

Town of Litchfield
Select Board
May 22, 2023
Final Meeting Minutes

1.0 Convened at 6:30 PM; Pledge to Flag; Selectmen: Gary Parker, Chairman, Scott Weeks;
Staff: Kelly Weissenfels, Town Manager; Larry Nadeau, Road Comm.; Tom Wood, Chm., Elton Wade, Budget Comm; Joline bell, Friends of Woodbury Pond Park; and others according to the sign in sheet. Clarence Gowell III was absent.

2.0 Minutes of May 8, 2023 Meeting submitted for final approval. A motion to approve the minutes as drafted was made by Scott Weeks, seconded by Gary Parker and voted 2- 0.

3.0 Reports and Correspondence:

3.1 Town Manager: A. The Town Manager advised early voting for the upcoming elections on June 13 can be done anytime at the Town Office.

B. The second new hire for the Town Office staff is doing well.

C. The Town Manager and Road Commissioner will be attending another meeting with MDOT regarding the Babcock Bridge (Route 126) construction.

D. The Town Office will be closed on May 29 for Memorial Day.

E. The Town Office will be closed July 3rd for vacation.

F. An inspection report for the Gustin Road Bridge and the Old Mill Road Bridge has been received from MDOT engineers.

3.2 Code Enforcement Officer/Plumbing Inspector – A. The Town Manager advised Steve is attending a 2-day conference along with the candidate expected to be his assistant.

3.3 Road Commissioner – A. The paving of the Central Fire Dept. yard has been completed. A request was made to move the dumpster on the premises to protect the pavement.

B. The ditching on the Huntington Hill Road is going well. Larry’s goal is to have it done by July 4.

C. The Public Works Dept. is down one man and another is expected to have eye surgery.

D. The new truck is expected tomorrow at 3:30, all dressed.

3.4 Fire & Rescue – A. Chief Sherman was absent due to a medical reason.

B. The Town Manager advised the Chief recently attended a meeting with CMP regarding operations and proposed rate increases.

3.5 Emergency Management – A meeting was held on May 18 regarding shelter decisions. The Chief will report on its content.

3.6 Assessing Agent – No report.

3.7 Transfer Station – A. The Town Manager reported for John that the Transfer Station has been busy. Tires were removed for the third time this year.

3.8 Other Town Committees – Tom Wood, Chm. of the Budget Comm. Reported he attended the RSU#4 budget meeting at the request of the Budget Committee.

- A request to adjust the formula for the local share to be fairer for Litchfield was not well received.

- Tom tried to get the amount to be raised and appropriated decreased but the vote failed by “7” votes.

- The Towns (Litchfield, Wales and Sabattus) will vote on June 13 to adopt or deny the amount approved at this meeting.

The Select Board Chairman advised two School Board members made disrespectful comments during the meeting that were captured by a microphone being on. While attendees could not hear them, persons reviewing the meeting via an electronic feed or watching the YouTube video can clearly hear them at 2 hours 40 minutes and 2 hours 50 minutes into the video. There was discussion about this incident and steps that might be taken. These steps might include attending the next School Board meeting to express a protest; sending a letter of protest to the School Board and Supt.; having the Town Attorney send a letter to the School Board and Supt. and reading the letter at our Town Meeting. A committee consisting of the Town Manager, Select Board Chairman and Selectman Weeks, Mark Russell and Budget Comm. Chairman was selected to meet with the Town Attorney regarding this matter. The suggestion was made to put together budget formula options for consideration for next year.

The Budget Committee is planning a special meeting for Monday, June 12, to review the proposed budget and be prepared to provide comments and recommendations at the Town Meeting.

4.0 Scheduled Business

4.1 Bid Opening – Town Office Deck & Wall bid – 7 PM – The Town Manager advised no bids were received. A list of materials has been obtained and an estimate of labor costs developed. A list of contractors will be compiled and invited to provide an estimate.

4.2 Driveway entrance sight line waiver request – R9 Lot 72D, R. Foster, Jr. - This location is on the Lunts Hill Road where the required sight line is 450 feet. He has 375 feet on his shortest side. The Road Commissioner supports approving the waiver for this location given the level of traffic. A motion to approve the waiver of the required sight line for this location at R 9, Lot 72D was made by Gary Parker, seconded by Scott Weeks and voted 2 – 0.

4.3 Woodbury Park – Opening and review of plans – Joline Bell reported that last year a lot of work was done at the Park and it looked great! Admissions were up but they did not allow the Park to be self-sustaining, as desired. Additional costs to the Town were about \$3,000, including lawn care, portable toilets, electricity and trash removal. The recommendation for this year is to have an Assistant Manager (to be paid \$1,000 for the season) open and lock the gate on weekdays when the weather allows and have an attendant there only on weekends. It would be desirable to continue to work to increase attendance. She suggested we might consider having a community picnic there, bring the fire trucks for kids to get close to, etc. Wages for attendant for 63 days = \$9,000. Now suggesting paying staff for 19 days @ \$2,660 and the Asst. Mgr. @ \$1,000 and the gate fees collected should cover it. A donation slot has been installed so weekday folks who want to pay can slide their money in. Joline has a candidate interested in being the Asst. Mgr. And she would report to the Town Manager. A clean up was held last weekend. 80% of the money last year came in on weekends. A motion to add an Article for the Town Warrant to establish a position of Woodbury Pond Park Manager was made by Scott Weeks, seconded by Gary Parker and voted 2 – 0.

