

MINUTES OF THE SELECT BOARD
Monday, October 17, 2016 - 7:00 PM

Present: David McGuckin, Chair, Bill Stewart, Selectman, Tom Maher, Selectman, Anne Miller, Secretary

Also Present: Tom Smith, Rita Fusco, Lorne Buxton, Holly Biddle, Clint Springer, VJ Strehl, Jim Cerny

1. Approve Minutes of October 3, 2016

Selectman Maher motioned to approve the October 3, 2016 minutes as amended. Selectman Stewart seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

2. Public Questions & Answers

a. Green Waste days

Ms. VJ Strehl requested the Board consider additional Green Waste days. Chair McGuckin responded that based on cost, it is unlikely that they will add to the current schedule of once per month, May through November.

b. Accessory dwellings

Ms. Strehl asked what the Town has done to interpret the recent accessory dwelling RSA into an ordinance. Chair McGuckin answered that the Board has asked the Planning Board to weigh in on it. Darcy Horgan, Planning Board Chair, recently attended a Rockingham County information session about it. The Board anticipates it will be on an upcoming Planning Board agenda. Mr. Tom Smith noted he was told it will be on the November Planning Board agenda.

3. Items:

a. Great Island Garden Club request

Chairman McGuckin noted a request from the Great Island Garden Club for a town contribution of \$2000 per year to cover cost of community plantings. Historically the town has assisted with heavy equipment, but this is the first time the Club has requested a financial contribution.

Mr. Smith, Town Treasurer, recalled that the interest from the Marchand Fund, a town trust fund, is earmarked to beautify New Castle with plantings. Chair McGuckin requested that Pam Cullen, Secretary to the Board, look into the Marchand Fund and asked that a representative from the Great Island Garden Club attend the next meeting to explain their request.

Mr. Jim Cerny questioned why the donation wasn't a part of the budget process. Selectman Maher suggested this be part of a formal request for next cycle.

b. 102 Wentworth Road-merged lots

Although the owner submitted information pertaining to 103 Wentworth Road suggesting that two lots were involuntarily merged, no official request to un-merge the lots has been made. The Board agreed to wait until the owners submit a request before taking any action.

c. Underwood Engineering update

Selectman Stewart is receiving input on the draft report of the Underwood Engineering Study from those who attended the presentation and plans to compile and submit it to Underwood by October 21, 2016.

Regarding the sewer line, Selectman Stewart reported the town has contracted with Underwood to have them assist with the bidding and construction management. There is no definitive timeline, but probably will be complete by mid-November.

Ms. Strehl asked for clarification about the availability of the Underwood Study. Chair McGuckin described the process: Representatives from the Select Board, Water & Sewer Commission, Public Works, Fire Department, and Fire Safety Committee attended a draft presentation a few weeks ago. Attendees are returning comments to Selectman Stewart who will compile and submit them to Underwood in order for them to finalize their report. Selectman Stewart stressed that it is important for Underwood to address the feedback because departments need the report to direct their actions.

Mr. Lorne Buxton, Ms. Strehl and Mr. Clint Springer all expressed their desire for the report to be publicly available in a timely manner so that the public has access to the report prior to any substantive discussion. They recalled that the warrant stipulated a November 1, 2016 completion date. Chair McGuckin explained that the report might not be available on November 1, having had a late start due to weather. The priority is to get it right.

The group suggested that the report be made available at the library as well as the posted on the town website. Chair McGuckin indicated the Board will do everything that they need to in order to ensure it's available to the public.

When Mr. Springer pressed the deadline, Selectman Stewart suggested that he wait until November 1st then come to Town Hall for his copy.

d. Tax rate

Selectman Stewart explained that there is a delay with filing some forms relative to trust funds as well as reporting issues that are being resolved with the Town Auditor but anticipate that the forms will be filed soon. The accountant, Deb Knowles, is striving to prepare so that tax bills will go out by the end of the month.

Mr. Smith, as Treasurer, requested to attend the meeting at which the tax rate is set. Tax rate will be set at a public session.

e. Election coverage for November 8, 2016

Board members agreed to cover the polls on November 8, 2016 as follows:

9:00 am-12:30 pm	Selectman Maher
12:30-4:00 pm	Chair McGuckin
4:00-7:00 pm	Selectman Stewart

f. 28 Atkinson Street estimate

Chair McGuckin described a complaint from the resident at 28 Atkinson Street about detrimental pruning by the Public Works Department of their privet hedge. The pruning was part of their annual pruning to prepare for winter. Customarily the Department knocks on the door to make the resident aware of the intended pruning but they did not connect on this occasion. The homeowner has submitted an estimate from their contractor for replacement at a cost of about \$5,400. The Town intends to get their own estimate but Chair McGuckin suspects that the hedge may come back in the spring growing season. He suggested not paying this and possibly looking at other options.

Selectman Maher thinks that right of way rules need to be clarified since it was trimmed for intersection sight lines and has been done so historically. The problem stems from the homeowner being unavailable to give input. Right of way and homeowner notification should be formalized so that going forward there is a basis to resolve these issues. Selectman Maher also believes the hedge will grow back. Selectman Stewart agreed that they should wait until spring to see what it looks like.

Mr. Smith commented that he went down to look at hedge. His impression was that the pruning was done to the portion that encroached on the street and that it didn't do any damage to roots or trunk.

Mr. Springer asked whether there was a line of sight problem. Ms. Rita Fusco, a neighboring resident at 33 Piscataqua Street, reported that it is a very unsafe intersection.

4. Old Business

a. Comcast

Selectman Maher connected with the school district about their service provider for the school and sent that information to the Principal. He believes there are opportunities for consolidation to save money.

b. Fire Safety report

Chair McGuckin stated that the Fire Safety Committee wants more time to go over each item in their three-page report. While the Board has included each one of the report items in their discussion with Portsmouth, they are open to a more in-depth presentation from the Committee. Chair McGuckin will check with the Committee to schedule an additional hour, pre or post, at the next meeting of the Select Board on November 7, 2016.

c. Candidate forum

Selectman Maher announced a forum for New Castle's state candidates on Saturday, October 29, 2016 at the Recreation Building: 2:00-3:00 pm, State Senate candidates, 3:00-4:00 pm, State Representative candidates. Selectman Maher will publicize.

There being no other or new business, Selectman Maher moved to close the public session. Selectman Stewart seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

The public session closed at 7:41 pm.