

Town of Litchfield
Select Board
March 12, 2018
Minutes

1.0 Convened 6:30; Pledge to Flag; Selectmen, Mark Russell, Chairman, Rayna Leibowitz and Gary Parker; **Staff:** Trudy Lamoreau, Town Manager; Larry Nadeau, Road Comm.; Bryan Lamoreau, Transfer Station Manager; Joan Thomas, School Comm.; Paul Hempstead, Planning Bd.; Cyndi Redmond and Tamas Szepsy, Road Advisory Comm; Tiffany Caton, Recreation Director; John Upham, FOAA Officer; Kelly Weissenfels and David Blocher, Budget Comm; Renee LaChappelle, BAR **and Guests Present** per the sign in sheet

2.0 Minutes of February 12, 2018 Meeting submitted for final approval. A motion to accept the minutes as drafted was made by Mark Russell, seconded by Rayna Leibowitz and voted 3 - 0. **Minutes of February 26, 2018 Meeting submitted for final approval.** A motion to accept the minutes as drafted was made by Mark Russell, seconded by Rayna Leibowitz and voted 3 - 0.

3.0 Reports and Correspondence

3.1 Town Manager - A. The MMA Risk Pool Inspector is coming in this week to visit the Town's buildings.

B. Taxes are coming in.

C. Few complaints and many compliments on the conditions of Litchfield's roads received.

D. The Town Manager would like to close the Town office for Tuesday and will notify media outlets to alert the residents. The Board supported that decision and a notice was put on the door immediately as a first step. Employees have the choice to use vacation days or lose pay for days the office is closed due to storms.

E. There are 32 - 34 potential foreclosures expected. Trudy expects most will request repurchase agreements to protect their interests.

F. The Budget process is going well. Department heads are being cooperative.

G. Trudy talked with the Sheriff's Office regarding the potential cost of a Resource Officer and learned that it might be \$55,000 - \$60,000 a year. See 6.4 below.

H. The Maine Revenue Services has notified Trudy that Litchfield will receive a penalty of \$1,000 per Homestead Exemption because of our quality of assessing. She was asked to identify the number of Homestead Exemptions that are given.

3.2 Code Officer/Plumbing Inspector -A. The Town Manager reported that Steve and Jay will be reviewing the building permits next Thursday to ensure all have been addressed with current assessing efforts.

B. The Planning Board is meeting Thursday evening.

3.3 Road Commissioner - A. Larry spoke with MDOT personnel regarding the paving project on Route 126. The project will pave a shim coat from Spears Corner in West Gardiner to the Huntington Hill Road in Litchfield. They would like Litchfield to sign the agreement for overweight permits to cover themselves. A contractor would need to approach the Board for permits they might require, but MDOT does not expect there will be a need for them. See 5.5 below.

B. Discussion with MDOT regarding the trees on the Plains Road: MDOT would remove them but would like letter(s) from the Town of Litchfield requesting it, as they understood the Town of Litchfield was opposed to removing them. Once the letter(s) of request have been received, they will contact all residents in the impacted area and proceed. Letters will be prepared for the Fire Chief and Public Works Dept. See 6.2 below.

C. Larry reported that during last week's storm, one driver experienced medical issues and had to be replaced with a spare driver. One truck had electrical issues that were resolved and one truck went off the road (no damages).

D. This next storm is expected to start tomorrow in the 7:00 to 8:00 AM time frame and extend

through Wednesday and possibly into Thursday. The trucks and equipment are ready.

E. Larry and Ron visited the West Road complaint of knocking down a mailbox. The plowing at that time was slushy snow. There was no evidence the box or post had been hit. The post was broken but it had dry-rot.

3.4 Fire & Rescue

3.5 Emergency Mgmt. A. Trudy advised she was on standby last storm in case she was needed to operate the radios and expects to be on standby for this storm.

B. Preliminary figures for a repeater have been received, but firmer numbers are expected later this month.

3.6 Assessing Agent - A. Trudy reported Jay will be here this Thursday (March 15) and Ellery will be here the following Thursday (March 22).

3.7 Transfer Station A. The Transfer Station Manager advised the single stream recycling was done manually last week as the electrical service was not heavy enough and will need to be modified to heavier wire.

B. Neither the Bulky Goods nor Metals were crushed and the cans are all full. If they can't be crushed before Friday, more of these goods cannot be accepted.

C. Overtime hours and pay was and is a concern. The budget for this year did not adequately address the time needed to get work done and there have been many hours of work that have not been paid for.

