

**Minutes of Meeting  
CONWAY BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
December 6, 2022**

The Selectmen's Meeting convened at 4:00 pm in the Meeting Room at the 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. Weathers explained that they would be moving agenda item 7i. to become 6c.

They would also be adding 11b. Tax Collectors Warrant, and removing 14a.

**Mr. Colbath moved, seconded by Ms. Seavey, to approve the agenda as amended. The motion carried unanimously.**

ELECTION UPDATE

Town Clerk/Tax Collector Louise Inkell and Town Moderator Chris Meier appeared before the Board.

They believed that the November 8, 2022 election went well and there was a big turnout with 67% registered voter turnout.

They commended the public for being patient.

One of the complaints that they had heard was that the entrance and exit onto the road should have been switched.

Chris Meier noted that because of the crowds, they had to extend the time for absentee ballot processing.

He noted that this raises the question on where we should be having these major elections.

Mr. Eastman explained that they had invited Superintendent Richard to the meeting because the School sets their calendars far in advance.

Mr. Richard explained that the School District only have two teacher workshop days a year to play with.

Typically, the district puts a teacher workshop day for the Presidential Elections.

He was wondering what other elections the Town was requesting the school for.

Mr. Porter stated that he would love to have all elections including the April Elections.

Ms. Inkell noted that the only election that the date is unknown for is the presidential primaries that are sometime in January.

It was noted that legally a voter is only supposed to have to wait 15 minutes to vote.

Mr. Richard will bring these requests to the School Board.

He noted that this is more complicated because there are other school districts involved.

Mr. DiGregorio stated that he believed they needed more books.

He added that moving the Recreation Center to the Middle School put more challenges out there for voting.

Ms. Inkell wanted to thank all of the election volunteers.

REQUEST FOR SECOND DRIVEWAY ACCESS (173 JACK FROST LANE)

The property owner was not present.

**Mr. Colbath moved, seconded by Mr. Porter, to table the request for a second driveway access for 173 Jack Frost Lane. The motion carried unanimously.**

DISCUSSION AND VOTE ON PROPOSED BUDGETS

a. Inspections

**Mr. Colbath moved, seconded by Mr. Porter, to include the \$361,819 for inspections in the proposed operating budget. The motion carried unanimously.**

b. Parking

Mr. Smith explained that he came up with a written draft of the paid parking program proposal.

He gave a brief overview of the proposal which including charging for parking from Depot Street to Pine Street from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm every day except Sunday which would be from 12:00 pm to 5:00 pm.

He also added that the recreation parking sites would be part of the program from Father's Day to Columbus Day all for \$2.00 an hour.

He noted that the parking fees would be collected through an app or using one of the kiosks in Town.

The program would be based upon license plate numbers.

In terms of employee parking, the plan would be to utilize the Deport Street Parking lot and the HEB lot.

There would also be a few spaces on the east side of Kearsarge Road designated for employees. Employee Parking: HEB lot. Restricted for employee parking only.

In terms of enforcement, the plan would be to have one enforcement officer on at a time.

The projected revenue based on the total number of spaces at 50% occupancy would be approximately \$1.1 million per year.

Total gross expenses for year one were budgeted for \$241,000.

Some of those costs would go away after the first year.

The cost of personnel would also include the summer staff that we already employ for the recreation sites parking program.

The proposed fine would be \$30.

Some goes away after the first year. Personnel includes the summer staff that we employed this year.

The permitting process would go through the Town's website and fines would be able to be paid online.

Ms. Seavey stated that if they choose to allow residents to park for free, that would free up some spaces in the employee parking lots.

There was discussion regarding whether they could allow for the first 15 minutes to be free in case people needed to run in somewhere really quickly.

Mr. Smith will look into that.

Mr. Smith clarified that they would not have signage for each individual parking space.

They would utilize existing two hour parking sign placement and add some signs by telephone poles.

When asked if the Town currently enforces the two hour parking, Chief Mattei explained that they do not because they would need to have one officer designated to that and they do not have the staff.

**Mr. Colbath moved, seconded by Ms. Seavey, to include the \$241,915 in the proposed operating budget for the proposed parking program.**

Mr. Weathers explained that there had been a lot of comments made from the business community about the opposition.

He would personally like to see this request in a warrant article to let the voters decide.

