

**Minutes of Meeting
CONWAY BOARD OF SELECTMEN
November 15, 2022**

The Selectmen's Meeting convened at 3:04 pm in the Meeting Room at the New Town Hall with the following present: C. David Weathers, Mary Carey Seavey, Carl Thibodeau, John Colbath, Steven Porter, Town Manager John Eastman, and Executive Assistant Krista Day.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mr. 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 as written. The motion carried unanimously.

DISCUSSION OF ARPA REQUESTS

a. Lighting at Town Garage

Mr. Smith explained that they had the lights installed at the Town Garage to help with voting and he was looking to be reimbursed from the ARPA funds.

Mr. Porter moved, seconded by Mr. Colbath, to authorize the spending of \$8,686.00 for the lighting at the Town Garage from the ARPA funds. The motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Seavey commended everyone for their hard work

Mr. Eastman noted that they planned to do a full election recap at a future meeting.

b. Master Plan

Planning Director Jamel Torres, Planning Board Chair Ben Colbath, and Planning Board member Ailie Byers appeared before the Board.

They were here to request that an additional \$7,000 be allocated from the ARPA funds toward the Town's Master Plan update.

Mr. Torres noted that they need the funds in order to sign the contract with their chosen company, the SE Group.

He explained that they had been able to bring the contract price down, but was afraid that the product would be affected if they decreased it any more.

It was discussed that if they obtain the grant funding from Invest NH, it would be used to redo the Town's ordinances so they were in line with the new master plan.

Mr. Colbath moved, seconded by Mr. Porter, to authorize the expenditure of \$7,000 towards the Master Plan from the ARPA funds. The motion carried unanimously.

Discussion of 2023 Proposed Budget

Mr. Eastman explained that in past years, they would do a budget overview as the first part of the proposed budget process.

However, he was going to wait to do the overview until after the next meeting as the Board was going to need to make decisions on whether or not to budget for a revaluation, the expansion of the building department, and a paid parking program.

He noted that these proposed items could lead to a substantial amount of revenue.

a. Executive

Mr. Eastman stated that the proposed executive budget was up 6.76% .

He noted that most of that increase comes from moving a portion of Ms. White's salary as she works a portion of her time under Mr. DegliAngeli whose salary is under executive.

There was also discussion regarding the intent to get the remaining Town Reports bound.

b. Legal

Mr. Eastman stated that the proposed legal budget would be level funded.

c. Welfare

Mr. Eastman stated that the proposed Welfare Budget was up approximately 9.78%.

Mr. Eastman wanted to give Ms. Parker credit for keeping her expenditures down in 2022 by going above and beyond to help her clients apply for other State and Federal programs.

Mr. Eastman explained that with the ending of the ERAP program, there was a big unknown in terms of how many people may look to the Town to help financially.

Mr. Eastman suggested allocating some ARPA funds towards the potential influx in spending instead of raising the General Assistance Budget.

Ms. Parker explained that letters went out today to people who were currently on the ERAP program instructing them to contact their Town General Assistance Office for help.

She noted that there are at least 43 households that are being affected by the ending of this program.

Ms. Seavey asked Ms. Parker to see if the Yankee Clipper would allocate rooms for Conway Residents.

Ms. Parker said that Yankee Clipper has never agreed to work with the Town.

Ms. Parker stated that if we don't have housing, we cannot help those who need housing.

Ms. Seavey stated that she did not believe that \$50,000 would be enough.

Mr. Colbath inquired as to what the cost for IT was.

Ms. Parker explained that it was for a software would allow her to see if clients are being served by other Towns which will help to limit fraud.

She also noted that she may need a new computer to be able to run the new software.

d. Police

Chief Mattei appeared before the Board to present his proposed Police Budget.

Chief Mattei noted that his proposed budget was up only 2.9% over 2022.

He stated that this included the 6% negotiation COLA increase as negotiated by the Union that would also be given to non-union employees to protect the integrity of the pay scales.

Chief Mattei explained that they are also looking to hire a full time dispatcher in order to cover the lines at all times and to also cut down on the overtime that he has been paying out as they are short staffed.

Finally, they are looking for a part time records clerk to assist with all of the requests currently coming in.

e. Library

Mr. Eastman explained that he had discussed with Library Director David Smolen that at request for \$22,140 in software that the Library needs would be better as a warrant article then as a budgetary item as it was a one year large cost item.

Mr. Smolen explained that when the Library comes up with their proposed budget, they look to identify savings without sacrificing service.

Main areas of increase were identified in salaries and wages, IT increases, and fuel oil.

Their main decrease came from changes in employee's chosen health plans.

Mr. Smolen explained that the new software needed at the library was for public computing.

