

**Town of Litchfield
Selectboard Meeting Minutes
Sep 25, 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 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.; Steve Ochmanski (absent), Code Enforcement Officer; and others per the sign in sheet.

2.0 Minutes of Aug 28, 2023

A motion was made by Scott Weeks to approve the minutes as written for August 28, 2023, Gary 2nd, vote 2-0(Rick abstained).

Gary wanted one adjustment noted as the walk through of the transfer station was discussed and did not make it to the minutes appropriately.

As written: A date will be set to go walk the property and come up with a plan for proposal.

Adjustment: After lengthy discussion date of September 25, 2023, at 7:30am was set for a walk through for visual inspection and discussion to look at expanding and rearranging the Transfer Station.

3.0 Reports and Correspondence

3.1 Town Manager - Kelly Weissenfels

A. The next vote for the RSU4 budget will be held at the Sportsman's Club on October 3, 2023 the tax commitment is waiting on the results of this vote.

B. Town audit (FY22) is now $\frac{3}{4}$ done with the most recent submission to the auditors.

C. The culvert and stream maintenance grant monies were received by the town. Also, Kelly has checked, and the town of Monmouth has paid their share of the dam repair which was approximately \$38,000.00.

3.2 Code Officer/Plumbing Inspector - Kelly gave the update as Steve Ochmanski was absent from the meeting.

A. There has been no progress reported at the residents of 2783 Hallowell Road. They have until the end of October to complete the project(s).

B. There has been a request received from the residents at 950 Plains Road for a change of Road name. They would like to see Peerless Lane as the new name.

A motion was made to approve the name of Peerless Lane at 950 Plains Road by Scott Weeks, Rick 2nd, vote 3-0.

C. The alteration(s) to either Birch or Perch Road names so they do not sound as similar for emergency call purposes.

D. Kelly noted he will be taking a vacation the 10th-12th of October and that Steve will cover the Select Board meeting on the 10th.

3.3 Road Commissioner - Larry Nadeau

A. The grading process has been completed on Pine Tree Road. There will be 2-3 days of injection with the plan of hot topping by October 2, 2023.

B. Three quarters of this coming winter season's sand has been acquired.

C. The new front loader is reportedly working very well.

D. Larry has received some bad news regarding the frame for the new plow truck the town has purchased. There was a fire at the plant where the frame is being built. Larry believes in the meantime the Ford he has in the garage will run and get the job done this winter season.

E. Shouldering of the roads is the last of the projects for the season, which are currently on schedule.

F. There has yet to be a sign placed at the end of Thorofare Road indicating the end of the road, Kelly will be following up.

3.4 Fire & Rescue - Michael Sherman

The Chief has extended an invitation to the Select Board members for the meeting on Wednesday September 27, 2023, at 5:30pm at Central Fire Station. This is if they would like to learn more about the Pumper Truck and the cost associated with its specs. This is the first of three that Chief Sherman has started setting up as previously discussed in meetings and minutes.

3.5 Emergency Mgmt. - Michael Sherman

The Mutual Aid contract has been reviewed by all parties and is now on the desk of the Superintendent for signature. Chief Sherman will be following up tomorrow with the Superintendent's office per Rick.

3.6 Assessing Agent - Kelly Weissenfels

Ellery has adjusted his arrival to October 26, 2023, he will be available in person, this is pending school budget vote results. Kelly is hoping to keep the 7:30am meeting for the scheduled commitment date on October 5, 2023.

3.7 Transfer Station - John Upham

A. There has been an increase in stickers issued, 8 new stickers for a total of 2,561.

B. The Swap Shop is doing well! There were 583 items taken in the last 2 weeks for a total of 6,508 items. The Transfer Station attendants will be done taking items in on September 30, 2023, for the year. The Swap Shop will be closed for the Season on October 14, 2023. There have been signs created that will be used every year denoting the opening and closing of the shop.

C. Both the Bulky and Cardboard bins needed to be emptied this week, there seems to be little slowing of folks utilizing the Transfer Station this fall.

3.8 Other Town Committees

A. Tom Wood wanted to inform the Board there will be a Budget Committee meeting October 19, 2023, at 6:30pm. He is looking to have the recommendations finalized to present to the Selectboard either at the last meeting in October or the first meeting in November of 2023.

B. Pat Soboleski reported that the Carol Bailey String Band has their final scheduled performance of the year at the Schooner Estates Memory Center on Wednesday September 27, 2023. The Senior Steppers will be performing at the St. Mary's Residences on October 16, 2023. The group's Christmas program will be starting up soon.

4.0 Scheduled Business

4.1 Review / Approve Winter Sand Bids 7 pm (Started 5 min early as the meeting was ahead of schedule)

A total of four bids were received:

1. PIKE Industries reads:

4,500 tons \$9.30/unit with a delivery rate of \$8.60/unit. Larry worked this out to be \$23.27/yard.

