

**TOWN OF DEERFIELD
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
September 23, 2019
MINUTES**

Call to Order

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

Present: Andrew Robertson, Chairman; Richard Pitman, Vice Chairman. Fred McGarry, Jeff Shute and Cindy McHugh, Selectpersons.

Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

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

Quarterly Reports: Police Chief, Gary Duquette and Road Agent – Mark Young

Chairman Robertson stated that the first order of business and he hoped it didn't cause too much discomfort for the police chief and the road agent but one of the things that the Board had discussed was getting back to, and they used to do this monthly, years and years ago, have department heads, particularly the road agent, the police department, fire department come in and give the Board an update about what's going on in the departments.

They thought monthly, the Board seemed to a little to steep but quarterly might be a good plan and hopes that it was agreeable to those folks.

For quarterly reports, they had the police chief, Gary Duquette on first.

Chief of Police – Gary Duquette

Chief Duquette stated that there was no discomfort on his end to doing this.

He stated that he probably isn't going to tell them anything that they don't know and it will be sort of a recap for the public record.

Things are going good. They just hired their new officer in the middle of August. He is in the 4th week of the 15-week police academy with a graduation date of December 20th.

That will bring the department back up to its full compliment of full-time officers. They will be looking to do some field training afterwards.

He is doing well over there and he seems to be enjoying it.

He stated that he may be a little biased but he has a fantastic group of officers. They are probably the best at least since he has been there.

The group he has now really take care of business, do a really good job, treat people nice. He gets a lot of compliments via e-mail, phone calls, things like that on these guys. Even when they are stopping people, they are doing an outstanding job.

Finished up the upgrades to their inhouse record management system that they talked about that took literally six months to get that done. They had been working on that for a couple of months. It was an interesting transition but they now have a more accurate account of what they do. There is a lot of information sharing there because they are hooked right into dispatch and can see what the towns around them are doing. It's good to be able to do that and to access other towns files to see what's going on out there as well.

They did their first National Night Out event in August and thought that it went very well. There was a real good response from that. He thought that it was well attended. All of his officers participated in that and did parts in it to make it a success.

Coming up in October, they are going to be doing the Haunted Barn event, which will be their third year doing it up at the barn at the fairgrounds that they usually use for that event that they graciously are allowing us to use again this year so they are looking forward to having a good event for Halloween.

That's about it. Other than that, they just do what they do. He thought that things were going well and will continue to serve Deerfield using the best of their ability.

Chief Duquette asked the Board if they had any questions.

Chairman Robertson asked if they got the new cruiser with the new items on it yet to which the chief replied that it is being outfitted right now.

The chairman asked how long it would take and the chief remarked that it was a good question.

The chief stated that everything comes in at once and he didn't expect it until after the fair at the earliest.'

Chairman Robertson stated that they were going to look at the police budget a little later if he wanted to stick around.

Road Agent – Mark Young

Mr. Young stated that they are pretty much through their road reconstruction. They did 4,500 feet on Nottingham Road which is complete. 1,600 feet on Parade Road which is complete.

He stated that they did a bunch of additional drainage on Parade itself in front of the Drummer Boy Apartments. It was always a bad spot in the winter time. The water would come across the road. They did some catch basins and some underdrains. Hopefully that will be better for everybody this winter.

Did some culvert replacements on Griffin Road, Coffeetown Road, Perry Road and got those drainage issues taken care of.

Basically, they are staying pretty busy. Roadside mower guy is starting today. Cotton Road is done. He was in Cottonwood Estates and will be heading to South Road.

It took him two weeks here last year with one tractor. He has two tractors this year so Mr. Young figured that he would be done in about a week and a half and have everything buttoned up.

He stated that he has a little bit of money left over from the road reconstruction budget and has thought about what to with it. It's too small a job to bring R & D Paving back into the equation but what he would really like to do is to overlay the intersection of Church Street and Candia Road just to kind of tie that together.

It seems like when Church Street got paved, they stopped short of the intersection and when Candia Road got paved, they stopped short of the intersection and it's all falling apart. They have to patch it all the time.