He explained that their current software provider has informed the Library that they will no longer be in the computing business.

Therefore, they have identified a new vendor in order to provide that service to the public. the new software.

f. Conservation Commission

Mr. Eastman stated that the proposed budget for the Conservation Commission was level funded.

Mr. Weathers explained that most of the budget goes toward the upkeep and creation of trails and mowing.

DISCUSSION OF DRAFT AGREEMENT WITH CVFD

Conway Village Fire District Commissioners Steve Bamsey, Tom Bucu, and Mike DiGregorio appeared before the Board along with Fire Chief Steve Solomon to discuss the draft agreement that they, together with Town staff, had drafted.

The draft agreement outlines what it would look like in the event that the voters in the CVFD vote to dissolve in 2023.

Mr. Colbath noted that municipalities are not mandated to provide ambulance service.

It was stated that if the district was to dissolve, the agreement would begin on January 1, 2024.

Mr. Bamsey explained that they were having a district meeting on Thursday, and would like to be able to tell the residents whether the members of the Board of Selectmen are in favor of taking over municipal water and sewer and fire and rescue.

Mr. Colbath noted that we should have send the agreement for legal review.

Mr. Colbath stated that if the district dissolves, the Town is required to take it out.

He added that they are ready and willing to take it on although there will be a learning curve.

Mr. Eastman stated that the staff would mirror what the district is doing now.

Ms. Seavey stated that she believed the Town had capable people.

Mr. Thibodeau stated that this made sense and he would want water, sewer, fire and rescue together or none of it.

Mr. Weathers asked if they had discussed this with other precincts.

It was stated that East Conway would like to look into it but North Conway, Center Conway and Redstone are not interested.

The consensus of the room was they this agreement would allow for a smooth transition if this comes to fruition.

DISCUSSION OF KEARSARGE FILE CABINETS

Kearsarge Lighting District Commissioner Lynn Lyman appeared before the Board to answer any questions regarding the Town's wish to move the file cabinets that are currently stored at the Town Hall Annex to the new Town Hall.

There were no questions.

Mr. Colbath moved, seconded by Ms. Seavey, to move the Kearsarge Lighting District's file cabinets to the new Town Hall. The motion carried unanimously.

DISCUSSION OF TRANSFER STATION HOURS ON CHRISTMAS EVE

Mr. Porter moved, seconded by Ms. Seavey, to authorize the closure of the Transfer Station at 12:00 pm on December 24, 2022. The motion carried unanimously.

DISCUSSION AND REAFFIRMATION OF SELECTMEN POLICIES

- a. Security Camera Policy
- b. Shade Tree Policy
- c. Timber Sales Revenue Policy
- d. Budget Process MOU with TOC and Conway Police Department

After discussion, the Board decided to only act on item a. and c. and will revisit the other two at a future meeting.

Mr. Colbath moved, seconded by Mr. Thibodeau, to adopt the security camera policy as written. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Colbath moved, seconded by Mr. Porter, to reaffirm the Timber Sales Revenue Policy as written. The motion carried unanimously.

REVIEW OF RECEIPTS

The receipts were available for review.

SIGNING OF DOCUMENTS

- a. Abatement of Taxes on Map/Lot 260-25.1 (2018-2022)
- b. 2022 Equalization Certificate
- c. Non-Precinct Fire Agreement with CVFD
- d. Non-Precinct Fire Agreement with NCWP

Mr. Colbath moved, seconded by Mr. Thibodeau, to sign the Abatement of Taxes on Map/Lot 260-25.1 (2018-2022). The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Colbath moved, seconded by Mr. Porter, to sign the 2022 Equalization Certificate. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Thibodeau moved, seconded by Mr. Porter, to sign the Non-Precinct Fire Agreement with Conway Village Fire District. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Porter moved, seconded by Mr. Thibodeau, to sign the Non-Precinct Fire Agreement with North Conway Water Precinct. The motion carried unanimously.

CONSIDERATION OF BILLS

- a. AP Manifest dated 11/17/2022
- b. Payroll dated 11/17/2022

Mr. Colbath moved, seconded by Mr. Thibodeau, to sign the AP Manifest and Payroll dated 11/17/2022. The motion carried unanimously.

