

**Town of Litchfield
Selectboard Meeting Minutes
Oct 10, 2023**

****The first 15 minutes of the meeting were accidentally muted; the minutes pick up where the sound was turned on at Scheduled Business. ****

1.0 Convenes 6:30 P.M.; Pledge to Flag; Selectmen and Guests present.

Selectmen: Gary Parker, Chairman; Clarence Gowell III (identified as Rick in these minutes); Scott Weeks.

Staff: Kelly Weissenfels, Town Manager (absent); Michael Sherman, Fire Chief (absent); Larry Nadeau, Road Comm.; John Upham, Transfer Station Manager (absent); Tom Wood, Chm., Elton Wade, Budget Comm.; Steve Ochmanski, Code Enforcement Officer; and others per the sign in sheet.

2.0 Minutes of Sep 25, 2023

3.0 Reports and Correspondence

3.1 Town Manager

*Kelly was on vacation, his notes to Steve included the following:

- Since the RSU4 budget did not pass (Litchfield Yes 106 No 256 and similar for Sabattus Yes 98 No 205, with Wales Yes 97 No 63) the Select Board decided last Thursday to delay tax commitment until after the next vote intended Nov 7. That date will be finalized at tomorrow's school board meeting. We've posted on Facebook and the Town website that early tax payments are encouraged and appreciated, similar to last year.
- Liens for last year were filed on Friday Oct 6th.
- Thorofare Road is now open (as of last Wednesday). The Rte 126 Bridge is expected to complete around the end of Oct.
- Our new (substitute) mowing contractor, Isaac Butler, has found all the cemeteries and they are looking sharp. I talked with him at the Purgatory Burying Ground, which he found is best accessed along the rock wall mid-way up the private driveway at 28 Neck Rd (also a customer of his).
- The Woodbury Dam committee will review at their next meeting a report from a diving team that inspected the dam and cleaned accumulated debris from the base. There were some maintenance recommendations, but the draft report indicated the dam is in good shape overall.
- The online auction contract with Auctions International is signed and Randy will be out this coming Monday morning the 16th at 8:30 to take pictures of items for sale. As of this report the larger items will be town trucks and the fencing sections at the transfer station.
- Speaking of the transfer station. John has received confirmation that a new application will be required if we intend to move the station. I'll be reaching out to an design firm to find out if we have a viable option and expected cost to prepare an application. The application alone has fee of approximately \$2000.

3.2 Code Officer/Plumbing Inspector

3.3 Road Commissioner

3.4 Fire & Rescue

3.5 Emergency Mgmt.

3.6 Assessing Agent

3.7 Transfer Station

3.8 Other Town Committees

4.0 Scheduled Business

4.1 Request CEO to seek resident approval for Birch Lane name modification (motion)

Motion was made by Scott Weeks for a request of the CEO to request approval for a name modification on Birch Lane. Rick 2nd motion, vote 3-0.

4.2 Ad Hoc RSU4 Withdrawal Committee Report

Percy attended the meeting to share a report on how and what the committee has gathered so far.

Currently Percy is looking to set up a meeting with the Superintendent of Richmond RSU. They are going to share their experience of leaving their RSU and how things have been going since. Percy is looking for questionnaire suggestions moving forward to see if the taxpayers support a withdrawing from the RSU or not. A suggestion for putting the questionnaire in the Sodalite. Also, the committee is planning on spending some time out in the community speaking with the citizens of Litchfield.

The room also had a conversation about signage and looking into the possibility of getting a grant to get the town a digital sign, Tom is to investigate this possibility.

4.3 Decision to begin the road discontinuance process.

This will wait for the next meeting as there is no letter for the board to view and discuss. This is the next step in the process of no longer having to plow and maintain the 9 roads that are not/no longer actual roads. More time was given for discussion about subdivisions and road maintenance, etc.

4.4 RSU4 Budget – Tax Commitment delayed.

Scott and Gary had a discussion with Ellery, the assessor, and a conclusion was reached that there is enough money to make approximately 2 more payments without borrowing money. For those who would like to pay taxes prior to the tax commitment, the recommendation is to add a percentage to the tax payment you send in. As discussed, the board does have the power to set the mil rate without this school budget being passed.

5.0 Unscheduled Business

5.1

5.2

6.0 Appointments/Resignations

6.1

6.2

7.0 Warrants

7.1 Town Warrant #10 \$557,795.07

There was a motion made by Scott Weeks to approve Town Warrant #10 for \$557,795.07. Rick 2nd the motion, vote 3-0.

7.2 RSU4 Warrant #11 \$330,291.71

There was a motion made by Scott Weeks to approve RSU4 Warrant #11 for \$330,291.71. Rick 2nd the motion, vote 3-0.

7.3 Town Payroll #7 \$27,875.28

There was a motion made by Scott Weeks to approve Town Payroll #7 for \$27,875.28. Rick 2nd the motion, vote 3-0.

8.0 Selectmen/Public Discussion/ Communication

8.1 Gary wanted to bring to the attention of Kelly that there are still no signs at the end of the Thorofare road, etc. where there are supposed to be new signs going up per MDOT. Steve will be sure Kelly gets the notes.

8.2 Gary questioned if the water situation at the Academy building has been rectified? Rayna still hasn't heard anything with an all clear. The signs have been removed and Gary is under the impression that the water is now safe as the signs have been removed.

8.3 Rick notes that the MDOT is currently paying a crew to go through Rt. 197 and clear trees/branches along the edges. He is in hopes that the intersection by the store will become wider and visibility will become clearer as they open that intersection. Rick was hoping that Kelly would follow up with the state about the intersections speed limit signs to reduce the speed. People are not slowing down, and the stop signs aren't stopping people, they run through the intersection.

8.4 The MDOT has been doing quite a bit of work replacing 8 culverts in the town, ditching on at least one road, as well as the bridge replacements.

9.0 Future Agenda Item

9.1 R02-017, 2783 Hallowell Road

10.0 Adjournment 8:10pm

Respectfully submitted by Angela Parker