

1 **MINUTES OF THE SELECT BOARD**  
2 **Monday February 19, 2018 – 7:00 PM**  
3

4 **Present:** Bill Stewart, Chair, Tom Maher, Selectman, Damon Frampton, Selectman,  
5

6 **Also present:** Pam Cullen, Administrative Assistant to the Select Board, Matthew  
7 Taylor.  
8

9 Chair Stewart convened the meeting at 7:00 PM.  
10

11 **1. Approve Select Board minutes of January 8, and February 5, 2018:**  
12

13 Selectman Maher made a Motion to Approve the minutes of January 8 and February  
14 5, 2018 as amended. Selectman Frampton seconded and the Motion carried.  
15

16 **2. Public Questions and Answers.**  
17

18 Pam Cullen, Assistant to the Select Board, spoke on the following issues:  
19

20 **a. PA 29 Forms.**  
21

22 Pam explained about veterans' credits and exemptions which are allowed by law. It  
23 is a \$500 property tax credit/exemption off the actual tax bill. She checked with  
24 DRA who approved this application. There are currently about 38 veterans who  
25 apply for the credit. Who applies is public information but the accompanying DD  
26 214 military form is not public. The Town could recommend expanding the  
27 eligibility/qualifications via a warrant article, but Pam recommended that if they  
28 chose to do that, the amount should be lessened as it would be a burden on the tax  
29 base. It was decided to leave the current process in place, and not expand the  
30 eligibility definition.  
31

32 **b. Green Waste Days.**  
33

34 Pam reported that she spoke with Jim Rini who heads up this project, and has dates  
35 for the coming year. He asked that the dates be posted on the Town website. The  
36 dates are as follows:  
37

38 May 5 and 12

39 June 9

40 July 7 and 14

41 August 18

42 September 8 and 15

43 October 13 ( Day before Road Race)

44 November 17.  
45

1 Chair Stewart requested a calendar be made available.

2  
3 **3. Items.**

4  
5 **a. Follow Up items:**

6  
7 **i. 164 Walton Road-merged lots.**

8  
9 Chair Stewart recused himself from this discussion, which is a petition from the  
10 property owner to unmerge two lots. Selectman Maher and Selectman Frampton  
11 reported they walked the property with the home owner Matthew Taylor, and  
12 worked with both Pam and Attorney Peter Loughlin to determine if the lots were  
13 merged voluntarily. It was the Selectmen's conclusion that the lots were not merged  
14 voluntarily. Selectman Maher recommended to not oppose the Taylor petition,  
15 based upon his review of the conditions contained in the record. There is no  
16 indication of a voluntary merger. After discussion, Selectman Maher made a Motion  
17 to Approve the request to unmerge 164 Walton Road, Parcel 1 and Parcel 2, Map 8  
18 Lot 5. Selectman Frampton seconded, and the Motion carried.

19  
20 **ii. Eversource Easement-Historical Society:**

21  
22 Chair Stewart reported that the requested easement was reviewed by Attorney  
23 Roman, and the new document was reviewed by the Board, signed and executed by  
24 the Select Board.

25  
26 **iii. Itinerary of accepting land.**

27  
28 Selectman Frampton worked with Pam and Jim Cerny on accepting the gift of land  
29 from Mr. Hughes to Riverside Cemetery. The agreed upon dates for the two  
30 required public hearings are March 5 and March 19<sup>th</sup>. April 2<sup>nd</sup> is the scheduled date  
31 for the Board to vote upon this issue. Chair Stewart asked if there could be more  
32 than one public hearing on those two dates as there may be warrant articles to  
33 consider.

34  
35 **4. New Business.**

36  
37 **i. Fair Point letter.**

38  
39 Pam stated that the Board had received an Email that Fair Point had concerns on the  
40 second property tax valuation. Avitar suggested sending them a letter, which Pam  
41 has drafted and asked the Select Board to review it. Fair Point had asked for a copy  
42 of the bill and the property card. In the letter Pam explained that the Town only  
43 bills once per year. After discussion, the Board approved the draft.

44  
45 **ii. Avitar Abatement - 50 Laurel Lane.**

46

1 Pam explained that Laurie Clark has subdivided the land and stated the two parcels  
2 do not much up with present valuations. Pam has written a letter to Avitar asking  
3 them to review the matter. Pam stated Avitar will be in Town next week for review  
4 of building permit properties, so she will ask them to add 50 Laurel Lane for their  
5 review. Chair Stewart asked to see the building permit list. After discussion the  
6 Board recommended sending the request to review the assessment of the two  
7 parcels to Avitar for possible correction, relative to the amount of waterfront  
8 coverage of the two parcels and the assessed valuation.

9  
10 **Action Item:** Pam to send Chair Stewart an Email copy of the list.