RATIFICATION OF DOCUMENTS SIGNED OUT OF SESSION

- a. AP Manifest dated 11/3/22
- b. Payroll dated 11/3/22
- c. AP Manifest dated 11/10/22
- d. Permit to Sell Raffle Tickets for Gibson Center (10/31/22)
- e. Permanent Application for Property Tax Credits/Exemptions on Map/Lot 234-79
- f. Permanent Application for Property Tax Credits/Exemptions on Map/Lot 259-101.17
- g. Permanent Application for Property Tax Credits/Exemptions on Map/Lot 262-83.082
- h. Permanent Application for Property Tax Credits/Exemptions on Map/Lot 273-40
- i. Permanent Application for Property Tax Credits/Exemptions on Map/Lot 215-103

- j. Permanent Application for Property Tax Credits/Exemptions on Map/Lot 283-28
- k. Permanent Application for Property Tax Credits/Exemptions on Map/Lot 245-37
- l. Permanent Application for Property Tax Credits/Exemptions on Map/Lot 245-34
- m. Permanent Application for Property Tax Credits/Exemptions on Map/Lot 240-6
- n. Permanent Application for Property Tax Credits/Exemptions on Map/Lot 268-149
- o. Permanent Application for Property Tax Credits/Exemptions on Map/Lot 252-13
- p. Permanent Application for Property Tax Credits/Exemptions on Map/Lot 232-34
- q. Permanent Application for Property Tax Credits/Exemptions on Map/Lot 240-40
- r. Permanent Application for Property Tax Credits/Exemptions on Map/Lot 214-47
- s. Permanent Application for Property Tax Credits/Exemptions on Map/Lot 253-7

Mr. Colbath moved, seconded by Mr. Thibodeau, to ratify the documents listed above in a through s. The motion carried unanimously.

REVIEW AND CONSIDERATION OF SPECIAL EVENT APPLICATION(S)

(none)

CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES

- a. Regular and Non-Public Minutes from 10/11/22
- b. Regular and Non-Public Minutes from 10/25/22

Mr. Colbath moved, seconded by Mr. Thibodeau, to adopt the minutes as listed above as written. The motion carried unanimously.

TOWN MANAGER REPORT

Mr. Eastman explained that next week they would be discussing the proposed paid parking program.

He noted that it was not a public hearing.

Mr. Eastman noted that he had received a request from Carol DiGregorio regarding the request for another street light on Pollard Street.

Mr. DiGregorio explained that years ago some lights were taken down on Pollard Street to help with electricity costs.

However, he noted that on Halloween, with over 500 trick or treaters, the street was extremely dark.

He would like to see at least one light put back up.

Mr. DiGregorio is going to poll his neighbors and Mr. Smith will look into how many lights there are and where they could potentially place another.

BOARD REPORTS AND COMMENTS

Mr. Porter noted that the Planning Board would be meeting on Thursday.

He stated that they had a lengthy meeting on the 27th of October.

He explained that it was brought to his attention that the Town owns a piece of land in Redstone.

It was stated that this subject will be discussed at a future meeting.

Ms. Seavey read an email from Chamber Director Michelle Cruz noting that the Ski Museum bathrooms would be closing to the public as of November 30, 2022 and would plan to reopen on April 15, 2023 depending on if there is enough funding.

Ms. Seavey noted that Alec Tarberry had stated that he was open to conversations regarding having some sort of public restroom at the new food hall site.

Ms. Seavey stated that Valley Vision would be meeting this week.

Mr. Colbath stated that the Budget Committee would be meeting on December 14, 2022 and the ZBA would be meeting tomorrow night.

He did note that in addition to a few other hearings, they would be deliberating on a request for a rehearing from Leavitts Bakery.

He explained that it would be a public meeting, however, the deliberation regarding the rehearing was not open for public comment.

He added that the reason to grant a rehearing was if a technical error was made, or if there was new pertinent evidence or information.

Mr. Thibodeau gave the October ESAA activity report.

He added that the Canadian Search and Rescue team would be here from November 21-25, 2022.

Mr. Weathers noted that they had a meeting for the Upper Saco Valley Land Trust to review the Pine Hill Community Development progress.

PUBLIC COMMENTS AND MEDIA QUESTIONS

Linda Burns wanted to thank the CVFD Commissioners and the Selectmen for opening up communication regarding the potential dissolution.

She stated that the forethought would be a great benefit to the Town.

Mike DiGregorio explained that he believed that there should have been more books available to help with the long voter lines at the election.

He believes that they need to have formal discussions with the School Board regarding using the school for elections.

They will be inviting Superintendent Richard to a future meeting.

Ms. Seavey added that it was nice to hear the positive comments from the election observers at the election.

Daymond Steer from the Conway Daily Sun asked if they were going to talk about the land in Redstone.

Mr. Eastman explained that they needed to discuss some things in a non-public session next week.

It was noted that the flashing crosswalk signs have been ordered.

ADJOURN

At 5:24 pm, Mr. Colbath moved, seconded by Ms. Seavey, to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Krista Day
Executive Secretary