

**TOWN OF DEERFIELD
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
March 25, 2024
MINUTES**

Call to Order

5:30 – Chairman McGarry called the meeting to order

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

Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

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

Second: Selectwoman McHugh

Discussion:

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

Chairman McGarry thanks the Board for honoring his late wife in this years Town Report.

Reorganization of Board:

Motion: Vice Chairman Pitman makes a motion for Fred McGarry to be Chair and Dick Pitman to be Vice Chair.

Second: Selectwoman McHugh

Discussion:

It is clarified that it is a single motion for both and 2 separate motions are not needed.

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

Courtney Torre – Lazy Lion:

Ms. Torre notifies the Board that the annual April Foolishness Race will be held again this year and The Lazy Lion needs a letter of approval from the BOS to the Liqueur Commission stating they approve of the event. Ms. Torre explains the process they have followed the previous years and that they will continue to follow.

Motion: Vice Chairman Pitman makes a motion to approve the event and have a letter of approval written.

Second: Selectwoman McHugh

Discussion:

The Board and Ms. Torre go over what happens at the event

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

Jack Hutchinson – Support for Aging in Place:

Mr. Hutchinson has come back to the Board to provide an update on how swiftly they have been able to expand help with Support for Aging in Place and what they are still working on getting for help such as a ride program. He asks Chairman McGarry to be present at the Southern NH Planning meeting on May 21 at 12:30 because Deerfield Support for Aging in Place is on the agenda for this meeting and would appreciate the Town's support. He goes on to explain to the Board that they will be submitting a warrant article next year on elderly tax exemptions and the formula they will use when writing it. Lastly, he discusses with the BOS the regions of the ride sharing programs and how they are trying to have Deerfield added to one of the regions.

The discussion is wrapped up with the Board agreeing to review the elderly tax exemption warrant that was on this year's warrant and see if there is something they can do to move forward with a higher elderly tax exemption.

Regular Business

Review of Outstanding Minutes 3/11/2024:

Motion: Selectwoman McHugh makes a motion to approve the minutes from 3/11/2024.

Second: Selectman Huebner

Discussion:

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

Payroll Manifest/Accounts Payable Manifest:

- Accounts Payable – 3/25/2024 - \$37,280.94

Motion: Vice Chairman Pitman makes a motion to approve the 3/25/2024 accounts payable in the amount of \$37,280.94.

Second: Selectwoman McHugh

Discussion:

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

Signatures/Correspondence:

- Signatures
 - Chairman McGarry will read all the Veteran's tax applications and then seek approval for all.
 1. Veteran's Tax Credit, \$750.00. Carson Lustenburger. Old Centre Road.
 2. Veteran's Tax Credit, \$750.00. Service-connected total and permanent disability, \$4,000.00. Total of \$4,750.00. Seth Bridges. Middle Road.

Motion: Vice Chairman Pitman makes a motion to approve both veteran's tax credits, \$750.00 for Carson Lustenburger of Old Centre Road and \$4,750.0 for Seth Bridges of Middle Road.

Second: Selectwoman McHugh

Discussion:

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

- Solar Credit. Michael Morely and Sally Weiss. Companion Road. \$16,800.00.

Motion: Vice Chairman Pitman makes a motion to approve the solar credit in the amount of \$16,800.00 for Michael Morely and Sally Wise of Companion Road.

Second: Selectwoman McHugh

Discussion:

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

- Timber Tax. Susan M. Reed. 45 Cotton Road. \$2,417.89.

Motion: Selectwoman McHugh makes a motion to collect the timber tax of \$2,417.89 from Susan M Reed, Cotton Road.

Second: Vice Chairman Pitman

Discussion:

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

- Letter from Avatar. March 5, 2024. Two recommendations for abatements. Matthew and Rebecca Priebe on Nottingham Road in the amount of \$684.00 and Scott Bassett on Brown Road in the amount of \$995.00.

Motion: Selectwoman McHugh makes a motion to approve the two recommendations for abatements from Avatar for Matthew and Rebecca Priebe on Nottingham Road in the amount of \$684.00 and Scott Bassett on Brown Road in the amount of \$995.00.

Second: Selectman Barry

Discussion:

Chairman McGarry reads the letter for Matthew and Rebecca Priebe to clarify what the abatement is for.