11  
12 **iii. Donor Town Letter.**

13  
14 Chair Stewart reported on the status of the bill. He spoke with Rep. Kate Murray,  
15 who followed up on the bill presently before the legislature, and spoke with Jane  
16 Ferrini, who is an attorney for the City of Portsmouth, who will be testifying against  
17 this. She represents a coalition of communities, which are opposed to the donor  
18 town concept. Rep. Murray was not sure if the bill would make it out of the House,  
19 and the plan is to hopefully kill the bill in the Senate should it reach there, Rep.  
20 Murray will be lobbying on behalf of the Town. Chair Stewart explained that the  
21 financial ramifications for the Town if the bill passes are huge. There would be a  
22 50% increase in the Town's operating budget, and a 20% increase in taxes. Chair  
23 Stewart noted the importance of supporting the coalition, and stated the Town has  
24 contributed by lobbying and advocating. If the bill does get to the Senate, then the  
25 Board needs to be fully on board to oppose passage.

26  
27 **iv. 2018 First Quarter results-water quality.**

28  
29 Pam reported that the Town passed the quarter, but not the yearly average. A letter  
30 needs to go out to the public to notify them as required. It must go out by March 8.  
31 The next reading is in May. Selectman Maher asked about the status of the City of  
32 Portsmouth aeration project, which is designed to alleviate the TTHM problems. It  
33 was noted the project went out to bid January 19, 2018. This fact will be included in  
34 our letter. Pam noted she has been asked by Al Pratt of the City of Portsmouth to  
35 provide copies of property tax cards of any houses built between 1982 and 1988 in  
36 order to look at what the pipes are made of, and their condition.

37  
38 **Action Item:** Chair Stewart to review prior public notice letter and approve the  
39 proposed draft letter with Pam so that the letter goes out before March 8.

40  
41 **v. Budget:**

42  
43 Chair Stewart stated that the budget is principally done. Changes are being made in  
44 concert with the accountant. The operating budget is pretty much flat and the  
45 department heads came in with all of their recommendations. Some adjustments  
46 were made. Selectman Frampton asked who made the adjustments. Chair Stewart

1 replied that he, the accountant, and department heads made some changes, but he  
2 will be providing the other selectmen with the final product for their input and  
3 review. The operating budget came out with a 1% increase. He said the Board  
4 needs to talk about the warrant article for roads and streets, which is presently  
5 earmarked for \$80,000. Also, there needs to be a decision about how much to put in  
6 for Town Hall renovation and maintenance. As of today, as a starting point, Chair  
7 Stewart reported that \$50,000 has been earmarked for Town Hall to start the fund.  
8 This is proposed as a capital reserve fund. \$132,000 is proposed for V& E Trust  
9 Fund. Selectman Maher asked if the Board should be giving guidance to CIP, which  
10 meets Thursday. After discussion, Chair Stewart noted the Board doesn't have a  
11 definitive plan as of yet for Town Hall, and there maybe further suggestions as a  
12 result of discussion at Town Meeting.

13  
14 Chair Stewart noted changes made to the operating budget such as the revision of  
15 the merit pool. Money was earmarked for archiving of Town records. (\$2500); and  
16 possible computer replacement was also earmarked. Also included is the \$32,000  
17 for the Town Project Coordinator. \$8,000 is allocated for Water and Sewer Project  
18 Coordinator.

19  
20 Chair Stewart discussed the proposed \$7.6 million warrant article for the entire  
21 water project, and has run some financing scenarios and effects on tax rates. If we  
22 paid for everything, (with Wentworth Bridge and private roads), it would be  
23 roughly a 75 cent increase on the tax rate. Otherwise it could be 55 to 60 cents on  
24 the tax rate, depending on what the Town agrees upon.

25  
26 Chair Stewart reported on his meeting with Spring Hill residents (20 houses) who  
27 requested the Town go ahead and do the project including them, and have  
28 Portsmouth pay back the Town. He explained to them about a proposed betterment  
29 fee, as they needed to understand that public funds can't be used for private road  
30 improvements, and the betterment fee route might be the way to proceed. They  
31 expressed concerns about having to pay themselves to hook up to a defective line,  
32 and prefer to have the Wentworth Road portion included in the project warrant  
33 article. Chair Stewart stated there are several ways to go in crafting the warrant  
34 article, either going the full 7.6 million or the 5.5 million route. All of this needs to be  
35 discussed and agreed upon in the next two weeks by the Board. The Board began  
36 discussion of which approach to follow in crafting the warrant articles.

37  
38 **vi. Bake Sale at Town Meeting.**

39  
40 The Select Board approved Pam Cullen's request to do a bake sale to benefit the  
41 Library at Town Meeting on May 8, 2018.

42  
43 There being no further business to come before the Board, Selectman Maher made a  
44 Motion to Adjourn, which was seconded by Selectman Frampton. Motion carried.

45  
46 Meeting adjourned at 8:50 PM.

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8