He thought that he was going to have a lot more money than this and he had R & D give him a bunch of quotes for other stuff but there is just, the money is just not going to be there.

He didn't know if the Board would have any objections if he asked Manchester Paving if they wanted to do it as it is such a small job and would probably only take them a half a day.

He has been patching of the culverts for him and is doing good.

Chairman Robertson stated that he wouldn't have any objections to it but he didn't know if the Board feels but anything that can be done to that intersection would be appreciated by the town.

Mr. Young stated that the manholes are sticking up and they catch them on the plows and it's endless patching and for a little bit of hot top there, he thought that it would make a world of difference so that is what he thought that he would like to spend the last of the money right there. Go down to the telephone house and that would be it.

Members of the Board agreed that this would be a good way to spend the remaining money.

Mr. Young stated that this was it and that they have been busy, busy.

Chairman Robertson asked if they were still on summer hours to which Mr. Young stated they were and will most likely run to the first of November. After that, it gets too dark, too early.

Mr. Young stated that he would see them at budget time to which he stated that it should be in another couple of weeks.

Chairman Robertson stated that they had one budget committee meeting last week, sort of an organizational meeting and he didn't think the next budget committee meeting was until the 3rd week in October. Actually the 29th of October.

Mr. Young stated that the only thing to keep in mind is that they have to recharge the credit card for the winter warrant article because they lose \$60,000.00 out of it this year. They will have to put in a new warrant article this year to bring that back up if they don't use anymore of it. Hopefully they have enough money here to get them through if they have any storms in November and December this year.

Chairman Robertson thought that the town has been pretty supportive of that.

2020 Budget Review:

Parks and Rec – Page 66

Nick stated that there were no surprises there. Again, it is the whole director's salary and half of the assistant director's salary. They are up slightly due to the COLA raise last year.

The budget is \$71,525.00

Chairman Robertson stated that if they had any questions, they would have asked Jeff and he stated that he thought that they heard that it will be late October to meet with the Budget Committee. Even though it's not their preview to vote yea or nay, as you already know, but they would like to know what is going on with the Parks and Rec fund as far as balance and what was expended out of it.

Motion: Vice Chairman Pitman moves to approve the Parks and Rec budget of \$71,525.00

Second: Selectman McGarry

Discussion:

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

Government Buildings – Page 20, George B. White Building, Page 21, Town Hall, Page 22

Mr. Ellis stated that on Government Buildings, there is one change that he would like to make. He was reviewing it and going over everything this morning and found out that the default budget that he was working with a couple of years ago, the repairs and maintenance there was a lot of maintenance and a lot of flooring, carpets which was why it had gone up so high when he was putting together his budget.

He started that he would like to make a correction on that. Where it says yearly maintenance, filter systems, furnace repairs to building, it says \$56,000.00 and would like to change that to \$26,000.00. There is \$17,000.00 for the seal coat and striping of the parking lot.

Chairman Robertson interrupted Mr. Ellis and asked if this was for the George B. White to which he stated yes and asked if that was what he was after.

Chairman Robertson stated that no, he was hoping to start with Government Buildings but if you are on George B. White and are half way through it, they could change to that.

So, on the George B. White, he would like to drop that \$56,000.00 and add \$26,000.00 and the \$17,000.00 he would like to keep in there for seal coating and striping of the parking lot and the paving of the new walkway on the side by DPR down back for \$5,000.00. That would bring the total down from \$78,000.00 to \$48,000.00

Chairman Robertson asked what it did for the bottom line if he knew offhand which he stated that it dropped it \$30,000.00 so it ends up \$112,695.00 which puts them a lot closer to last year.

Questions for Mr. Ellis from the Board on the George B. White

Motion: Vice Chairman Pitman moves to approve the budget for the George B White Building of \$112,695.00

Second: Selectman McGarry

Discussion:

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

Chairman Robertson stated that they would now start with Government Buildings.

Mr. Ellis stated that the change in Government Buildings is the part-time employee raise. Mileage which they never had mileage on that line. It was always \$1.00 so they figured out roughly 2,080 miles so basically 40 miles a week. It will be \$1,113.00 for the year.

