

Town of Litchfield
Select Board
May 8, 2023
Meeting Minutes

1.0 Convened at 6:30 PM; Pledge to Flag; Selectmen: Gary Parker, Chairman, Clarence Gowell III (identified as Rick Gowell 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, Chm., Elton Wade, Budget Comm.; Richard Lane, Road Advisory Committee Member; and others per the sign in sheet.

2.0 Minutes of April 24, 2023, Meeting submitted for final approval. A motion to approve the minutes as drafted was made by Scott Weeks, seconded by Rick Gowell and voted 3- 0.

3.0 Reports and Correspondence:

3.1 Town Manager: A. Sue Webber was hired 3 days ago. She is doing well.

B. Summer residents are arriving.

C. Heavy rain required a lot of Public Works work.

D. New Mills Dam had debris build up. All 3 towns were alerted. Larry & Greg and a few others worked to remove a lot of the debris. Additional debris clearance will be needed. New Mills Dam rented an excavator for them to use. Kelly will seek reimbursement of costs for Litchfield's labor. West Gardiner has an article on their Town Warrant regarding contributing to the New Mills Dam.

3.2 Code Enforcement Officer/Plumbing Inspector – A. Steve is absent tonight. The Town Manager advised he is working on 3 separate enforcement actions.

B. Steve is expected to have updates next meeting on 2783 Hallowell Rd. and the status of a Woodbury property.

3.3 Road Commissioner – A. Larry reported several weather monitors reported to him that they measured 7 inches of rain in 24 hours. Major washouts. Gustin Road, Pine Tree Road, Dennis Hill Rd. Sportsmens Pond overflowed.

B. Lost an employee.

C. New Truck expected late this week.

D. Whippoorwill Road paved, driveways tied in.

E. Summer residents are arriving.

3.4 Fire & Rescue – A. Chief Mike Sherman advised four firms were invited to bid on the frame repairs to Truck #65. Only 1 firm (from southern New Hampshire) submitted a bid for \$71,000 and change. It will take 4 months to do the work. The Chief was disappointed that no Maine firms bid. Chief Sherman and the Town Manager will be crafting an article for the Town Warrant.

B. Chief Sherman will document the due diligence effort to obtain bids from multiple firms.

3.5 Emergency Management – Chief Sherman is inviting a small group to develop the process for determining the need to open a warming center or shelter. Mike, Bruce, Rayna and another person are participating on May 18.

3.6 Assessing Agent – Ellery Bane will be here this week. Letters regarding the Seniors tax freeze are being sent out identifying those eligible or not eligible.

3.7 Transfer Station – A. John Upham, Transfer Station Manager, advised 2425 stickers have

now been issued. The Swap Shop has opened and already 790 items have been removed from it. The brush and leaf piles have been opened. The Transfer Station will be open on Sunday starting this week.

3.8 Other Town Committees – Conservation Commission – Lindsay Nelsen advised a new Chairperson has been selected. Janice Horne Boyer has been a member for 3 years and she and her husband have done a lot of work with and for the Commission.

4.0 Scheduled Business

4.1 RSU#4 Libby Tozier bond request information session – The Supt. of RSU#4 participated via Zoom. She advised she is looking for funding sources for the ADA compliance area. One bathroom at Libby Tozier School is being considered for renovations. The application is for funding up to a certain amount. Actual costs will be determined with RFP later. This is from a revolving loan fund at 0% interest to be paid back over 5 years, which would start in FY 2025. The maximum amount is \$133,903 with a payback amount of \$87,881.00 and some \$46,000 forgiven. A feasibility study was done several years ago and this ADA compliant bathroom was considered a priority. The study needs to be updated and done for the Sabattus Primary School too, since the proposal for the Elementary School addition was not approved. Questions to the Supt. require her to obtain and provide answers about other ADA upgrades and the architect’s estimate of costs.

4.2 Review liquor license for Meadows Golf Course – The license was reviewed. There have been no complaints received at the Town Office. The Chairman waived the holding of a Public Hearing. A motion to approve and sign the renewal application for a liquor license for the Meadows Golf Course was made by Scott Weeks, seconded by Rick Gowell and voted 3 – 0.

4.3 Review request for Bid- Town Office Support Walls & Deck – The draft of the bid was reviewed and some changes and corrections were made including a requirement for a pre-bid meeting by potential bidders. A motion to approve the revised bid form for Town Office Support Walls and Deck to be due May 22, 2023, was made by Scott Weeks, seconded by Rick Gowell and voted 3 – 0.

4.4 Review/Sign Certified Ratio Declaration Form – The Town Manager advised that factoring will be used to bring the Town into compliance. A motion to approve and sign the Certified Ratio Declaration Form was made by Scott Weeks, seconded by Rick Gowell and voted 3 – 0.

4.5 Corrective Deed for foreclosure sale (R03, Lot 041) – The deed was not prepared for this meeting but needs to have all 3 Selectmen sign it. A motion to sign the deed outside a regular meeting was made by Scott Weeks, seconded by Rick Gowell and voted 3 – 0.

4.6 Budget Review, Review Revisions to Town Warrant – Focus was on the wording for several Warrant Articles:

Art. 4, Increase interest rate on unpaid taxes to 5%.

Art. 5 references a State Statute – Title 36 MRSA §506. The text of this reference should be somewhere in the Town Report and referenced here.

Art. 10, Does Litchfield have an interest in having the Gardiner Rescue Fly Car if Richmond is not? Consensus seemed to be, Yes, among the Board. Additional discussion is needed and information provided to the Board.

Art. 14, remove the language appearing in red from last year’s report explaining the extra funds being added to the Employee Benefits account that no longer applies.

Art. 25, The numbers in this Article need to be finalized.

