

**Minutes of Meeting
CONWAY BOARD OF SELECTMEN
December 12, 2017**

The Selectmen's Meeting convened at 4:05 pm in Meeting Room of Conway Town Hall with the following present: Selectmen, C. David Weathers, Mary Carey Seavey, Carl Thibodeau, John Colbath and Steven Porter, Town Manager, Thomas Holmes, and Recording Secretary, Holly Meserve. Paul DegliAngeli, Public Works Director; and Lilli Gilligan, Finance Director, were in attendance.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairman Weathers led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Colbath moved, seconded by Ms. Seavey, to approve the agenda. Motion carried unanimously (5-0-0).

DISCUSSION OF PROPOSED SELECTMEN WARRANT ARTICLES

- a. Request for funding of Eastern Slope Airport

Mr. Thibodeau stated they are requesting \$10,000 which is the same amount for the last four years. Mr. Thibodeau stated contrary to what you read in the paper the airport is in good shape; our bills are paid and we are not in debt and are not currently taking on any debt. **Mr. Thibodeau moved, seconded by Ms. Seavey, to put an article on the warrant requesting \$10,000 to continue funding of the Eastern Slope Airport. Motion carried unanimously (5-0-0).**

- b. Request for authorization to expend funds for redesign of Conway Public Library Website

David Smolen, Library Director, appeared before the Board. Mr. Smolen stated the library would like to redesign their website, and it would not cost any tax dollars. Mr. Smolen stated the Trustees would like to use funds from their donation account. Mr. Smolen stated when we receive unspecified donations they go into this account.

Mr. Smolen stated the web page is out of date and we don't have a responsive web design. Mr. Smolen stated we would also like to have an on-line room reservation system as our meeting room is heavily used, and having such a system that would allow for an on-line room reservation would be helpful.

Mr. Smolen stated we currently lack technical support for our website and this would allow that. Mr. Smolen stated the amount they are requesting is \$7,500, the lowest bidder out of three bids is a company based in Rhode Island and they have done a lot of library websites.

Mr. Thibodeau asked if these monies are being used from a fund of donations why does it have to be on the warrant and not just approved by the Board of Selectmen. Ms. Gilligan stated the library donation account is not set up like a capital reserve account that only requires Board of Selectmen approval, this is an account that is not under the Board of Selectmen's purview and needs Town approval. Mr. Smolen stated if we use the money within the year it was donated we don't need approval, we can spend it as we see fit; however, if it is deposited into this account than we need Town approval.

Mr. Colbath asked how much is in the account. Mr. Smolen answered approximately \$19,000. Mr. Thibodeau asked if this fund has been accumulating or have you spent out of it. Mr. Smolen stated he has not spent any money out of it since he has been Director; it has been accruing over the years. **Mr. Colbath moved, seconded by Ms. Seavey, to put the stated article on the warrant. Motion carried unanimously (5-0-0).**

c. Request for authorization to allow Keno gambling in the Town of Conway

Mr. Holmes stated this was discussed last week and he is looking for a vote. Mr. Weathers stated he is not denying the benefit of the money, but he still has questions if this is just another form of gambling and he is not sure if it is advantageous for the Town to promote. Mr. Colbath questioned if it is gambling through the back door, however, he does not have a strong opinion one way or the other.

Mr. Thibodeau stated he would like to see it on the warrant if for no other reason than to let the voters have their say. Mr. Thibodeau stated he doesn't see the big deal, but if it gets stretched out into something we don't want there can be another bill for table games that we could vote no on at a later date in time. Mr. Thibodeau stated he thinks the good that it is going to do will outweigh the issues that will come up. Mr. Thibodeau stated it is extremely limited.

Mr. Colbath stated he thinks it will be on the warrant one way or the other, either as a Board of Selectmen article or as a petitioned article. Ms. Seavey stated she does not think it is up to a five-member board and she would like it to go on the warrant.

Ms. Seavey moved, seconded by Mr. Colbath, to put an article on the warrant to allow keno voting in the Town of Conway. Motion carried with Mr. Porter voting in the negative, Mr. Colbath, Mr. Thibodeau and Ms. Seavey voting in the affirmative, and Mr. Weathers abstaining from voting (3-1-1).