4.4 Quitclaim for liens recorded 1969 to 1983 (R03, Lot 041) – The Town Manager advised that a Title Search for a sale identified 6 liens that had not been recorded as paid. The affected party will pay the filing costs. A motion to approve and sign the Quitclaim Deed to discharge the Town's claims was made by Scott Weeks, seconded by Gary Parker and voted 2 – 0.

4.5 Budget Review – Town Warrant final review:

Article 4 and 6 – add statement regarding where to find the text of the statute identified.

Article 10 – This might be decreased if the Fly-car is not going to be added this year. Info is expected to be available at the Town Meeting.

Article 36 is new to add the Woodbury Pond Park Manager position. Article numbers are adjusted from here on.

Article 41 could increase at Town Meeting depending on the availability of information by then. See the notes added under 5.2 for more information

Article 42 is amended to clarify wording and add an account number for the Purgatory Dam that has not been an account before.

Article 44 is amended to clarify the action intended and the dollar amount needs to be added.

Article 45 has one Special Project (Plains Memorial Cemetery Lot) moved to a separate Article and adjusting the dollar amount. That new Article will require adjusting the Article numbers again.

Article 46 addresses Capital Projects to be paid for from sources other than taxes for the coming year. Dollar amounts need to be added.

Article 54 requests authorization to dispose of town-owned property (other than real estate) by a means other than sealed bid. Some changes were made to the wording.

Article 62 is a new Article prompted by petition and provision of a map at Town Meeting was confirmed.

5.0 Unscheduled Business

5.1 Petition – A petition has been received from Mr Redmond requesting the addition of a Warrant Article for the Town Meeting to include a vote extending the Planned Development District on Route 197 to a point which would allow the establishment of an auto repair garage on the west side of the Maxwell Road, or just across the road from where the District now ends. Mr Redmond was able to obtain nearly all the minimum signatures (174 of 179) required to ensure it was on the Warrant and the Board approved including the Warrant Article to amend the Land Use Ordinance adopted in June 2022 to include the location of Map R03, Lot 57 within the Planned Development District on a motion by Scott Weeks, seconded by Gary Parker and voted 2 – 0.

5.2 Woodbury Pond Dam Committee information that was provided during discussion of the Town Warrant is placed here. An underwater assessment needs to be made. The outer sluice gates are 10 years old. The recommendation is to replace them with metal but the cost is not known at this time. There are cracks in the concrete. It was noted that the Town of Monmouth has offered to cover 20% of the previous repair costs, but nothing has been paid yet. Our Town Manager advised there is an article on their Town Warrant for this.

6.0 Appointments/Resignations

6.1 Reappoint Lawrence Bell to the Woodbury Pond Dam Committee – A motion to reappoint Lawrence Bell to the Woodbury Pond Dam Committee was made by Scott Weeks, seconded by Gary Parker and voted 2 – 0.

6.2 Reappoint David Larrabee as a Smithfield Plantation Trustee - A motion to reappoint David Larrabee as a Smithfield Plantation Trustee was made by Scott Weeks, seconded by Gary Parker and voted 2 – 0.

6.3 Reappoint David Smith Sr. to the New Mills Dam Committee - A motion to reappoint David Smith Sr. to the New Mills Dam Committee was made by Scott Weeks, seconded by Gary Parker and voted 2 – 0.

6.4 Reappoint Michael Sherman as Director of Emergency Management - A motion to reappoint Michael Sherman as Director of Emergency Management was made by Scott Weeks, seconded by Gary Parker and voted 2 – 0.

6.5 Reappoint Katie Yates to the Conservation Commission - A motion to reappoint Katie Yates to the Conservation Commission was made by Scott Weeks, seconded by Gary Parker and voted 2 – 0.

7.0 Warrants

7.1 Town Warrant #33 for \$252,663.82 - A motion to approve the Warrant #33 for \$252,663.82 was made by Scott Weeks, seconded by Gary Parker and voted 2-0.

7.2 Town Payroll #23 for \$26,696.40 - A motion to approve the Payroll #23 for \$26,696.40 was made by Scott Weeks, seconded by Gary Parker and voted 2-0.

8.0 Selectmen/Public Discussion/Communication

8.1 Concert to Honor Mothers Report – Rayna reported the concert was very successful with receipts of \$1470 for the Food Bank Building Fund between donations received at the Concert and following it. The Carol Bailey String Band and Chorus provided a wonderful concert.

9.0 Future Agenda Items

9.1 R02, Lot 017, 2783 Hallowell Rd.

9.2 Update from RSU#4 Withdrawal Investigation Comm. (Meeting on 6/1 at 6:00 PM at the Town Office)

13.0 Adjournment at 9:00 PM

Respectfully Submitted By

Rayna Leibowitz