Everything other than the cost of everything going up as far as their trash, electricity and the mowing contract as well. That was two years ago on a default budget.

Chairman Robertson asked the Board if they had any questions on the Government Buildings budget.

Motion: Vice Chairman Pitman moves to approve the Government Buildings budget of \$133,048.00

Second: Selectman McGarry

Discussion:

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

Town Hall – Page 22

Mr. Ellis stated that the yearly sprinkler testing is in the budget which is the same as last year. The maintenance repairs, the only thing there was the ceiling in the town hall at the bottom of the stairs is cracking and the chandelier looks like it is starting to pull a little bit. It's not in danger of falling yet but he would like to get it replaced and fixed. So, there is a little change there of \$1,000.00 for that.

Two sides of the town hall will be painted to try to catch up. Last year, they had the front and the back done and this year they did the front and the back. The year before that, they didn't do anything, any painting. So, to get on track, he would like to do the other two sides this year.

The chairman asked if there were any questions regarding the town hall.

Motion: Vice Chairman Pitman moves to approve the Town Hall budget of \$54,386.00

Second: Selectman McGarry

Discussion:

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

The chairman asked Mr. Ellis if he had anything else to which he stated no but that everything was going well and they are getting ready for winter. They have all the generators checked and everything seems to be good. They did all the furnace filters and maintenance and everything is good there so they should be ready to go for winter.

Police Department – Page 30

Chief Duquette stated that his proposed budget represents an increase of \$49,985.00 which is basically 6.5 percent over last year's default operating budget.

Largest portion is contributable to wage increases based on the pay scale approved by the Board back in October of 2017 and also reflects that 1.5 percent COLA that the town employees received in June 2018.

That is really the biggest jump which was the wage which was in the amount of \$21,023.00 which was about 5.5 percent of the total increase. Of course, when you do that, it affects the overtime, shift rated pay and all those lines as well.

Other than that, he added \$500.00 to the legal notice line like he does every year because he usually has \$250.00 and he basically uses that for advertising for vacant positions and \$250.00 doesn't even cover, not even close.

The maintenance agreement for the copier went up \$150.00 a year compared to what it was so that was added in.

He added \$9,300.00 to the gasoline line which he believed was a town wide increase in the per gallon rate. It was set, he believed, to \$2.25 to \$2.90 a gallon now.

He added \$2,000.00 to the cruiser line because quite simply because cars are getting any cheaper.

And that's it. Like he stated before, the biggest increase was on wages and he didn't know how many years they have been at the default budget.

Other than that, it was only like a 1 percent increase over what was asked for last year. Things are getting tight with all these default budgets.

Chief Duquette stated that he would answer any questions that the Board might have.

Vice Chairman Pitman asked what the state was of the NHSPOTS?

Chief Duquette stated that it was a good question. Believe it or not, for whatever reason, since he has been there, they have never charged them for that. His administrative assistant asked him the same question every year.

The problem is that he didn't want to take it out of there and he didn't ask questions. According to her, every year they sent that bill.

There was an issue with that whole system, he didn't know what it was whether it wasn't working right. There was something that happened there. He kind of got the feeling that they just dropped the ball and never picked back up on it. He hasn't been charged for it since he has been there.

Vice Chairman Pitman asked if he was doing well with the prosecuting and Chief Duquette stated that they were doing great. He has been with them since June and he is working out very well.

Motion: Vice Chairman Pitman moves to approve the Police Department budget of \$799,243.00

Second: Selectman McGarry

Discussion:

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

Chairman Robertson stated that he didn't think the chief had much to say on Highway Safety as there is a \$1.00 in each of those lines in case, they got state or federal money.

He stated that he also had the Animal Control Budget and there was no change in that one either.'

Highway Safety – Page 39

Animal Control – Page 60

Selectwoman McHugh stated that she needs a truck and the vice chairman stated something like a pickup to which she stated something like a Transit.