- d. Request to allow for property tax reduction for either Commercial or Industrial new construction or both under the authority of RSA 72:80, 81, 82 & 83

Thomas Irving, Planning Director, was in attendance. Mr. Holmes stated that this is sponsored by Representative Frank McCarthy. Mr. Holmes stated these RSA's essentially allows a town to adopt a tax exemption for commercial or industrial uses, or both, up to 50% per year, for a maximum period of 10-years. Mr. Holmes explained that this tax reduction would only be on any new development on the site, not any existing development that is on the site.

Mr. Weathers asked if there is a private home that is converted to an Airbnb would it then be considered commercial. Mr. Irving stated if the entire home is used for an Airbnb we have not been treating it as commercial, we treat it as residential with a short-term lease.

Mr. Thibodeau stated this allows for a property tax reduction for commercial or industrial, or both, that tells him that it can be restricted. Mr. Holmes agreed. Mr. Thibodeau asked if an industrial use could be located in the commercial zone. Mr. Irving answered in the affirmative. Mr. Thibodeau asked if the fact that it is a commercial zone and not an industrial zone play into this. Mr. Irving stated if an industrial use was located within a commercial zone it would still be a candidate for the reduction as it is an industrial use.

Mr. Thibodeau asked if this can be put on the warrant deleting the word commercial and restrict it to industrial new construction only. Mr. Holmes answered in the affirmative. Mr. Thibodeau stated that would be his suggestion.

Mr. Porter stated he's not sure the Board should differentiate between commercial and industrial as we are looking for new growth; we should let the voters decide. Mr. Thibodeau stated the intent was to promote industrial growth within the Town of Conway to diversify the economy. Mr. Thibodeau stated we were not interested in a new hotel or restaurant getting a tax break under this RSA, it was intended for industrial uses only.

Mr. Thibodeau stated he would like to see "either commercial or" deleted. Mr. Holmes stated the Board also needs to determine percentage and duration. Mr. Weathers asked if we do sponsor this and it passes, this would not reduce the tax amount on that property it is only if they decide to develop the property further. Mr. Thibodeau agreed and stated that is one of the good things, under no circumstances does it reduce your tax revenue as it stands today.

Mr. Colbath asked if this has been approved anywhere else. Mr. Holmes stated this is in place in Coos County. Mr. Thibodeau stated it has been there for quite a while.

Mr. Thibodeau moved, seconded by Ms. Seavey, to place on the warrant the contents of RSA 72:80, 81, 82 & 83 to read in part as follows “to allow for property tax reduction for industrial uses for a period of five years in the amount of 50%”. Motion carried unanimously (5-0-0).

DISCUSSION OF PROPOSED BUDGET

Mr. Holmes asked if the Board had any follow-up questions. Mr. Holmes stated the finance numbers have been updated; LED lighting has been adjusted and there have been some personnel changes. Mr. Thibodeau asked about the LED savings and what was the number. Ms. Gilligan stated it ended up being \$4 per light per month for a reduction of \$7,000 for the year. Ms. Gilligan stated with the \$16,100 rebate and the \$7,000 reduction for 2018, 2019 and 2020 the project will pay for itself in three years.

Mr. Thibodeau asked if there is anything in this budget that is notable. Ms. Gilligan stated in the Executive Budget, the Selectmen's Secretary has been reduced by almost \$11,000.

Ms. Gilligan stated in the Finance and Tax Collector Budget, the finance salaries has been increased by \$4,000 as she has been notified by the Bookkeeper that she might retire in 2018. Ms. Gilligan stated the increase of \$4000 is to accommodate four-weeks of training of the new hire by the current Bookkeeper.

Ms. Gilligan stated that the Assessing Budget has been reduced by \$10,000 as the Assistant Assessor position has been vacated and will be discussed under the next agenda item.

Ms. Gilligan stated there have been changes to the Employee Benefits budget with the changes in labor. Ms. Gilligan stated with the two open positions we have budgeted for family plans. Ms. Gilligan stated that she was also contacted by the Police Chief and there have been several changes to their budget in regard to holiday pay, medical insurance, and retirement. Ms. Gilligan stated they have hired a new cleaning company so that line has increased was well.

Ms. Gilligan stated under the Highway Department budget is where you will see the reduction of \$7,000 in street lighting.

Mr. Holmes stated there is a slight decrease in the net result. Mr. Thibodeau stated in regard to the LED lights and the ones we would like to do has there been any progress with the CO-OP. Mr. Holmes answered in the negative and stated it is at the top of the list.

