

**Town of Litchfield  
Selectboard Meeting Minutes  
Feb 26, 2024**

**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) (absent); Scott Weeks.

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

**2.0 Minutes of Feb 12, 2024**

There was a motion made by Scott to approve the minutes from February 12, 2024. Seconded by Gary, vote 2-0 (Rick absent).

\*Gary wanted to know if FEMA found the \$25,000.00 yet that was needed to meet the reimbursement threshold? Per Kelly, yes, they have.

\*Gary also asked how the audit is progressing. Kelly replied that the FY22 audit is drafted and as soon as approved will be published and FY23 has commenced.

\*No current update on the zoning changes from the Planning Board.

\*No update on the state's grant/Calderwood Engineering for the culvert replacement for Dennis Hill Road.

\*Update on the old fire station, the current tenant's probate attorney has reached out to our legal and will be working out a plan moving forward. Kelly to investigate further why probate is taking so long.

\*\*Gary's correction(s) 4.2 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph: should read "there is no way to be certain". - new policy regarding Zoom executive meetings.

**3.0 Reports and Correspondence**

3.1 Town Manager - Kelly Weissenfels

Kelly reports that the Town Manager's report was essentially completed with Gary's previously asked questions. Nothing additional to report.

3.2 Code Officer/Plumbing Inspector - presented by Kelly as Steve Ochmanski is absent. Also previously spoken about as Jim Farris has reached out to the Town of Litchfield's legal counsel about steps forward regarding the old fire station in the Village District.

3.3 Road Commissioner - Larry Nadeau

A. Per Larry, Dennis Hill was started today with the process of grinding and excavating the ditches. He also met with the tree trimming service used in the past as well to discuss getting some of the larger trees cut so the roadsides are cared for before grinding, etc. starts this Spring.

B. Larry spoke with Calderwood Engineering and got an update from Greg MacAlister from Calderwood about the grants (regarding culverts, etc.). There is no specific timeframe/timeline on the presentation of the expected grant(s). He asked about an in-kind replacement, Mr. MacAlister is going to reach out to the Army corps of Engineers and see if that's possible without a permit, as this would save time. Larry will get options and a plan to move forward to get the culvert replaced prior to the road being completed.

3.4 Fire & Rescue - Michael Sherman

A. This month the department is working on ice water rescue training. Chief Sherman noted they have a few pieces of new equipment that have been put into service with this training. They were out on Sand Pond training and plan to head back out to the cove tomorrow night. They will continue practicing pulling people out of the water.

B. Chief Sherman received a call from Coastal Truck and Autobody regarding Engine 65. They are anticipating the completion of the project by the end of March. Which makes the project as planned, on schedule.

3.5 Emergency Mgmt. - Michael Sherman

A. Nothing new to report currently, the department continues to work on their budget.

B. Gary asked Chief Sherman and Kelly if there was money left in the budget to fill the holes left in front of Central Station from the grinding of the stumps done this winter. Chief Sherman believes he will have what he needs once they have a total.

3.6 Assessing Agent - Kelly Weissenfels

Kelly noted March 7, 2024, to be the next day the Assessing Agent will be back in the office.

3.7 Transfer Station - Kelly Weissenfels

A. No stickers given out since the last meeting.

B. No bins have needed to be removed since the last meeting.

3.8 Other Town Committees

A. Tom Wood noted the last Budget Committee meeting was cancelled due to illness. The next meeting will be a regularly scheduled meeting on Thursday, March 21st, at 6:30 pm (pulled from Town Website).

\*Tom asked if the town had a plan moving forward regarding the lack of full funding for the Senior Tax Freeze as was noted in the recent news. Kelly believes that a bill still needs to be amended, he will follow-up and get an update.

#### 4.0 Scheduled Business

4.1 Regional Ambulance discussion

Kelly met with Richmond Town Manager, Gardiner City Manager and Gardiner Fire Chief this past week to discuss the regional reach of the Gardiner Ambulance Service. Kelly wanted to talk about the possibility of the Central Fire Station in Litchfield being a host to an ambulance service or fly car, manned by Gardiner, or whether Richmond was still interested in hosting. Kelly was surprised to learn that the ideal solution probably wasn't an either-or situation. A location in between the two towns would likely be the best choice, meaning a much larger investment. The next step is a cost estimate that Chief Sieberg will provide in a couple of weeks.