Mr. Weathers explained that they are constantly looking for revenue sources to help with taxes and this would be one.

He does not personally believe this program will hurt the business.

He also explained that this is a program that could be tweaked at any time.

Ms. Seavey explained that if they vote to include this in the budget, she encourages the residents of Conway to come to the Deliberative Session of Town Meeting to vote and take it out.

She noted that it is frustrating each year when the turnout at Deliberative is so low.

Mr. Porter stated that he believed this belonged as a warrant article.

He explained that as a native of North Conway, he personally has a problem putting meters in Town, however, as a Selectmen, it is their job to find a way to lessen the tax burden.

Mr. Colbath stated that he comes from the medical community where every decision is made using evidence.

He gave the example of the debate over a roundabout vs a light at the Eastman Road and East Conway Road intersection.

When you look for data, the research overwhelmingly supports that roundabouts are safer.

Correspondingly, Mr. Colbath did research regarding the effect of paid parking on business.

The information he found strongly supports that paid parking actually enhances business and increases opportunity for people to find parking to access these businesses.

Mr. Colbath noted that he often frequents the businesses in North Conway and parking is hard to come by.

He noted that people are not going to shy away from the Village if they have to pay \$2.

He noted that as a Town they are late to the game of paid parking.

As a Selectmen, they are looking for a revenue source to offset the tax burden.

He noted that the opposition to this plan has mainly come from those who are not actually residents of Conway and all of the people he has talked to who are residents are in favor of any program that enhances revenue.

Mr. Colbath added that since paid parking programs began in 2001, no community has rescinded the program.

Mr. Thibodeau explained that he has been sitting on this side of the table for 27 years as both a District Commissioner and a Selectmen.

He stated that he tries to make decisions with a clean conscience and do what is right for the Town of Conway regardless of its popularity.

While this proposal appears to be unpopular, he believes it is what is best for Conway and will be voting in favor.

Ms. Seavey stated that this is a tough decision but her obligation is to the tax payers of Conway.

She added that many of her elderly clients are wondering how they will be able to pay their taxes and need relief.

She noted that they owe it to the residents to help in any way they can.

She also added that they also owe it to the businesses to be as amenable as possible when coming up with a plan.

**The motion carried (3-2-0) with Mr. Porter and Mr. Weathers in the negative.**

c. Other Selectmen's Warrant Articles

a. Eastern Slope Regional Airport

Mr. Thibodeau explained that he would like to request that the Board put an article on the warrant for \$12,000 to support the ESAA.

He explained the importance of the airport to the area.

He gave an example about how the airport was utilized after the tragic events in Jackson the week prior in order for organ donation to occur.

Mr. Colbath totally agreed and stated, what cost do you put on life.

Ms. Seavey stated that she agreed and this request is so small in the grand scheme of things.

b. "All Veterans" Property Tax Credit

Ms. Walker explained that as part of a House Bill that had been voted in, the DRA was advising that the Town ask voters to Readopt the three Veteran's Property Tax Credits.

This will also add the ability for those on active duty to be eligible.

- c. Standard and Optional Veterans Property Tax Credit
- d. Service-Connected Total Disability Property Tax Credit
- e. Library Software

Mr. Eastman explained he had a great conversation with Mr. Smolen regarding the need for this new software as it is vital for the library.

Mr. Smolen had originally included this request in his regular budget, however, Mr. Eastman had decided to remove it as it was more of a one-time expenditure and he would rather have it as a warrant article.

Mr. Smolen explained that this new computing system had a year one cost of \$22,140 and a year two cost of only \$2,400.

He added that the Library did not seek out this new software, but the current company that they use has notified the Town that they are not longer going to be offering that service.

He noted that it was central to Library operations.

Mr. Colbath stated that he was 100% for it.

f. Communications District

Ms. Day explained that at the previous meeting there had been a public hearing regarding a draft of a communications district agreement.

It had been requested that the Board place an article on the warrant for the voters to decide.

The wording of the warrant article is set by statute.

BUDGET REVIEW

a. Town Clerk/Tax Collector

Ms. Inkell explained that her proposed budget for 2023 was up 9.39% due mostly from wages but also all four computers were scheduled to be replaced.

They will also be purchasing signature pads.

The current part time position was also planned to become full time.

Mr. Colbath inquired about new ballot machines.

Ms. Inkell stated that currently there are no options out there.