Art. 29, Change Selectmen “Request” to Selectmen “Recommends”.

Art. 31, Remove the words “carry-forward”.

Art. 33, Insert the correct amount

Art. 35, Use language, “To see if the“ Town will... and change the amount to \$14,500 with a separate line for the Woodbury Pond attendant stipend. Change “Selectmen “requests” to “recommends: Ought to Pass and Budget Committee Recommends: “Ought to Pass”.

Art. 38, Change “D.A.S.H” to “Friends of Cobbossee”

Art. 40, Previous draft included Purgatory Dam info and that has been moved to a separate Article. Also, any balance left in the Woodbury Pond Dam account as of June 30, 2023 be changed to 2024.

Art. 41, is a new Article To see what sum the Town will raise and appropriate for engineering evaluation of removing PURGATORY DAM, and that any balance as of June 30, 2024, be transferred to WOODBURY DAM MAINTENANCE reserve funds (G10-368-00). Selectmen Request: \$7,600, Budget Committee Recommends: \$7,600

Article numbers need to change from here

Art. (now) 42, second line to read: (\$128,000; Roads and Bridges reconstruction (add “bond repayment” delete “loan”.

Art. (now) 43 needs the amount inserted.

Art. (now) 44 needs to read: To see what sum the Town will appropriate for ((remove “CAPITOL”) insert ”SPECIAL” PROJECTS (80-6) 1) Community Park Benches and access point monitoring cameras and 2) Plains Memorial Lot Renovation (insert “and” 3) Invasive Plant Control (83-6-010) on Town owned lands by Conservation Corps to be used by the Selectmen as they deem reasonable, and that any unexpended balance, as of June 30, 2025 shall return to the **CAPITAL (SHOULD IT BE “SPECIAL”) PROJECTS RESERVE FUND (G0-373-00) CHECK THAT FUND #** and the amounts need adjustment

Art (now) 45 needs dollar amounts inserted

Art. (Originally) 46 is a duplicate of #43 and will be removed, making future Article number correct without changing them.

Art. 49, Correct dollar amount

Art. 53, Completely new article

Art. 56, The Town Manager needs to check the amount.

Art. 60 is a duplicate of Art. 52. Remove

Art. (now) 60, \$ amount needs confirmation

5.0 Unscheduled Business

5.1 New street name request – Linwood Drive – Gideon Wheeler was present to request the road name now that a second dwelling is being constructed on a private driveway. Linwood Drive has been recommended by the Code Enforcement/E911 Officer. A motion to approve the road name as Linwood Drive off the Oak Hill Road was made by Scott Weeks, seconded by Rick Gowell and voted 3 – 0.

5.2 Guardrails for Dead River Rd and Buker Rd. - Larry advised he received a quote for repairing/replacing the guardrail on Buker Road and installing guardrails on Dead River Road for \$11,600 from C. A. Newcomb Co., virtually the only company to do this work. The Select Board approved the proposal. A Selectman asked if MDOT had any standards for the situations where guardrails were recommended or required. No one here had an answer.

5.3 Transfer Station Transportation Costs for April – The Town Manager advised the transportation costs for recyclables is the largest expense for the Transfer Station budget. The costs for April

were considerably above expected costs at \$7,127.50 because of higher labor and fuel costs as well as more trips than previously required. March transportation expenses were \$1,000 over budget. May and June projected amounts are \$9,000 each month. These costs will eliminate the contingency fund and funds in the abatement fund will be used. No action was taken as this was informational only.

5.4 Transfer Station Materials Costs – A quote for materials was provided showing \$22,185.59 from Hammond Lumber. Additional discussion of needs and options was held. A final figure for the Town Warrant will be needed for the May 22 meeting so the printer can include it. There are two assignments for that meeting. 1) Get a rough estimate from a builder to build a 24 X 24 building, as proposed; and 2) Get the cost of a temporary structure that can be adequate for the winter and delay the decision into the spring.

5.5 Woodbury Pond Park Plan for 2023 – The proposal for 2023 is to be open on weekends (Fri. & Sat. ?Sun.) and special events and holidays. A Part Time worker would open and close the dates all summer for \$1,000. The Select Board approved not being open and staffed on weekdays and be open on weekends. Discussion of the problem with geese identified that a horizontal string about 8 inches off the ground deters them. So the approval includes putting up string to deter the geese, thus minimizing the clean-up issues. Folks can park at roadside and walk around the gate for use on weekdays.

7.0 Warrants

7.1 Town Warrant #31 for \$56,875.76 - A motion to approve the Warrant #31 for \$56,875.76 was made by Scott Weeks, seconded by Rick Gowell and voted 3-0.

7.2 RSU#4 Warrant # 32 for \$345,483.17 – A motion to approve the RSU#4 Warrant #32 for \$345,483.17 was made by Scott Weeks, seconded by Rick Gowell and voted 3-0.

7.3 Town Payroll #22 for \$27,486.92 - A motion to approve the Payroll #22 for \$27,486.92 was made by Scott Weeks, seconded by Rick Gowell and voted 3-0.

8.0 Selectmen/Public Discussion/Communication

Tom Wood, Chairman of the Budget Comm. Has received RSU#4's Budget and is preparing for the voter review on May 17th. A notion to approve up to \$500 (from the contingency account) to make signs regarding the RSU#4 vote to encourage voter participation was made by Scott Weeks, seconded by Rick Gowell and voted 3 – 0.

9.0 Future Agenda Items

9.1 R02, Lot 017, 2783 Hallowell Rd.

9.2 2022 Road Construction Cost Review

9.3 Update from RSU#4 Withdrawal Committees

9.4 Transfer Station Building costs and/or building rental cost options for the Budget

13.0 Adjournment at 10:35PM

Respectfully Submitted By

Rayna Leibowitz