Chief Duquette stated that he might be able to resolve that issue too. Instead of going with the whole Ford thing as it went haywire this year, he purchased a Dodge Charger sedan. He thinks that they will work out really well and he could purchase one of those cars and upfit it for about what it would cost them to buy a new Ford SUV. The prices have gone through the roof.

If he does that, what he would offer is that the next vehicle coming off line is an Explorer SUV.

They are well maintained but it will have about 100,000 miles but they are rigidly maintained and everything gets replaced on them as they go through so they run well. He really wouldn't need to use that for a trade in and that could be something that could be stripped out, have the graphics taken off it and handed down for an ACO vehicle. Just some food for thought for you folks. That could be done.

The only issue that he would say is that it is gas and maintenance wouldn't be an issue because it would not be a high used vehicle.

It's just a thought and he knew that they could do it but would let them decide.

Motion: Vice Chairman Pitman moves to approve the Animal Control Budget of \$6,202.00

Second: Selectman McGarry

Discussion:

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

Mr. Harrington noted that they didn't vote on the Highway Safety budget and the vice chairman thought that they didn't have to because the amount was \$1.00. The chairman stated that the amount was \$5.00.

Motion: Selectman McGarry moves to approve the Highway Safety budget of \$5.00

Second: Selectman Shute

Discussion:

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

Chairman Robertson stated that they had the Building Department and the Planning Board.

He stated that they had talked with Mr. Pelletier last week and he didn't know if the Board wanted to revisit that. The vice chairman stated that he would like to wait another week if they could.

Selectman McGarry stated that similarly on the Planning Board budget, the board hasn't met but will be meeting on Wednesday night and hopefully voting on the budget.

Regular Business:

Review of Outstanding Minutes of 9/16/2019

The chairman stated that they didn't have outstanding minutes completed.

Payroll Manifest - \$71,728.59 (gross), \$46,502.39 (net)

Motion: Selectman McGarry moves to approve the payroll manifest as presented

Second: Selectwoman McHugh

Discussion:

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

Accounts Payable Manifest - \$66,692.00

Motion: Selectman Shute moves to approve the accounts payable manifest as presented

Second: Selectwoman McHugh

Discussion:

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

Signatures:

The first one is very straight forward. It is a service quote that came to the Deerfield Rescue Squad regarding the service plan for the Lucas. Annual cost for coverage is \$1,333.80 and the extended term net price is \$5,335.20 so it just needs a signature.

It was asked if all the paperwork was from Mr. Harrington to which he answered that they were not. One was for Kelly Duffy and the other is Tina St. Peter. One is to be the transcriptionist for the MBC and one for Parks and Rec.

Chairman Robertson stated that he had two personnel action requests for transcriptionist for Parks and Rec and the MBC. Both of them are at \$18.00 an hour and hopefully if we approve these that they can keep them for a little while.

Motion: Vice Chairman Pitman moves to approve the personnel request forms as presented and have the chairman sign

Second: Selectman Shute

Discussion:

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

The next item is essentially personnel action requests recommending a 2% rate increase based on a successful yearly evaluation. He has not put any of these forward since he has been there and would like to take some action to maintain his current staff and reduce the possibility of turnover. It's a good business practice to show successful business staff after a good evaluation that there's some action taken wage.

Chairman Robertson stated that he didn't know if the Board has had a chance to look through these. He appreciates his rationale but rather than to act on these tonight, he would like the Board to take a look through these and look at the amounts and see what they think and come back and revisit.

Chairman Robertson asked if the Board was in agreement and they all agreed.

Correspondence:

Chairman Robertson stated that they had a request from a Boy Scout Troop from Raymond in regard to Justin Schbelka from Deerfield.

"He has reached the rank of Eagle Scout, the highest and prestigious award in Boy Scouts"

He is looking for a letter or certificate or anything else that you would feel acknowledges his achievement and this is coming from his troop leader, Boy Scout Troop 3.

This is something that they have typically done. This agreement for the Board, he would direct to the Town Administrator to put together a letter of congratulations of reaching the rank of Eagle Scout from the Board of Selectmen.

