

**Town of Litchfield**  
**Selectboard Meeting Minutes**  
**April 22, 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); Scott Weeks.

Staff: Kelly Weissenfels, Town Manager; Michael Sherman, Fire Chief; Larry Nadeau, Road Comm.; John Upham, Transfer Station Manager; 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 April 8, 2024, workshop minutes April 8, 2024**

First 5 minutes video was muted, Kelly provided overview as follows:

April 8, 2024, minutes approved [Motion by Scott, second by Rick, voted 3-0]. Then Kelly requested that April 1, 2024, minutes be approved, as the previous meeting agenda had read April 8 instead of April 1, 2024, so that the April 1, 2024 minutes were inadvertently approved as April 8, 2024. [Motion by Scott, second by Rick, voted 3-0].

**3.0 Reports and Correspondence**

**3.1 Town Manager**

A. The Town Manager's report included a summary of a telephone conference regarding the new OSHA regulation with staff from Senator Collins' office. The primary take away was that politically it is very difficult to get the public comment period extended. But Senator Collins would like to lend Senatorial strength to our comments where appropriate, and relayed through the staff that we should provide them with copies of any public comments that we do make.

B. Absentee ballots will be available May 11<sup>th</sup> as well as absentee voting in person will be available at that time.

**3.2 Code Officer/Plumbing Inspector**

Nothing new to report.

**3.3 Road Commissioner**

A. A majority of the bridge has been delivered over the last 7 days to the site on Gustin Road. The rest should be delivered in the next couple of days. There will be a walking bridge assembled for the residents to utilize during the construction phase. Larry is planning on Thursday barring any weather interruptions.

B. Dennis Hill Road's clean-up is almost complete. The cutting is done on both sides and the brush has almost fully been picked up. The residents are welcome to take the wood for

firewood. If it's along the side of the road and not claimed, it's free for the taking. Ditching will commence tomorrow on Dennis Hill Road.

C. Roads are no longer posted.

D. Per Larry the new truck is currently at the upfitter for the body.

E. Gary wanted to make sure that the clean-up around the Old Mill Road bridge project that was completed last year is on the "to do" list. Larry noted it is, they have been straight out with the Dennis Hill Road project.

F. Rick asked about the guardrails that have come up in conversation at a couple meetings in the past. Larry noted he has been in contact with the company that said they could replace them. Larry has given the Select Board an estimated cost and is waiting to hear back about next steps from the Select Board. The amount of \$14,000.00 was noted tonight, the company said they will honor the quote, but Larry would like to get back to them tomorrow. The Select Board gave Kelly as the Town Manager permission to get the guardrails needed and have them installed. Larry will email the contact person to get them installed.

G. Rick also asked about the chevron sign at the end of Libby Road, Larry stated that they have the sign, it's on the to-do list.

### 3.4 Fire & Rescue

A. Per Chief Sherman the framework repairs to Engine 65 have been delayed due to staffing issues at the shop where the work is being performed. They are anticipating a three-week delay. Chief Sherman is still excited as the project is nearly complete.

B. There will be a fundraiser for Tina Gowell who is the Assistant Chief of Rescue for Litchfield. She is recovering in the hospital currently after a major surgery, she is doing better currently than she has been in a while. There will be a benefit super for her in the afternoon on May 18, 2024.

C. The Purgatory Fire Station Sign that has been previously discussed at Select Board meetings is a project that is nearing completion. This is a student project that Deputy Chief Danforth has been overseeing, and will be completing soon. The grounds have also been cleaned up as has been discussed in the past.

D. March saw twelve fire calls, seven of which were lines and trees down. The crew also had a carbon monoxide call; car fire; car accident; as well as a tree that fell onto and into a house in town. Chief Sherman reports there were 38 EMS calls, 15 of which Litchfield was able to assist Gardiner EMS with.

E. Deputy Chief Reggie Porrier will be retiring after more than 10 years of service to the Litchfield Fire Department. Chief Sherman wanted to take a minute to recognize and thank the Deputy Chief for his exemplary service and dedication.

### 3.5 Emergency Mgmt.

A. There was an issue with Purgatory Station's generator during the last storm that has been resolved. Chief Sherman reports that the company they work with to get the generator serviced is working with them to resolve any issues to be sure they can remain up and running for the foreseeable future.

### 3.6 Assessing Agent

A. Kelly reports there was an RJD representative in the office last Thursday, and multiple resident inquiries were answered.

### 3.7 Transfer Station

A. Per John there were 6 new stickers for a total of 2693.

B. Both bulky, paper, and metal emptied this past week.

C. Swap Shop is now open and seems to be doing well.

D. If the weather cooperates and the ground dries up the brush pile will be opened soon.

E. The new office building is scheduled to be delivered May 7, 2024. If the old building isn't taken away it will be destroyed and moved off site.

F. The CONEX boxes and building that will be the garage and shop will be started soon and will be going parallel to the metal container once the concrete slab is poured. The orientation of all the boxes that will make up the building is still under consideration.

G. Rick has sent Kelly some information regarding a Veteran owned (clothing) recycling company called Apparel Impact. This would be a good way to help keep clothes out of the bulky bin as well as help those in need. If you have clothing that could help someone else out, please think twice about throwing it away.