“The taxpayer, through their tax representative Harriet Cady, has filed for abatement on this 2.730-acre property improved with a 1.00 story (with small bonus room) ranch style dwelling assessed at \$341,900. As basis for the abatement, the taxpayer states, "see attached sheets" and provided a list of issues and/or concerns they felt warranted an abatement, i.e., no cellar cement pad, two bedrooms have no closets, floors uneven, etc., with most of the issues either being accounted in the building value already and some that are incorrect, i.e., "No central heat". I verified with the homeowner and during my inspection that was scheduled due to this abatement on March 1, 2024, that they do have central heat (Gas with baseboard hot water). Additionally, they provided a market value opinion of \$260,000. However, the only evidence that was provided to support that opinion was other assessments in town, not recent sales, to determine the market value of the property (205 Raymond Road, 24 Meetinghouse Hill Road and 167 South Road). Furthermore, no analysis or report was provided to determine how the adjustments were made to account for the differences, as the only home remotely close to the size of the subject (2,389 GLA) is 24 Meetinghouse Hill Road at 2,428 GLA and their assessment for TY2023 was \$334,400, which is similar to the subject at \$341,900. Both 205 Raymond Road (1,128 GLA) and 167 South Road (1,176) are substantially smaller than the subject, which is why they are (among other adjustments for differences) assessed less. For those reasons, the market value opinion of \$260,000 held no weight in my decision. However, due to the taxpayers' claims regarding quality, layout, overall concerns, etc. I visited the property on March 1, 2024. There are some on-going issues with the house, layout, misc. leaks, septic tank location and so on. While most of the condition issues were accounted for previously in the building valuation depreciation section, I do agree that the house has a unique layout, and the quality is not the average quality that you would see in a ranch today. Areas with low head room, uneven floors, appear very pieced together, etc. Therefore, because of my inspection and review I reduced the quality rating from an AO (average ranch) to an BI (below average ranch) to account for and recognize the quality and layout issues that you would not typically see on your average ranch today. Also, I reduced the condition ratings on two outbuildings (screenhouse and deck) due to rot and its poor condition. These changes reduced the assessment from \$341,900 to \$311,700 and I recommend an abatement on the \$30,200 value difference. Abatement of \$684 ($\$30,200 / \$1,000 \times 2023 \text{ Tax Rate } \22.66) plus statutory interest pursuant to RSA 76: 17-a.”

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

Chairman McGarry reads the letter from Avatar about the abatement for Scott Bassett.

“The taxpayer, through their tax representative Harriet Cady, has filed for abatement on this 3.860-acre property improved with a 1.75 story cape style dwelling assessed at \$250,000. As basis for the abatement, the taxpayer states much of the interior of the house is unfinished, the

sheet attached to the abatement essentially lists all the issues and unfinished areas on the house. They opined a value of \$200,000; however, they did not provide any market evidence or information that indicates how that opinion was arrived at, therefore it held no weight in this decision. Due to the taxpayers' concerns and information regarding much of the house being unfinished and Avitar not having reviewed the interior in the past, I scheduled an interior inspection on March 1, 2024. As the taxpayer and tax representative indicated, much of the interior is unfinished and/or in rough condition, i.e., upstairs needs floors and trim, with one room completely gutted, needs a new furnace (currently wood heat only), first floor also needs floors and trim (mostly subfloor), misc. ceil damage, original and dated kitchen and bathroom. Additionally, the back section of the house was originally a mobile home, the steel framing is still visible from the basement. For the reasons noted above, a temporary depreciation was added in the amount of 15%, to account for the cost to cure and the quality was reduced to B 1, to account for the overall quality, old mobile home parts still visible, etc. As a result of these changes, the assessment was reduced from \$250,600 to \$206,700 and I recommend an abatement on the \$43,900 value difference. Abatement of \$995 ($\$43,900 / \$1,000 \times 2023 \text{ Tax Rate } \22.66) plus statutory interest pursuant to RSA 76: 17-a."

Motion: Vice Chairman Pitman makes a motion to approve the abatement for Scott Bassett, Brown Road in the amount of \$995.00.

Second: Selectwoman McHugh

Discussion:

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

- Unitrends. New server back-up agreement. Steve Jamele, IT, explains why he is looking to change to Unitrends for server back-up with a cloud service and why he recommends them per his research. After discussion with the Board, it is agreed that going with Unitrends is the best option for a cost of \$12,781.88 for 3 years. Mr. Harrington requests that they include in the motion an approval for himself to sign the agreement electronically.

Motion: Selectman Barry makes a motion to approve the agreement with Unitrends at a cost of \$12,781.83 for 3 years and for Mr. Harrington to sign electronically.

Second: Vice Chairman Pitman

Discussion:

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

- Casella contract.

Motion: Selectman Barry makes a motion to approve the contract with Casella and authorizing the Chair to sign on behalf of the Board.

Second: Selectwoman McHugh

Discussion:

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

- Oaths of Offices Nominations. John Dubiansky, Health Officer. Kevin Lemieux, Deputy Health Officer. Building Inspector, Kevin Lemieux. Cindy McHugh, Animal Control Officer. Doreen Schibbelhute, Welfare Administrator.

Motion: Selectman Barry makes a motion to nominate John Dubiansky as Health Officer, Kevin Lemieux as Deputy Health Officer and Building Inspector, Cindy McHugh as Animal Control Officer, and Doreen Schibbelhute as Welfare Administrator.

Second: Vice Chairman Pitman

Discussion:

Selectwoman McHugh abstains from the Animal Control Officer vote but votes yea for the remainder.

