

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

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

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(absent); Larry Nadeau, Road Comm.; John Upham, Transfer Station Manager; Tom Wood, Chm., Elton Wade, Budget Comm.; Steve Ochmanski, Code Enforcement Officer(absent); and others per the sign in sheet.

2.0 Minutes of June 26, 2023

Scott weeks motions to approve the minutes (with correction noted) from June 26, 2023, Rick 2nd, voted 3-0.

3.0 Reports and Correspondence

3.1 Town Manager - Kelly Weissenfels

A. Kelly reports the requested recount was successfully accomplished. Both candidates brought a representative to the recount. The votes were all matched and accounted for after the first recount, Mr. Russell noted he was satisfied the election results were confirmed with G. Parker at 222 and M. Russell at 221.

B. Kelly presented a list of past Spirit of America award winners at the meeting as requested by the board. The award was started in 2007 and since 2014 the process has been paired down to single nominee/winner.

C. The RSU Budget Reduction review ended this round with a reduction of \$368,758.00. As a reminder there will be a meeting for public discussion on Thursday July 27th, 2023. Kelly did note he has a list of what was reduced.

3.2 Code Officer/Plumbing Inspector - Kelly reports that Steve Ochmanski is home nursing an injury and will be out of the office tomorrow but hopefully back to work in the office on Wednesday.

3.3 Road Commissioner - Larry Nadeau

A. The base coat of tar has been finished on Huntington Hill Road. All States is looking to finish up the final coat in the next 30 days, but rain may cause delays in the plan.

B. The Town Crew back filled driveways on Huntington Hill Road from Libby Road back towards Rt 197, finished up today and will be looking to continue ditching Pine Tree Road tomorrow or when rain lets up and allows for completion.

C. Larry also discussed failing a driveway entrance he assessed recently; the landowner was in attendance tonight to speak to the Board about the variance request.

**An alteration to the schedule was made in order to be respectful of guest(s) time.*

4.1 Driveway Entrance Permit variance request - Darrell Heroux

There is a parcel of property that Mr. Heroux is looking to build a house and a shop on. This is up on Oak Hill Rd, where there was a large logging operation completed. There is an already established clearing Mr. Heroux would like to utilize. Larry noted there wouldn't be a culvert required. Also, Oak Hill is a 45MPH zone so those are the guidelines/regulations that were followed when denying the request.

Technically a driveway being established in this spot wouldn't meet sight line requirements. The brush on both sides needs to be cut back and that will assure there will be 250-275 feet. Per Larry the location would not cause a blind drive by any means. Larry stated he has no opposition to the variance passing.

Scott motions to pass the driveway entrance permit variance request for Mr. Darrell Heroux, Rick 2nd, Vote 3-0.

D. The town now has a new loader. Larry has taken for a drive and noted it runs very well.

E. Dennis Hill Road will be getting a sign reading Local Traffic Only. With the closure of the bridge(s) there has been an increase in traffic on Dennis Hill Road. People are not paying close enough attention to the road signs as the bridge on Dennis Hill Road is being worked on as well. Larry has spoken with the Sherriff's office, and they have agreed to patrol the road/set a car at the entrance of Dennis Hill to try and assure everyone slows down.

3.4 Fire & Rescue - Kelly Weissenfels noted that Chief Sherman is on vacation and will be able to provide more details when he is able to attend the next meeting.

A. 74 Purgatory Drive had a visit by the Fire Department. This turned out to be a beeping smoke detector. However, it was noted that there is now a "do not enter" assigned to the building. The town will be looking to pursue a formal condemning of the building. It was noted that the owner was incapacitated and is intending to sell the property.

3.5 Emergency Mgmt. - Kelly Weissenfels

A. There was a second meeting regarding the Emergency Warming/Cooling Shelter and again Chief Sherman will have more details at the next meeting he attends.

3.6 Assessing Agent - Kelly noted the Assessing agent will be back in the office on Thursday July 13th, 2023.

3.7 Transfer Station – John Upham

A. There have been three more stickers issued for a total of 2494 stickers giving folks access to the transfer station.

B. There were four bulky bins emptied last week with only one needing to be emptied this week.

C. The Swap Shop has been doing well. There were 322 items taken this week for a total of 3096 items.

D. The leaf and brush piles are continuing to be well used.

E. The Mound has been fully mowed. Also, John reports the Pine Tree Cemetery has been "mowed". Proving that the bush hog works very well.

3.8 Other Town Committees

- Elton Wade gave an update on the Academy Building. The contractor plans to get started tomorrow if the weather holds out. The amount of rain that has been seen this year has slowed all progress on work outside.