### 3.8 Other Town Committees

A. Senior Center will be gearing up in May for the start of their season. Litchfield Senior Steppers have two shows, then two more in June. Also, the Carol Baily String Band will be performing in May. There are also group trips that the folks with the senior center will be headed out for.

## **4.0 Scheduled Business**

### 4.1 Resolve Woodbury Dam bridge mat install request (review input from Town attorney)

Kelly reports that the Town's attorney has been consulted. The attorney pointed out that there could be liability risk to the town since tort law covers the dam, not necessarily a road across the dam. They recommended either to have a contractor do the work, or if the landowner has the work done there needs to be a contract between the landowner and the town absolving the town of Litchfield of any liability. There is work that still needs to be done to close this discussion. The landowner needs to get back to Kelly to make any movement in either direction. At the current weight posting of 3 tons, fire trucks can't cross

the over the dam. Rick had made the suggestion the option of putting up more general signage of “Pass at your own risk” until there is an engineer’s plan settled.

#### 4.2 Open mowing contract bids

No one has bid on the current contracts. Kelly would like the permission of the board to re-bid the contracts. Also, it was suggested to send it directly to the companies that might be able to handle the contracts. Kelly will have the contracts ready for the next meeting.

#### 4.3 Public hearing for draft Road Ordinance

Time was allotted for Kelly to give a brief overview of how the ordinances read, as well as questions and comments. The most noticeable change to the ordinance is the permitting process for putting in a driveway. Now applicants will need to provide proof of ownership to get the driveway permit.

#### 4.4 Review quitclaim for map U20, lot 001 to UGO Investments, LLC (discharges liens from 2004, 2006)

There was a motion made by Scott to accept the quitclaim for map U20, lot 001 to UGO Investments, LLC (discharges liens from 2004, 2006). This was seconded by Rick, vote 3-0.

#### 4.5 Discuss proposed large budget adds: Full-time Fire Chief; RSU4 withdrawal consultant.

Currently there is no solid dollar amount for either of these topics. There was time for opinions, discussion, and questions to be heard. After discussion Gary asked Chief Sherman to speak about the issue. He gave his opinion on how he believes the best way to move forward would be. The discussion concluded with recognition that the total cost to the town would be approximately \$120,000.00, representing \$60,000 to \$70,000 salary plus benefits for a full-time Fire Chief on the Town Warrant. There will be more research done as well as more discussion before the Town Warrant is finalized. There will also be future discussion regarding stipends for volunteers who to respond to Fire Rescue calls. RSU4 withdrawal consultant dollar amount hasn’t yet been established. Gary feels contingency should be used for the consultant until an estimated cost is established.

#### 4.6 Review draft Town Warrant

Kelly didn’t have the warrant to hand out to the board yet. There will be a copy of the warrant to hand out during the Special Budget meeting on April 29, 2024, at 7am. Time was given for more discussion and questions.

### **5.0 Unscheduled Business**

5.1 The Solid Waste Ordinance needs to be revamped. Gary and Kelly will be getting together to amend the document for review so it will be ready for the Town Meeting.

5.2 Rick wanted to know if there was any movement on a Select Board Facebook page for more communication. Kelly wants to get through the budget first and will then tackle expanding communication options.

### **6.0 Appointments/Resignations**

6.1 Election/Ballot Clerks for FY25 Kelly handed out a list of folks suggested to be nominated for the Election/Ballot Clerks for FY25. This will allow them to be appointed for two years.

There was a motion made by Gary to appoint 2024 election/ballot clerks list as provided. This was seconded by Rick, vote 3-0.

There was a motion made by Rick to be able to sign the election/ballot clerk's nomination forms outside of a regular meeting. This was seconded by Scott, vote 3-0.

#### 6.2 Wardens for the municipality

There was a motion made by Gary to appoint Earl Lamoreau and Cheryl Pouloupoulos as election wardens for the town of Litchfield. This was seconded by Rick, vote 3-0.

#### 6.3 Recreation Committee - Staci LeClaire

There was a motion made by Scott to appoint Stacy LeClair to the Recreation Committee. This was seconded by Rick, vote 3-0.

### **7.0 Warrants**

#### 7.1 Town Warrant #30 \$57,862.50

There was a motion made by Scott to approve Town Warrant #30 in the amount of \$57,862.50. This was seconded by Rick, vote 3-0.

#### 7.2 Town Payroll #21 \$30,298.80

There was a motion made by Scott to approve Town Payroll #21 in the amount of \$30,298.80. This was seconded by Rick, vote 3-0.

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

8.1 Rick suggested giving Reggie something for 10 years of service to the Town of Litchfield. Gary would like to put together a plaque for the achievement.

8.2 Brad Hilton would like to discuss the option of hydropower on the purgatory dam. He has been in contact with FERC (Federal Energy Regulatory Commission) and has filled out a form to get an assigned project number. Then he can move forward with the State of Maine.

After discussion, the board was not leaning either for or against the project, and it was decided that Gary will be calling the town attorney to find out what legal concerns there are about allowing such a project.

### **9.0 Future Agenda Items**

#### 9.1 Solid Waste Ordinance

#### 9.2 Discussion for communication options and plan moving forward

#### 9.3 Plaque for achievements for service to the Town of Litchfield

**10.0 Adjournment** at 9pm

Respectfully submitted by Angela Parker