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

- Correspondence
 - March 2024 Highway Department Update Report.
“Since February 28 the Highway Department has added crushed stone and gravel to Middle, Mountain, Candia, Currier, Harvey, and graded and rolled most of the Town dirt roads. A lot of this work was done to fill in the ruts in the roads from the frost coming out of the ground. We have completed ditching on Church Street, and Meetinghouse and Lang. We have installed 2 new concrete culverts on Lang Road to replace the failed CMP pipe culverts. We have more ditching to complete on Lang and Meetinghouse Hill Roads. Mark young completed ditching on Currier Road. Glen Young will be ditching on Mountain Road. I will be working on layout for Mt Delight Road to generate an RFP for paving this year. The highway crew will be working on tree clean up after this weekend snow storm
In the coming year the Highway Department has many issues to address with tight budget constraints. With the help of the people of Deerfield, The Highway Department intends to accomplish work that will show improvement on our roads. Improvement will take time, but it is attainable. Thank you, Pete Schibbelhute”
 - Trustee of the Trust Funds Investment Policy Statement. The Town Treasurer, Joanna Waring, pointed to RSA 41:9, VII, and summarized it stating the BOS should review the investment policy annually and approve it.

Motion: Selectman Barry makes a motion to reapprove the current investment policy.

Second: Selectwoman McHugh

Discussion:

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

Payroll Manifest/Accounts Payable Manifest:

- Payroll Manifest – 3/13/2024 – Approved and electronically signed by the Board 3/18/2024 – Gross, \$102,236.17. Net, \$65,975.28
- Accounts Payable Manifest – 3/18/2024 – Approved and electronically signed by the Board - \$1,486,093.64 which \$1,400.00.00 of this amount went to the school.

Town Administrator’s Report:

Mr. Harrington has a few items.

1. had sent to the Board of over the weekend for the proposal from Deb Curtain for the artistic signs for each section of Deerfield. He Would like to know if the Board would like to move forward with the signs or not.

Motion: Selectman Barry makes a motion to move forward with Deb Curtains proposal of creating and putting up artistic signs in the 8 different historic sections of Deerfield.

Second: Vice Chairman Pitman

Discussion:

It is clarified that no funding is being requested from the Town for the project.

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

Mr. Harrington agrees to work with Ms. Curtain and the Highway department for proper installment and placement of the signs.

2. The Septic Design for Central Station has been approved by the State of NH so the design is ready to go to RFP and is to be funded by ARPA. The Board agrees with this and Mr. Harrington states he will start working on an RFP to get it posted.

Selectman Huebner asks if the Board would like to set aside of the remaining ARPA funds for the roads. It is clarified that there is around \$233,000.00 left in ARPA funds and \$80,000.00 of it is earmarked for Haynes Road and an unknown additional amount is possibly needed for Range Road.

3. Striping of the Town Hall parking. How far back would Board like the striping to go. Mr. Harrington agrees to check with the highway department. Whatever they do not need can be striped and move the handicap spaces closer to the ramp.

Unfinished Business/New Business/Other Business:

- Unfinished Business
 - Wage Survey. Selectman Huebner and Selectwoman McHugh present the results of their research. The Board agrees to review the information provided.
 - Selectwoman McHugh reminds the Board of a decision made last April about the Command Vehicle being left with next in command or at the fire department when the Chief is out of town and the Board agrees the Chief should be aware of this and should following this procedure.
- New Business
 - Proposed Senior Housing. The land needed for the driveway is Town owned property and Chairman McGarry would like permission from the Board to submit the driveway application to the DOT on behalf of the developer.

Motion: Selectman Barry makes a motion to approve the submission of a driveway application to the DOT by Chairman McGarry on behalf of the senior development developer.

Second: Vice Chairman Pitman

Discussion:

It is clarified that the costs will be covered by the developer.

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

- Selectman Huebner congratulates Selectwoman McHugh on her re-election.
- Other Business -no other business

Non-Public Session

Motion: Vice Chairman Pitman makes a motion go into non-public under RSA 91-A:3, II (b) The hiring of any person as a public employee.

Second: Selectwoman McHugh

Discussion:

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

Selectman Barry states that no action was taken during the non-public.

Motion: Selectman Barry makes a motion to seal the non-public minutes.

Second: Selectwoman McHugh

Discussion:

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

Citizen's Comments

- Erroll Rhodes. Church Street. Mr. Rhodes congratulates Selectwoman McHugh for her reelections. He then provides his opinion on the wage study and his recommendation on it.
- Linda Perry. Range Road. Ms. Perry gives her opinion on the wage study. She then asks about the contract with Casella it is confirmed that the BOS had decided finalized what wanted to go with at the last meeting and so Casella wrote up the contract per the BOS's request and it was signed this evening.
- Vicky Bedard. Cole Road. Ms. Bedard asks the BOS if they have met with the town council and it is conformed, they have not but all the RSA's pertaining to her situation were sent to the Board to review and they will make a decision by the next meeting on how to move forward. Lastly, Ms. Bedard states it is fact that culvert put in at the end of her driveway is unsafe and not an opinion.
- Suzanne Steele. Harvey Road. Ms. Steele provides the Board with an update on the first meeting of the Recycling Committee and their goals. Their next meeting date is April 10, 7pm at the Deerfield Community Church.

Adjournment

Motion: Selectman Barry makes a motion to adjourn.

Second: Vice Chairman Pitman

Discussion:

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

Next Meeting: April 8, 2024 at 5:30 pm

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