D. Additional site work is desired to allow the cardboard can to be situated next to the recycling can. This would allow the recycling operator to also monitor the cardboard disposal. There were some initial problems with folks just throwing their cardboard into the can without stacking it, so education efforts have been important. Some plywood insets for the cardboard bin will help.

E. More cement blocks for the compost area have been purchased but not picked up and installed yet.

3.8 Other Town Committees - The Road Advisory Comm. advised their meeting is scheduled for March 21 at 5:30 PM.

4.0 Agenda Adjustments

4.1 Quit Claim Deed to 6.1

4.2 Pine Trees on Plains Road to 6.2

4.3 Reval RFP to 6.3

4.4 Meeting with RSU#4 Supt. to 6.4

4.5 Transfer Station Discussion on Budget to 6.5

4.6 Audio Recording Proposal to 6.6

5.0 Scheduled Business

5.1 Litchfield Recreation Comm - Woodbury Pond Park (smoke and animal free) A. Tiffany Caton advised the Rec. Comm. would like to make the Woodbury Pond Park either smoke free or designate an area where smoking would be allowed. They would also like to not allow dogs (except service dogs) as people are not keeping their dogs on leashes for the duration of their visit to the park. Since these are decisions the Rec. Comm. has authority to make, the Board took no action.

B. Tiffany advised the mowing bids were coming back to the Rec. Comm. at their next meeting. They will be brought to the Select Board for the decision and awarding the bid.

5.2 Gustin Rd - David Blocher -A. David advised he does not want to retain the property if the Town meets his purchase proposal of \$7,500 for 1.7 acres along the south side of the Gustin Road. This would cover the costs of the survey, some remediation and the damaged trees. If Gustin Road is closed, however, he wants assurance he will have access to the Oak Hill Road. He would then be responsible for maintaining the upper portion as a private road. The property on both sides of the upper level of the road is owned by Sonny Gowell.

B. A motion to put a warrant article on the Town Warrant to purchase the property from David Blocher for \$7,500 was made by Rayna Leibowitz, seconded by Gary Parker and voted 3 - 0.

5.3 Gustin Rd - Analysis - The Road Advisory Comm. Is reviewing options including:

1. Closing Gustin Road for winter maintenance

2. Closing Gustin Road to all public traffic above the last house up the hill on the north side of the road.

3. Determining the cost to make the road safer.

5.4 Marijuana Moratorium Public Hearing 7:00 PM - A motion to enter the Public Hearing regarding the Marijuana Moratorium was made by Rayna Leibowitz, seconded by Gary Parker and voted 3 - 0 at 7:10 PM. Representative Kent Ackley advised the State Level moratorium was not extended but no licenses or regulated sales can be done. A new bill is being drafted by the Legislature and is expected to be presented before both Chambers in 2 -3 weeks. The Governor has asked for no revenue sharing to the towns in it, so his request has been met. His position is that towns can tax through the property taxes and charge for permitting fees and realize revenues from these sources. The provision for social clubs was removed. There will be an effort to combine administration for Adult Use and Medical Marijuana under the Dept. of Administration and Financial Services, rather than the Alcoholic Beverages and Lottery Commission. The proposed bill reduces the number of flowering plants per person allowed from 6 to 3. They are hoping for a 2/3 majority in both chambers to override a potential veto by the Governor. Towns must still opt-in. They must enact a local Ordinance to control what can be done within their town. This would need to include setting the types and number of licenses allowed in the town. Towns can allow a number of plants higher than the State law, but not lower.

The surveys distributed to residents through the Sodalite have not been tabulated and evaluated by the Planning Board.

The Chairman solicited questions from residents present and/or comments they wished to make. There were few.

The Chairman declared the Public Hearing closed at 7:27 PM.

A motion to extend the Marijuana Moratorium for another 6 months was made by Gary Parker, seconded by Rayna Leibowitz and voted 3 - 0.

5.5 Agreement with MDOT re: Project #023324.00 - A motion to sign the agreement with MDOT regarding overweight permits relating to the repaving of Route 126 in 2018 was made by Rayna Leibowitz, seconded by Gary Parker and voted 3 - 0.

5.6 Budget Review: It was noted the figures shown and identified as "Actual" on the 2018-2019 Budget for 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 are the appropriated amounts and not actual expenses as labeled. The Town Manager advised the next set of budget pages will show the actual amounts. The following categories of the proposed budget were reviewed and discussed:

Transfer Station: Amounts for Labor, Electricity and Telephone/Internet are reflecting increases. Mileage needs to be added as a separate line. Additional information regarding projections for labor are requested.

