugh asks about the open highway maintainer position and Mr. Harrington states he has only received one application and it was incomplete. He has reached out to the candidate but has not received a response. Selectwoman McHugh then asks about the transfer station position and Mr. Harrington states there have not been any applicants yet.

New Business/Other Business

Citizen's Comments

- Anne Myers, Philbrick-James Library Director and Sadie Stimmell, Chair of the Library Board. Ms. Myers states she is there to answer any questions the Board may have about the library roof and to provide an update on the egress. She then explains everything she included in a packet for the BOS members to look over and she hands them out. The Board agrees to look over the packet and then have Ms. Myers be added to a future meetings agenda to discuss it.

Adjournment

Motion: Selectman Barry makes a motion to adjourn at 6:44pm.

Second: Vice Chairman McGarry

Discussion:

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

Next Meeting: July 31, 2023, at 5:30 pm

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