

MINUTES OF THE SELECT BOARD
Monday, November 21, 2016 – 7:00 PM

Present: David McGuckin, Chair, Bill Stewart, Tom Maher Selectman, and Bette Jane Riordan, Secretary.

Also present: V.J. Strehl, Andy Schulte, Jim Cerny, Peter Rice, Ann Tarlton, Peter Tarlton, Brad Greeley, Paul Hamblett, Pat Wilson, Sylvia Marple, Leonard Seagren, Beth Barnhorst.

1. Approve Select Board Minutes November 7, 2016.

Selectman Stewart made a Motion to Approve the minutes of the November 7, 2016 Select Board Meeting, as amended. Selectman Maher seconded, and the Motion carried.

2. Public Question and Answer.

a. Street Lights.

Andy Schulte questioned the number of streetlights which are out and asked for solution and time frame. Chair McGuckin reported that 20 of 68n lights are out. Eversource is presently doing a survey of all lights and will provide information and recommendations to the Select Board. Chair McGuckin will report back.

3. Items.

a. Policy and Procedures for Town road maintenance.

The Board reviewed the updated policy and procedures for Town road maintenance include hedge clipping. The policy is available at Town Hall and will be posted on the website. Selectman Maher stated that before any work is done affecting a homeowner, the homeowner will be advised. DPW will call and also leave a message; however they will be doing the work needed.

Selectman Maher made a Motion to Approve the Policy and Procedures for Town Road maintenance, which was seconded by Selectman Stewart. Motion carried.

b. 28 Ocean Street: Unmerger of lots.

Chair McGuckin reported that this matter has been referred to Town legal counsel, Kerry Ann Roman for her opinion.

c. Rye Youth Soft Ball request.

The request from Rye to use the Rec Center for softball was referred to Guy Stearns, Chair of the Recreation Committee.

d. Update on handicapped ramp.

Chair McGuckin reported that there have been a number of informational meetings regarding replacing the handicapped ramp by eliminating the current front access and constructing a new ramp out back. Bids were solicited twice and only one provider

responded. The bid from Jeff Green came in at \$10,000. The Board will continue to pursue this project so that the Town is ADA compliant.

e. Public Works – vacancy.

Chairman McGuckin reported that one of the two DPW crew is no longer employed and this vacancy will be posted after Thanksgiving holiday. In the meantime the Town has hired a temporary worker who is familiar with the Town.

f. Water testing.

Chair McGuckin reported that the NH Department of Environmental Services (“NH DES”) tests town water every 3 months. TTHM’s are a by-product of chlorination, and the readings from the last four quarters were not satisfactory. Portsmouth is providing aerators to Newington in attempt to mediate this problem, however it is taking a long time. Once the new system is in place, DES will be looking for 2 months of good results. In the meantime, Chair McGuckin met with Portsmouth officials who were not willing to help with this, so the Town will need to get to Underwood Engineering to discuss how to lower the readings. The desired standard is .080. Portsmouth is near this.

Selectman Stewart stated that since New Castle is at the end of the water line, that fact accounts for our increased levels. The flushing may have helped a bit. He noted that the two test sites are Shapleigh Island and the school. Chair McGuckin has met with the Town Accountant regarding the 15% loss, and questioned whether the Town could open up at the corner of Main and Wentworth Road. Selectman Stewart stated that 15% loss is not an unusually high loss. Selectman Maher questioned whether it is Portsmouth’s problem or New Castle’s. Chair McGuckin stated it was the Town’s problem to resolve. The Board discussed the fact that organic material that is causing the problem, not the pipes themselves. Chair McGuckin stated there is a need to hire professionals to remediate the problem. We have had four bad readings, and the EPA has been notified, which could possibly result in sanctions. Peter Tarlton suggested a bypass solution for the oxygenation. VJ Strehl asked about possible health effects. After further discussion the Board agreed to meet with Underwood.

g. Garden Club request.

Chair McGuckin asked to revisit the Board’s decision at the last meeting to add the Garden Club to the list of donations to nonprofit agencies. At that time the Club was seeking a \$2,000 donation as the Club could not hold its annual plant sale due to no one coming forward within the Club to chair and run the event which is the Club’s principal annual fundraiser. At the prior Select Board Meeting all agreed that the continuation of beautification of the island was important and granted the request, pending Budget Committee approval. Support was expressed by Tom Smith of the Budget Committee at the prior meeting. Chair McGuckin subsequently learned that there were other funds available within the Club’s structure which they could use, and he asked for clarification.

Ann Tarlton provided detailed reasoning to support the request, and also indicated that due to dwindling membership the Club would have to raise dues to \$140, and she did not want to exclude people from joining. She stressed that the annual plant sale is the chief

fundraiser and the money is needed to purchase quality plants. Both Selectman Maher and Selectman Stewart remained in support of the nonprofit list decision, and after hearing from Ann Tarlton and Beth Barnhorst, Chair McGuckin was satisfied with going forward with the original decision.

h. Underwood Engineering Study Update.

Selectman Stewart recapped the information concerning the urgent need for a bypass process should there be a failure of the current sewer system (pumping stations) He stated the Town had put the project out to bid, but received only one bid which the Board considered too high to accept. So they have rebid for the spring which 5 or six months later than hoped for, but he said it was important to get the pricing right. Peter Tarlton asked about whether reconditioning the pumps was an option; however Selectman Stewart pointed out that technically the stations should be and need to be above ground, not below ground like the current ones, so reconditioning would not be a viable or cost effective option.

Selectman Stewart spoke about the upcoming meeting with Portsmouth on December 12 regarding the conveyance. After questions from Peter Tarlton regarding why the process had to be spaced out over five years and not “one and done”, Selectman Maher noted that Portsmouth would be better able to get financing. Leonard Seagren expressed his concern about the built in political delay with both Portsmouth and New Castle involved and that perhaps New Castle should do the whole process itself and not convey. Chair McGuckin made it very clear that New Castle does not belong in the water/sewer business, and does not have the resources. Possibly the Town will be going to hire a Town Manager, but the paperwork alone to undertake full responsibility with out Portsmouth as a partner would overwhelm present staff. Selectman Maher noted that to go it alone would not be practical. Selectman Stewart clarified all the steps the Town has taken to date, and made it very clear that the Town was not “kicking the can down the road” as was suggested. The Town will have a better sense of the situation after the meeting with Portsmouth on December 12th. Prior to that date, the Board will meet with Underwood to prepare for the Portsmouth meeting.

4. Old Business.: none.

5. New Business.

a. Appointment of new member to the Conservation Commission.

At the Chair’s request, this matter was postponed until the Board has the opportunity to meet with the proposed member.

There being no further business to come before the Board, Selectman Maher made a Motion to Adjourn, which was seconded by Selectman Stewart. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:10 PM.