Chairman Robertson stated that he had a letter from FEMA specifically from the state mitigation officer basically accepting their hazard mitigation plan. It didn't require any action.

There were minutes from the Executive Council submitted by Deerfield's executive councilor, Theodore Gatsas for their review and the actions that they have taken.

Town Administrator's Report

Mr. Harrington stated that they had a few things in their folders if they wanted to follow along to bring to their attention.

The first item that they had was the completed 2018 Audit Report in their folders. Those were submitted to the town just last week and everyone should have a copy.

He also wanted to put out a notice that at the next meeting on the 30th, the work session begins at 5:00 pm with a conference call in the conference room upstairs. He stated that he would send out an email reminder as well as they got to the end of this week and probably Monday as well.

Because they are back on a holiday schedule including Columbus Day, that was a previously scheduled Board meeting on the 14th of October and he wanted to know if the Board wanted to move that to the Tuesday the 15th to keep in the cycle of meeting every week?

Board members agreed to move the meeting to the 15th of October.

They also had an updated, Capital Improvement Plan form that has additional information and some photos from the transfer station. This was submitted by Sylvia and she would like to ask the Board the same questions that she asked on every other one when she was here last. A year and a priority.

He didn't know if they wanted to hold off until the 30th in order to take time to look it over, he could reschedule it.

Vice Chairman Pitman stated that he didn't need more time.

Chairman Robertson asked what year he would like to assign to it to which he stated that it should be at least three years out and a low priority as there are other ways around it.

Mr. Harrington stated that the year should be 2023 and it should be a medium priority which was confirmed by the Board members.

Mr. Harrington stated that he would pass that information on.

Mr. Harrington stated that they all had a sheet that is a report form about escrow accounts. It should be a one page, landscape sheet.

This has been in the audit report for the two years that he has been doing audits here. They have been recommending that they clean up the escrow accounts.

Peter Lemay and Rita along with the help from Jane Boucher have been able to clean up the escrow accounts, some dating back more than ten to fifteen years.

What they have left, there are two blocks of information. The top is all of the ones in question. They have been able to identify three of those will be returned to owner with their approval tonight and the remaining four, they have been unable to identify where those funds need to go back to. Anything over five years left unclaimed according to State of NH Abandoned Property should go back to the State of NH in their unclaimed property account.

Out of curiosity, did he know who the Cottonwood settlement is being returned to?

Mr. Harrington stated that he believed it was the developer.

Selectman McGarry stated that he had a problem with that and the reason he did have one is that he never filled the requirement that a homeowner's association be established.

Also, did the select board get any money associated with that to which Chairman Robertson stated that he thought that they did get some and it was used for culvert repair. He was trying to remember because it was such a long time ago.

He remembered that they had the meeting with Kelly Ayotte in the AG's office in Concord and everyone hollered at each other for a half an hour.

He continued that he thought that the developer at the time was not in country. He was over the border in Mexico, he believed.

If it is the only legal way to clear the accounting is to do it this way then maybe we have to but if there is any other way around it...

Mr. Harrington stated that he had investigated other ways to rectify this situation and this seems to be the only legal way, based on statute.

Selectman McGarry asked if they have had any more problems in regards to drainage?

Chairman Robertson stated that he didn't believe so because they took the road over and put in new culvert pipes that go over to that last piece that had washed out and then they had changed the drainage with that one house in the middle that flooded every time it rained more than a half inch.

Vice Chairman Pitman asked if they couldn't petition the state to go towards the highway fund or something?

Mr. Harrington stated that to his knowledge, they could not. He has been working with Bart Meyer on this as well.

The other question from Selectman McGarry asked if they could get some of the money for the improvements done down there to the 29 people that live there even though it wouldn't be much.

Mr. Harrington stated that the statute reads that it goes back to the person that initially established it.

Say they can't find the person that initially established it, do they hold onto it to which Mr. Harrington stated that technically after five years it would go back to the state

Mr. Harrington stated that they all were established in 2004 and the chairman asked if they could turn it over to the state to which it was answered that they could.

Selectwoman McHugh asked what the money was for.