DISCUSSION OF RECLASSIFICATION OF AN
ASSESSING DEPARTMENT POSITION

Mr. Holmes stated it is with regret that we allowed the new Assistant Assessor to resign; we both agreed it was not working out. Mr. Holmes stated he would like to make the position an Assessing Clerk, which will exclude appraisals and field work. Mr. Holmes stated this would broaden our field of candidates and shorten our training time. Mr. Holmes is asking to advertise that position.

After a brief discussion, **Mr. Thibodeau moved, seconded by Ms. Seavey, to reclassify the Assessor Assistant position to an Assessing Clerk and advertise to acquire one. Motion carried unanimously (5-0-0).**

SIGNING OF DOCUMENTS

- a. Notice of Intent to Cut Wood or Timber Tax – Map/Lot 218-8, 54 & 33

Mr. Colbath moved, seconded by Mr. Thibodeau, to sign the Notice of Intent to Cut Wood or Timber Tax for Map/Lot 218-8, 54 & 33. Motion carried unanimously (5-0-0).

CONSIDERATION OF BILLS

- a. Accounts Payable Manifest 12/14/17

Mr. Colbath moved, seconded by Mr. Thibodeau, to sign the Accounts Payable Manifest dated 12/14/17. Motion carried unanimously (5-0-0).

RATIFICATION OF DOCUMENTS SIGNED OUT-OF-SESSION

There were no documents signed out-of-session to ratify.

REVIEW AND CONSIDERATION OF SPECIAL EVENT APPLICATION(S)

- a. Badger Realty / A Holiday Gathering for Children – 12/16/17

Mr. Colbath moved, seconded by Mr. Thibodeau, to approve and sign the Special Event Application for Badger Realty/A Holiday Gathering for Children on 12/16/17. Motion carried unanimously (5-0-0).

CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES

The regular and nonpublic minutes of 12/05/17 were continued until the next meeting.

TOWN MANAGER REPORT

Mr. Holmes stated that he contacted the Albany Town Administrator in regard to the Spectrum franchise fees. Mr. Holmes stated Spectrum overpaid for the number of subscribers. Mr. Holmes stated that Albany was given \$2,300.13 and they have sent that check to us. Mr. Holmes stated that Valley Vision should only expect about \$2,300 a year; however, the petitioned article was for \$4,000 and he will be checking to see if they are bound by that and owe Valley Vision all \$4,000.

Mr. Holmes stated the town has received a disbursement for federal lands for 2017, but the County has been receiving this money and has not been sending us our share. Mr. Holmes stated they thought it was all Hales Location. Mr. Holmes stated Mark Hounsell asked for a letter from the Board of Selectmen addressed to the Carroll County Commissioners and he will try to get the back money to the Town.

Mr. Thibodeau moved, seconded by Mr. Colbath, for authorization to write a letter addressed to the Carroll County Commissioners for the back money. Motion carried unanimously (5-0-0).

Mr. Holmes stated that he has received complaints about the traffic light at Washington Street and Main Street that it is not giving enough time for pedestrians to cross. Mr. Holmes stated we have contacted the State. Mr. Weathers stated crossing from Washington Street to Pleasant Street, that is where the snag is; there is not even a five second interval. Mr. Thibodeau stated he thought the State was studying the traffic flows in general and noticed we had this camera system in place, maybe it needs to be adjusted. Mr. Weathers asked if we have spoken to them. Mr. DegliAngeli stated that he sent them an email, and will follow up. Mr. Weathers asked him to remind the State about the Walmart letter as well. Mr. DegliAngeli agreed.

BOARD REPORTS AND COMMENTS

Mr. Porter stated the Planning Board meets Thursday night. Mr. Colbath stated that the Budget Committee meets tomorrow night and the Zoning Board of Adjustment meets next Wednesday night. Mr. Thibodeau stated that he had nothing to report. Ms. Seavey stated that she had nothing to report. Mr. Weathers stated the Conservation Commission canceled their meeting in December and will next meet in January.

PUBLIC COMMENT/MEDIA QUESTIONS

Daymond Steer of the Conway Daily Sun asked if there have been any accidents at lights at Washington and Pleasant Streets. Mr. Weathers answered in the negative. Mr. Steer asked if the tax reduction warrant article is town wide. Mr. Holmes answered in the affirmative.

ADJOURN

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 5:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Holly L. Meserve
Recording Secretary