Chief Mattei appeared before the Board to apprise them of a change in the proposed Police Budget.

He explained that the request actually was decreasing by \$500, but he was asking to add a part time officer.

He explained that in a few weeks they would be down two officers and down four officers on the road as two were waiting to be trained.

He added that Sergeant Strong was retiring in July and he would be unable to hire for that position until then.

Chief Mattei explained that they would be looking for an officer with experience on a 24-32 hour basis.

Because they would not be paying for insurance or retirement, they would be saving.

He added that he had no intentions to make this position full time in the future.

Chief added that in is 18 years on the Conway Police Department, they have only been fully staffed for about one year.

Chief Mattei reviewed his request for the Capital Reserve Fund for Police Vehicles.

He explained that he was requesting \$74,000.

He also noted that the price of vehicles has increased but they believe they have enough to cover it in the fund.

b. Finance

Ms. Golding explained that the finance department's proposed budget for 2023 was up 4.13%.

c. Planning and Zoning

Mr. Torres explained that the proposed budget for planning and zoning was up 9.14%

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d. Health

Mr. Eastman stated that the health budget was proposed to be level funded.

e. Non-Precinct Fire + Emergency Management

Chief Solomon explained that the proposed budget was up 21.54% due to the formula in the approved contract.

f. Ambulance

Chief Solomon noted that this budget was up 301.81% due to the previous year only being a partial year.

g. Department of Public Works

a. Government Buildings

Mr. Smith explained that the proposed budget was up 9.28% due mostly to the increase in electricity.

b. Highway

Mr. Smith explained that the proposed budget was up 12.96%.

He explained that there are already three petitions for road acceptance and that this requires another truck and driver to maintain.

He also noted that the fuel and salt prices are up.

c. Garage

Mr. Smith noted that the proposed budget was up 7.66% due mainly to proposed precinct vehicle repair.

d. Solid Waste

Mr. Smith stated that the proposed budget was up 4.69%

h. CRF Warrant Articles

a. CRF for Infrastructure Reconstruction

Mr. Smith noted that the main project for 2023 would be the Modock Hill Road reconstruction.

The CRF request for 2023 was \$500,000.



There was discussion regarding the status of The Big Pea Porridge Watershed Preservation Association's application for the Watershed Management Planning Grant.

Ms. Day will contact the association.

b. CRF for Highway Equipment Replacement

Mr. Smith noted that the request for 2023 was for \$425,000.

c. CRF for Solid Waste Equipment Replacement

Mr. Smith stated that the request for 2023 was \$225,000.

d. CRF for Landfill Expansion

Mr. Smith stated that the request for 2023 was \$100,000.

e. CRF for Maintenance of Town Buildings and Facilities

Mr. Smith explained that the request for 2023 was \$125,000.

It was noted that they are still waiting for the lift to be put in at the Town Hall Annex.

f. CRF for Maintenance of Town Buildings and Facilities Leased by the Town

Mr. Smith stated that the request for 2023 was \$75,000.

g. CRF for Parks Department Vehicles and Equipment Replacement

Mr. Smith noted that the request for 2023 was \$25,000.

h. Expendable Trust Fund for Public Educational Government Cable Television

Bill Edmunds from Valley Vision noted that he was requesting \$119,358.92 for 2023.

NOTICE OF DEMO PERMIT APPLICATION FOR 91 HILL ROAD

Mr. Weathers notified the Board of a Demo Permit Application for 91 Hill Road.

RECREATION REVOLVING FUND TRANSFER

Mr. Eastman requested that the Board authorize the transfer of \$83,069.60 from the Recreation Revolving Fund to the General Fund to help offset the Recreation Budget.

Mr. Eastman explained that process of collecting revenue from Recreation Programs and using it at the end of the year to help offset the budget.

Mr. Eastman stated that at the end of 2022, they are projecting to have \$229,853.27 remaining in the Recreation Revolving Fund.

**Mr. Colbath moved, seconded by Ms. Seavey to transfer \$83,069.60 from the Recreation Revolving Fund to the General fund. The motion carried unanimously.**

Mr. Colbath noted that in a future meeting , he would like to see funds from the Recreation Revolving Fund allocated to refurbish one of the tennis courts at Davis Park into three pickleball courts.

The estimate would be for approximately \$50,000.

#### REVIEW OF RECEIPTS

The receipts were available for review.