4.2 Approve CMP Pole Permit Oak Hill Road

Kelly handed out CMP's plan for the work of replacing and extending the height of some of the poles on Oak Hill Road. There hasn't been any negative feedback yet. Larry will be requesting that the poles near enough to be in the way of plowing get set further back.

There was a motion made by Scott to approve the CMP pole permit for Oak Hill Road. This was seconded by Gary, vote 2-0.

4.3 Approve Hauler's License – Dave's Disposal

Kelly reminded the Board that Dave's Disposal has stepped in to try and close the gap left by the closing of Rine's Rubish. Dave's charges \$35.00 per month for weekly bag pick up. Details are attached to the license.

\*Mr. Russel asked what authority the Select Board has to approve the fee schedule and what parameters of the license that the Select Board has control over?

There was a discussion had by the attendees in the room and more research will be done for everyone to be on the same page regarding the provisions of the current ordinance. The signing will be tabled until the next Select Board meeting, so all members have had a chance to read the ordinance.

4.4 Approve remote meeting policy w/changes.

At the last meeting there was a request to change the policy to prohibit remote executive sessions. Kelly has implemented the change as requested and read aloud for everyone's information.

There was a motion made by Scott to approve the remote meeting and participation policy as currently written. This was seconded by Gary, vote 2-0.

#### 4.5 Approve Road Ordinance Changes

Kelly handed out the Road Ordinance with the changes redlined. There was time to review and ask questions. Scott will be reading the ordinance in more detail before deciding how he wants to proceed. There will be more research done on Kelly's side as well to see if putting an appeals procedure in place makes sense here or not.

#### 4.6 Approve Mowing Contract request for bids

Kelly presented the contract and answered all questions from the room. Larry suggested breaking up the bid for multiple contractors to care for different areas (i.e. one for cemeteries, different one for ball fields/fire station). There was a discussion held throughout the room. Kelly will be rewriting the bid with more specific details and looking at breaking the areas up.

#### 4.7 Approve Quitclaim – R14-018 Arnold Danforth

The repurchase agreement was completed by Mr. Danforth.

There was a motion made by Scott to approve Quitclaim – R14-018 Arnold Danforth. The motion was seconded by Gary, vote 2-0.

#### 4.8 FY25 Budget – Public Works; Transfer Station; Emergency Management; Misc (KVCOG, etc)

Kelly handed out budget report(s) to the room to review. Each were reviewed with time to discuss and ask questions as needed.

\* There is a workshop scheduled for a more in-depth discussion regarding the Town of Litchfield FY25 budget Monday March 4, 2024 at 7am.

### **5.0 Unscheduled Business**

#### 5.1

### **6.0 Appointments/Resignations**

#### 6.1 Appoint Alan Plummer to Planning Board

There was a motion made by Scott to appoint Alan Plummer to the Litchfield Planning Board. This was seconded by Gary, vote 2-0.

#### 6.2 Appoint Chadd Hill to Appeals Board

There was a motion made by Scott to appoint Chadd Hill to the Litchfield Appeals Board. This was seconded by Gary Parker, vote 2-0.

### **7.0 Warrants**

#### 7.1 Town Warrant #24 \$64,826.69

There was a motion made by Scott to approve town warrant #24 in the amount of \$64,826.69. This was seconded by Gary, vote 2-0.

#### 7.2 Town Payroll #17 \$28,802.61

There was a motion made by Scott to approve town payroll #17 in the amount of \$28,802.61. This was seconded by Gary, vote 2-0.

### **8.0 Selectmen/Public Discussion/ Communication**

8.1 Kelly introduced Brad Hilton, a Litchfield resident, to discuss the idea of placing a hydroelectric plant on the spot where the Purgatory Dam currently sits. Scott said he has no issue with a committee being formed to investigate it. He suggested such a group could do some research on why other spots that always have water no longer have their plants running.

8.2 Rayna updated the progress on the Food Bank building. The insulation has been completed and she is in hopes that plywood will be started by the end of the week. Heat pumps have been installed and doors have been ordered.

**9.0 Future Agenda Items**

9.1

**10.0 Adjournment** at 8:14pm

Respectfully submitted by Angela Parker