Mr. Harrington stated that he believed and he was basing this on information that he could get from people that were around it at that point. It was work or improvements that weren't done when that development was started and the escrow was put in place as a guarantee against these things being completed.

Chairman Robertson stated that his recollection is that they pulled the bond on the project and he suspects that they might be the residue from what they didn't use.

The bond was fairly substantial. It was either \$30,000.00 or \$60,000.00. His recollection is that they pulled the bond and this was what was probably left from what wasn't expended.

Mr. Harrington stated that what has happened over the last fifteen years is that it has continued to accrue interest so some of these numbers don't even resemble what they began with.

Chairman Robertson thanked Mr. Harrington for the update and if he was to find out any mechanism to hold onto some of it from Bart, he thought it would be appreciated by the Board.

Mr. Harrington asked if there were any decision on whether they could return the monies to the owners or return it to the state.

Chairman Robertson stated that if this is the advice of counsel, and we paid Bart to tell us what to do with it, it is probably better to ...

Selectman McGarry asked if the question came up at all about Cottonwood Estates in returning the money to all 29 people that are down there.

The way that the statute is written, it goes back to the person that opened the escrow.

Realistically, they paid and Mr. Harrington stated that he would bring that question back to Bart to see if there is any leeway in that decision if they would like and will bring it back for next meeting.

Selectman McGarry stated that of the four that are listed to go back to the state, he had no idea what some of them are.

Mr. Harrington stated that this has been the problem as the descriptor was never clear.

Selectman McGarry stated that there was a security deposit for state property and Mr. Harrington stated that his only real resource has been Jane and she was able to clear some of them up. He went as far as going back to the minutes in 2004 to find information that wasn't included but he will bring it back on the 30th.

One final thing, if the Board was considering COLA's this year for town staff, from a bookkeeping standpoint, could they make that decision sometime no later than November. It makes preparation easier from the bookkeeping standpoint to get everyone set up to those numbers rather than waiting until December. It makes it kind of hard to do payroll.

Chairman Robertson stated that he didn't know if the Board wanted to revisit the Avitar Agreement this evening. He thought a couple of questions and wanted everyone to get to take a look at that and read it.

Typically, Avitar has been the most bang for the buck in regard to reevaluation but he knew that there were some citizen's comments that asked if they would consider putting it out to bid. There certainly a number of companies that they could put this out to bid with. One that springs to mind immediately is Cartographic Associates, the folks that do the town's tax map online. They offer assessing services and believed that they use Avitar's software.

There is also Vision Appraisal which he thought was the chief competitor with Avitar. They have gotten quotes from them in the past. He didn't think that they had been favorable. There are a couple of smaller ones. Patriot offers a service. There are a few others.

He didn't know what the Board's pleasure was.

Vice Chairman Pitman stated that they worry about a gallon of paint but they were ready to sign a contract for \$222,000.00. He didn't think it would hurt if they could get back to the Board in a week or two.

Chairman Robertson asked if they could inquire as to what it would be for a timeframe to put the contract out to bid.

Mr. Harrington stated that he could probably get an RFB together this week and get it posted for Monday of next week and he would recommend at least a two-week time period to get back. It wouldn't go less than that.

Chairman Robertson stated that it is due diligence on the Board's part.

Mr. Harrington stated that he would put together a draft RFB and email it and also bring a hard copy draft as well next week.

Vice Chairman Pitman stated that he would say that a lot of his questions got answered this week but we are doing our job if at least we look into it.

New Business/Other Business:

Selectman McGarry stated that they needed a statement or an email from Mr. Harrington to Sylvia advising her that both Bob Cote and himself have been sworn in as Southern NH Planning Commission members. Apparently, she hasn't gotten anything.

Also, she will need to be reminded that next week, at 4:00, the guy from USDA is coming to take a look at the site.

Chairman Robertson stated that he would mention it again to the police chief so that it is on his schedule as well.

Motion: Vice Chairman Pitman moves to adjourn

Second: Selectwoman McHugh

Discussion:

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

Next Meeting: Monday, September 30, 2019 at 5:30 pm

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