

**MINUTES OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING
TOWN OF GORHAM
MONDAY, JULY 20, 2015 6:00 PM
GORHAM TOWN HALL**

Gorham Selectmen present: Jeff Schall, Grace LaPierre, Terry Oliver

Also present: Robin Frost, Town Manager; Kirstan Lukasak, Berlin Daily Sun; Mike Waddell, Michael Welch, NCIC; Henry Sanschagrín, Eric Cornish, Ron Dagesse, Dan Dagesse, Keith Roberge

1. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm by Chairman Schall.

2. Appointments:

a) Keith Roberge – OHRV Use on Town Roads: Mr. Roberge was late for the meeting, the Board moved on to Mr. Cornish. Please see Mr. Roberge's comments below.

b) Eric Cornish – OHRV Use on Town Roads: Mr. Cornish stated that at the last meeting the Board discussed the possibility of opening the Jimtown Road/Crestwood Drive neighborhood and wondered where the matter stood with the State. TM Frost stated that she called and left messages for Chris Gamache at the NH Bureau of Trails, but she has not heard back from him. Mr. Cornish wondered if the Board would approve the opening of those roads based on receiving approval from the State.

Mr. Roberge stated that he understands that the State will be opening the trail from Moose Brook State Park for the ATV Festival only. He went on to tell the Board that he feels that he pays plenty of taxes and is tired of trailering his bike in order to have access to the trail bed. Mr. Roberge told the Board that the Town should not be waiting for the State to tell the Town what they are willing to do, but that the Town should be telling the State what they want done for trail access. Access and availability to the parking lot on Route 2 is most often full and he must trailer his bike to Berlin to park. Mr. Roberge informed the Board that he has insurance and copies of special permits that he could provide the Town, but he would like an answer to his request tonight.

Henry Sanschagrín said he was asked to contact Andrew Zboray regarding using Moose Brook to access the trail. As it stands right now, campers may bring ATVs into the park cannot unload once there. He expressed his frustration regarding the State having an additional public hearing regarding the additional trail access via the rail bed because there already was a public hearing where this was discussed. He also said that he does not agree that the Board accepted all petitions that had been submitted as some of them were not even valid. He suggested that the Board contact John Rose versus Chris Gamache. Mr. Sanschagrín expressed frustration and discontent with the Board at the last public hearing. Larry Brown attended this hearing and had a presentation for the public, which Chairman Schall cut him short and did not allow him to finish the presentation. Mr. Sanschagrín had also been cut off from speaking fully. He said that this was not right.

Further discussion took place regarding the Board's position on moving forward with approvals for Jimtown Road/Crestwood Drive neighborhoods as well as Cascade Flats and Cascade Hill.

Selectman Oliver made a motion to open all of Cascade Hill for ATV use, and upon an official, written approval from the State of NH Bureau of Trails for the Route 16 crossing between Cascade Hill and Cascade Flats, to open Cascade Flats for ATV use, seconded by Selectman LaPierre, voted unanimously.

Selectman Oliver made a motion to approve ATV use on the roads in the Jimtown Road/Crestwood Drive neighborhood along with all side connecting streets upon official, written State approval of trail access via either the rail bed or Route 2 intersection, seconded by Selectman LaPierre, voted LaPierre – Aye; Oliver – Aye; Schall – Nay.

Selectman LaPierre made a motion to give Keith Roberge special written permission to access the trail system via Jimtown Road, Crestwood Drive and Brook Road to Gerald Marcou’s property, seconded by Selectman Oliver, voted LaPierre – Aye; Oliver – Aye; Schall – Nay.

c) **Michael Welch, NCIC – NH Grant Kiosk Wayfaring Signage:** Mr. Welch stated that NCIC placed the kiosk sign that is located in the Town Park cooperatively with the local Chamber of Commerce. He presented the Board with a proposed information sign that will be placed in three entry locations of the Town. The sign will have their “moose” logo along with an additional “info” section with arrows pointing to the direction of the kiosk. The signs are slated to go on Route 16 at the tracks, while the other two will be placed before the Route 2/16 intersection respectively. The Board stated that NCIC should consider an additional sign on Route 2 coming from Shelburne and Maine. He stated that he would look into an additional sign for that location as well. Mr. Welch asked the Board if the Town would be able to take over the maintenance of the signs, noting that the Town will be given additional signs for future use/replacement. **Selectman LaPierre made a motion to approve the acceptance of the maintenance of the proposed signs, seconded by Selectman Oliver, voted unanimously.** Chairman Schall stated that the front of the current kiosk facing Routes 2/16 would be a great location for a sign that states “Gorham, NH”.

d) **Ron and Dan Dagesse – Proposed 140 Unit Hotel:** Dan Dagesse informed the Board that he is coming back to the North Country. He asked the Board that if he was to open a call center if they thought a \$12 per hour wage along with benefits is considered a viable for this area. The Board stated that they felt the NH Employment Office could better give him that answer. Mr. Dagesse stated that at this time, because of the increase in tourism in general as well as because of the new ATV trail system, he is looking at the Berlin-Gorham area to build a new hotel. At this time, he is not sure whether it would be a “flag” hotel or an independent hotel. Mr. Dagesse said that he currently owns a 4.5 acre site on Main Street that he could possibly develop. Mr. Dagesse asked the Board if the assessment values of properties was at 100 percent or not. TM Frost stated that the Town is currently at 95.4%. TM Frost asked Mike Waddell if he could assist with how the property assessment works and explain it to the Dagessees. Mike Waddell stated that assessment can be based on a business’ cost of construction approach or on sales of the business. It totally depends on whether or not a business will share financial information. Mr. Dagesse asked the Board if the Town would consider some sort of a tax break for the first five years. It usually takes about five years for a business to gain enough momentum to be at the anticipated operation level. The Board asked what type of break was he looking for and Mr. Dagesse replied that maybe either a reduced assessment value or a lowered tax rate. The Board stated that they would look at suggestions that Mr. Dagesse would present, but that the Town will also include their appraisers and attorneys.