2. CH Stevensons:

\$16.15/cu yard for a total cost of \$48,450.00

3. St. Laurent & Son:

\$14.97/yard

4. Steve McGee Construction, LLC: *Winning Bid
\$14.25/cu yard

There was a motion made to approve the bid received from Steve McGee Construction, LLC. Rick 2nd the motion, vote 3-0.

4.2 Junk Yard Public Hearing / Permit Approval - L. Bolton 1062 Plains Rd 7:15 pm

Per Gary, there have been no complaints or issues brought before the Select Board to date, so a Public Hearing is not needed.

There was a motion made to approve the Automobile Graveyard/Junk Yard permit for L. Bolton 1062 Plains Rd. Rick 2nd the motion, vote 3-0.

4.3 Update on the walk around of the Transfer Station's proposed expansion location.

The Selectmen walked around the grounds of the current site then moved to the undeveloped area the morning of September 25, 2023. There was time for discussion and thought sharing. The next steps are to speak with the DEP and see if the expansion is a possibility, John Upham has been in contact with the previous DEP representative for our area and he has moved on to another position but provided some observations. John was informed that the town will likely need to apply for a new permit/license for the Transfer Station. It was decided that abutters would be contacted only if the site was deemed able to be developed, at which point a development plan would also be necessary to move forward.

4.4 Ad Hoc RSU4 Budget Committee Report – No update has been received.

There was again a strong suggestion made that the committee be ready to have a table/area at the November elections at the Sportsman's Club to poll the voters to see how they feel about the possibility of leaving the RSU4. In the discussion it was mentioned that if the matter goes to election and fails there is a 2-year waiting period before it can be tried again. As has been previously stated, if the taxpayers aren't in favor of the process, then there is no point in moving forward. Also, Rayna pointed out that the taxpayers aren't going to know if they are in favor or not in favor as there has been no information presented to date. Tom, who is also on this committee, reports there is an outline in front of the committee members now for review. The Ad Hoc RSU4 Budget Committee Report will stay on the schedule so Percy or Committee can have time to report to the Select Board.

4.5 RSU4 Budget

Gary and a few others went to the "town meeting" [referendum validation] and the report is that the cuts seem to have mostly been unfilled positions, with it also being noted that the administration has taken no cuts in the revision(s) of the school budget. The local share passed 26-19. Kelly wanted to point out that RSU4 has put up a "frequently asked questions" tab, if anyone wanted more information. There were a few people with the question of why, since the budget hasn't passed, is the town not paying amounts based off last year's budget? Kelly read aloud Title 20A Subsection 2087 with the explanation. Basically, the statute states that if the budget has been passed by the board and presented to the voters then the schools can use that budget and towns may choose to commit taxes based on that number, even if it has not passed the final vote. Kelly noted that with each of the decreases in budget then the RSU4 Warrant (invoice) has decreased correspondingly.

4.6 Town Road "Driveways" Discontinuances

Kelly has nothing new to report on the topic.

Gary has requested permission from the members of the board to sit with Ellery to gain more clarity on how to assess the abutter's property. Kelly is to ask Ellery if he can be present via Zoom for the meeting scheduled October 8, 2023, so all members can ask questions about the process. Also, he will be

reaching out to an assessor and/or Realtor to see if they have advice or opinions on how to move forward.

4.7 Quitclaim – Repurchase completed R09-071 - M. Macdonald

There was a motion made by Scott Weeks to approve the Quitclaim – Repurchase of R09-071, M. Macdonald. The motion was 2nd by Rick, vote 3-0.

5.0 Unscheduled Business

5.1 There was a question by Rayna about the signs regarding the water clarity at the academy building. There are signs stating not to drink the water as it has high levels of arsenic. There was a meeting a few weeks ago where Kelly noted the filters were in the process of being ordered and then will be changed out. He is to follow up and inform all parties involved if the signs can officially be removed or not. He is under the impression that the company in charge completed the project as scheduled. Meaning, the water should be fine. However, he will follow up.

5.2 Most recent update on the bridge repairs causing detours in town:

Rt. 126 is allegedly going to be finished by the end of October.

An attending resident stated Thorofare Rd has reportedly been noted to be 2-3 weeks out.

6.0 Appointments/Resignations

6.1 Appoint GA Administrator – Diana Larrabee

Scott motioned to approve Diana Larrabee as General Assistant Administrator, Rick 2nd, vote 3-0.

6.2

7.0 Warrants

7.1 Town Warrant #9 \$103,097.92

There was a motion made by Scott Weeks to approve Town Warrant #9 for \$103,097.92, Rick 2nd, vote 3-0.

7.2 Town Payroll #6 \$32,018.37

There was a motion made by Scott Weeks to approve Town Payroll #6 for \$32,018.37, Rick 2nd, vote 3-0.

8.0 Selectmen/Public Discussion/ Communication

8.1 Pat Soboleski noted that the bus will be getting a good cleaning soon.

9.0 Future Agenda Item

9.1 R02-017, 2783 Hallowell Road

9.2 Update from RSU4 withdrawal committee

10.0 Adjournment 8:07pm

Respectfully submitted by Angela Parker