Town Office Operations: Errors in amounts shown were identified. A small increase in Supplies was made.

Insurance: An increase in the Risk Pool costs is identified.

Capital Improvement Plan: Kelly Weisenfels presented a working draft of the CIP identifying the projected items for this next year. He also showed the balances in several of the reserve accounts that may be used to defray expenses.

Cemeteries: Trudy talked with the American legion. Costs may be increasing as the flags left up all summer deteriorate and cannot be used multiple years. There was discussion about leaving them up for shorter periods and/or putting them up only for special periods. Trudy needs to check mowing contracts to see if there is another year on them.

Sodalite: Increase in postage.

Conservation Commission:

General Government: increases in Elections (minimum wage increase), postage, printing & supplies, MMA dues, workshop training and payroll services.

The final vote on the proposed budget before going to publication will be held on April 25, 2018.

5.7 Quit Claim Deed - L. Farrington, Map U24, Lot 014 - This will allow the heirs of Mrs. Farrington

authority to sell the property. A motion to approve the Quit Claim Deed was made by Rayna Leibowitz, seconded by Gary Parker and voted 3 - 0.

5.8 Supplemental (Tree Growth Penalties) Map R01-Lot 025B Acct # 2587, \$500.00- A motion to approve this penalty was made by Rayna Leibowitz, seconded by Gary Parker and voted 3 - 0.

Map R09, Lot 059 Acct # 2882, \$500.00 - A motion to approve this penalty was made by Rayna Leibowitz, seconded by Gary Parker and voted 3 - 0.

6.0 Unscheduled Business

6.1 Quit Claim Deed Map R05, Lot 23A This Quit Claim Deed was never filed when released. A motion to approve this Quit Claim Deed was made by Rayna Leibowitz, seconded by Gary Parker and voted 3 - 0.

6.2 Pine Trees on Plains Road The Town Manager was asked to prepare letters as appropriate. A motion was made by Gary Parker, seconded by Rayna Leibowitz to authorize the Board members to sign the letter outside of the meeting. It was voted 3 - 0.

6.3 Reval RFP - Renee LaChappelle submitted a sample RFP. The Chairman will review it and modify the proposed RFP as appropriate and distribute it to the Board for final decision on it at the March 26 meeting.

6.4 Meeting with RSU#4 Supt - Chairman Mark Russell and Board Member Rayna Leibowitz met with School Supt. Andrew Carleton and staff. Discussion focused on budget preparation, state funding, school security and the water situation at the High School. The Chairman requested the Town Manager obtain a price from the Sheriff's Office regarding the potential cost of a resource officer. It is not known if RSU#4 will receive some funding for improved security measures and what those measures might be for the schools, but if we knew the approximate cost and were interested in funding it ourselves for the two schools in town, we'd have some information to work with. The School is evaluating whether drilling a new well for/at the High School or connecting into the Sabattus Water District will be the best option. It was an interesting and useful meeting.

6.5 Transfer Station Discussion on Budget - The Manager was urged to project additional costs and bring them back for further discussion.

6.6 Audio Recording Proposal - The camera currently used to produce videotapes of the meetings belongs to John Upham and adding a microphone for better audio pick-up is not possible. A new camera with an external microphone capability would cost \$1,000 and include an SD Card, battery and charger. The Town Manager was asked to determine a funding source if one is available in the current budget or it will need to be included in the next budget.

7.0 Legal

8.0 Appointments and Resignations

9.0 Warrants

9.1 Town Voucher # 17 for \$343,616.08. A motion to approve was made by Gary Parker, seconded by Mark Russell and voted 3 - 0.

9.2 Town Payroll # 18 for \$17,352.78. A motion to approve was made by Gary Parker, seconded by Mark Russell and voted 3 - 0.

10.0 Other Business

10.1 A resident asked about foreclosure procedures regarding some certain properties. The Town Manager invited her to provide a list of the questioned ones and she will advise of the status.

11.0 Selectmen/Public Discussion/Communication

12.0 Future Agenda Item

12.1 D. Blocher Property

12.2 Street Lights

12.3 Gustin Road and Old Mill Rd Bridges

12.4 Whippoorwill Road Culvert/Bridge

12.5 Return of the 7/14/16 Executive session Working Papers

12.6 Number of Homestead Exemptions

12.7 Planning Board report Re; Marijuana Survey

12.8 Reval RFP

13.0 Adjournment at 9:30 PM.

Respectfully Submitted by

Rayna Leibowitz