Mr. Dagesse asked how the Rec Department was going and noted how much his grandchildren enjoy it. The Board and Messrs. Dagesse discussed the park program along with the movies that are shown on the Town Common. Dan Dagesse said that he would like to donate another \$10,000 to the Rec Department, but he stressed that he would only donate the money if it can be spent as the Rec Department sees fit and that the Town does not take money away from the current budget because this money is given.

3. New Business

a) NH Division of Historical Resources Moose Grant Acceptance: TM Frost informed the Board that the Town has been awarded a Moose Grant for \$10,000 to finish the windows in the building. There are approximately 33 windows that need to be buttoned up and the current estimated cost of completion is approximately \$11,000. Any balance for the repairs will come out of the Building Maintenance CRF. The Grant period is from 9/1/2015 through 9/1/2017. TM Frost informed the Board that one person needed to be designated to sign the documents.

The Board made the following resolution:

RESOLVED: That this municipality shall enter into a contract with the State of New Hampshire, acting by and through the Department of Cultural Resources providing for the performance by this Municipality of certain services as documented within the foregoing grant application, and that the official listed, Robin L. Frost, Town Manager, on behalf of this Municipality, is authorized and directed to enter into the said agreement with the State of New Hampshire, and that they are to take any and all such actions that may be deemed necessary, desirable or appropriate in order to execute, seal, acknowledge and deliver any and all documents, agreements and other instruments on behalf of this Municipality in order to accomplish the same.

b) Governor Jeb Bush, Presidential Candidate, Town Hall Meeting, July 23rd: TM Frost stated that Governor Jeb Bush will be here Thursday afternoon for a Town Hall Meeting, which will take place in the Medallion Opera House. He will be available to meet the Board approximately 5 minutes before the meeting begins. Seats will be saved for those Board members that can attend. Selectmen LaPierre and Oliver stated that they each have previous engagements and will not be able to attend. Chairman Schall was not sure if he would be attending.

4. Old Business

a) John Ellis Memorial Update: TM Frost had nothing new to report. PWD Holmes is putting this project on his summer schedule, and at this time she is not sure of the exact date that it will be moved.

b) Public Works Roof Project Update: TM Frost stated the project is still on schedule. A substantial completion walk through will take place on August 4 at 10:00 am. PWD Holmes, Dan Pitman, USDA, Denise Vallee, Dave Lorin and the contractor will be in attendance

c) Tinker Brook Project Update: TM Frost stated that she did not have anything new to report.

d) Panhandling: TM Frost said that she has spoken with Chief Cyr regarding this matter as well as Selectman Oliver. Chief Cyr said that at this time it does not seem like a real problem. To date, the department has been able to move people along. The Board decided to leave the matter alone.

5. Public Comment:

Henry Sanschagrín stated that at last week's meeting he asked the Board about a district court matter being not proessed because of the Town's failure to prosecute. He wondered if an answer had been received. TM Frost stated that Chief Cyr was sick that day and that he had notified the Court. While the Court had dismissed the cases, it had been done without prejudice. Chief Cyr has refiled paperwork to bring the matters back before the Court. Mr. Sanschagrín said that he had been asked that if the State opens Berry Road for the ATV Festival, would the Board approve the Jimtown Road/Crestwood Drive neighbor access for that day only. **Selectman Schall made a motion to open Jimtown Road to Berry Road during the ATV Festival, July 31st, August 1st and August 2nd, if accessibility is approved by the State of NH, Selectman Oliver seconded, voted unanimously.**

Mike Waddell asked if he could get Appointment Certificates for Terry Rhoderick, Pat Lefebvre and Dennis Arguin for the Budget Committee. The Budget Committee will be meeting on Thursday, July 23, 2015.

6. Other Business

a) Town Manager's Update: TM Frost stated that the new scoreboard for the Libby's field is on order and that all monies needed to get the scoreboard was received through donations. The Town did not incur any expense.

b) Selectmen's Update: Chairman Schall wanted to follow up on the Munce properties. TM Frost stated that she had sent an email to Attorney Ed Boutin but has not heard back from him. She will check in with him.

c) Approval of Minutes (June 29, 2015): The minutes were passed over, as they were not available.

d) Sign Manifest: All manifests were signed.

e) Sign Abatements and Exemptions (if necessary):

7. Non-Public Session: RSA 91-a:3, II a: On a motion by Chairman Schall, seconded by Selectman LaPierre, the Board voted unanimously by roll call to move into non-public session at 8:00 pm. Schall – Aye, LaPierre – Aye, Oliver – Aye.

On a motion by Chairman Schall, seconded by Selectman LaPierre, the Board came out of non-public session by unanimous roll call vote at 8:15 pm. Schall – Aye, LaPierre – Aye, Oliver - Aye.

8. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 PM.

REVIEWED AND APPROVED:

Jeff Schall

Grace LaPierre

Terry Oliver