- RSU 4 investigation committee will have a meeting on July 20, 2023, to draft an interim report to present to the Select Board.

4.0 Scheduled Business

*4.1 Driveway Entrance Permit variance request - Darrell Heroux – taken out of order (see 3C above).

4.2 Consent agreement status and response to filing of lawsuit - D. Lahey (U25-013)

Kelly informed the board of a lawsuit submitted by Dorris Lahey (and Son) owner of 92 Woodbury Drive. After signing a consent agreement back in February to correct a rock wall as well as a lean-to that were not permitted due to being too close to the water as well as too close to the neighbor's property line. On July 6th there was notification of a complaint filed against the Town of Litchfield accusing the CEO of singling the Laheys out. There also appeared to be a misunderstanding about how the consent agreement would be enforced. The town's lawyer has been consulted via a conference call to discuss options at this point. The lawyer informed the attendees of the meeting that a response must be filed within 20 days of receiving the complaint, meaning by the 26th of July. The 1st option of response is to deny all allegations. The 2nd option is to file a request to dismiss the lawsuit. The 3rd option is to answer, and counter sue. An option has been picked and the request has been made of the attorney to call Mrs. Lahey to find out what they were expecting to get out of the suit. Mrs. Lahey referred questions to her son. It's been noted they may be seeking out council, as at the time the suit was filed it was done without council.

4.3 Gustin Road Bridge – temporary repair status, and options for replacement

Larry has received an email from Greg MacAlister at Calderwood Engineering that states the fix is to grind out the area that is the issue place a metal plate down on deck and refill with concrete. One of the issues is that the current decking is weak and the hole could grow and get out of hand quickly. The repair will be done as soon as the weather allows as paving cannot be done in the rain.

The current fix of the metal plate is working well to cover the hole. However, with it not being flat it bounces up and down every time a vehicle goes over it. At this point more and more cracks are showing through. There was a request put forward to Larry and the board for some signage stating, "bridge under repair" or "damaged bridge". This is mostly for the delivery drivers that do not seem to slow down for anything. Kelly will be keeping the road association abreast of any progress.

4.4 Update on Veteran's Memorial

This past Saturday Scott, Elton and Tom worked on taking the fencing apart that is going to the powder coating company. The next step is to get the posts detached from the cement so all parts and pieces can be done together. It was suggested that all the sections of fencing go now to be repainted so that they are ready to go in the future if they are needed. The final repair was discussed, and it sounds as though all members involved are on the same page.

Rick brought up the memorial itself and asked if there was any progress on the historical plaque that is to be acquired. Elton was given a wonderful article by Rayna that was very informative. Elton reports the plaque is currently accurate. He will be working on getting something written up that is detailed and to the point so all who will need to work on the memorial in the future will know its history.

4.5 Update on bid for the frame repair of the Town Office. Kelly has sent the request for bid out to the Kennebec Journal which Rayna stated was in the Kennebec Journal on July 9, 2023. It has also been put out on Facebook and per Scott has been shared several times. The board is really hoping to get this done before Winter. However, there have been no responses yet.

5.0 **Unscheduled Business**

5.1 Approve dollar amount for the purchase of the Komatsu front loader.

A motion was already made for the Komatsu to be purchased as noted in minutes of June 26, 2023.

"Scott motion to approve the purchase of front-end loader Komatsu in the amount of \$159,704.00 after trade, Rick 2nd". Today a vote of 3-0 was taken.

5.2 Another walk through for the Small Road will be July 14, 2023.

6.0 **Appointments/Resignations**

6.1 None to discuss at this time.

7.0 **Warrants**

7.1 Town Warrant #1 \$351,332.34

Scott motions to approve Town Warrant #1 for \$351,332.34, Rick 2nd, Vote 3-0.

7.2 RSU4 Warrant #2 \$386,533.01

Scott motions to approve RSU4 Warrant #2 \$386,533.01, Rick 2nd, Vote 3-0.

7.3 Town Payroll #26 \$48,195.69

Scott motions to approve Town Payroll #26 \$48,195.69, Rick 2nd, Vote 3-0.

8.0 **Selectmen/Public Discussion/ Communication**

8.1 Rayna has made a request for the Selectman to send a letter to the DOT requesting a sign at the end of the Thorofare Road on the Plains Road end. There have been at least 5 cars that have been driven into the pile of leaves there.

9.0 **Future Agenda Item**

9.1 R02-017, 2783 Hallowell Road no update at this time.

9.2 Update from RSU4 withdrawal committee (will be moved into the agenda for next meeting)

10.0 **Adjournment 7:26 pm**

Respectfully submitted by Angela Parker