#### SIGNING OF DOCUMENTS

- a. Request to Move Assessment Review Letter
- b. Tax Collectors Warrant

**Mr. Colbath moved, seconded by Mr. Thibodeau, to sign the request to move assessment review letter. The motion carried unanimously.**

**Mr. Colbath moved, seconded by Mr. Thibodeau, to sign the Tax Collectors Warrant. The motion carried unanimously.**

#### CONSIDERATION OF BILLS

- a. AP Manifest dated 12/8/2022

**Mr. Colbath moved, seconded by Mr. Thibodeau, to sign the AP Manifest dated 12/8/2022. The motion carried unanimously.**

#### RATIFICATION OF DOCUMENTS SIGNED OUT OF SESSION

- a. AP Manifest dated 12/1/22
- b. Payroll dated 12/1/22
- c. Intent to Cut Wood/Timber on Map/Lot 230-1
- d. Permanent Application for Property Tax Credits/Exemptions on Map/Lot 276-141
- e. Permanent Application for Property Tax Credits/Exemptions on Map/Lot 203-62
- f. Permanent Application for Property Tax Credits/Exemptions on Map/Lot 276-45

- g. Permanent Application for Property Tax Credits/Exemptions on Map/Lot 265-77
- h. Permanent Application for Property Tax Credits/Exemptions on Map/Lot 254-70
- i. Permanent Application for Property Tax Credits/Exemptions on Map/Lot 219-144
- j. Permanent Application for Property Tax Credits/Exemptions on Map/Lot 260-42
- k. Permanent Application for Property Tax Credits/Exemptions on Map/Lot 265-18
- l. Permanent Application for Property Tax Credits/Exemptions on Map/Lot 262-83.033
- m. Permanent Application for Property Tax Credits/Exemptions on Map/Lot 278-48
- n. Permanent Application for Property Tax Credits/Exemptions on Map/Lot 202-120
- o. Permanent Application for Property Tax Credits/Exemptions on Map/Lot 232-189
- p. Permanent Application for Property Tax Credits/Exemptions on Map/Lot 264-15
- q. Permanent Application for Property Tax Credits/Exemptions on Map/Lot 215-10
- r. Permanent Application for Property Tax Credits/Exemptions on Map/Lot 259-20
- s. Permanent Application for Property Tax Credits/Exemptions on Map/Lot 214-14

**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)

- ~~a. Level Rave Series (May 7, 2023) Pending Liquor License and Fee~~
- b. Joyce Endee Craft Fairs (5/27/23, 5/28/23, 8/19/23, 8/20/23 9/30/23, 10/1/23, 10/14/23 and 10/15/23) Pending Fee and Insurance

Mr. Eastman explained that it was “Pending Fee” because they were going to review to 2023 Special Event Permit fees at a future meeting.

**Mr. Colbath moved, seconded by Mr. Thibodeau, to approve the special event application pending fee and insurance as listed above. The motion carried unanimously.**

CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES

- a. Regular and Non-Public Minutes from 11/22/2022

**Mr. Colbath moved, seconded by Mr. Thibodeau to approve the minutes as written for 11/22/2022. The motion carried unanimously.**

TOWN MANAGER REPORT

Mr. Eastman explained that he had received information regarding the State of New Hampshire Grant for the boat ramp and Mr. Smith was looking into it.

Mr. Eastman noted that the Board had voted in a non-public session to sell the following properties via auction this spring: Map/Lot 245-34, 247-53, 277-285 and 277-280.

He stated that he was continuing to review other Town owned properties that could potentially be put up for sale.

Mr. Eastman informed the Board that Town Hall now was decorated for the holidays and thanked the Garden Club for their wreath donations.

There was discussion regarding funds from the Mt. Washington Valley Preservation Society that were being used in Conway Village.

Mr. Eastman will be looking into the insurance claim for the elevator as he had not heard back yet.

### BOARD REPORTS AND COMMENTS

Mr. Thibodeau gave the November ESAA report.

He noted that the Canadian Rescue Helicopter had spent another week here in the Valley.

They had utilized the new transient hangar and have scheduled another two weeks for 2023.

Mr. Colbath stated that the Budget Committee meets next Wednesday.

He noted that the ZBA would be meeting on December 21, 2022 as Conway Humane Society has petitioned for a rehearing.

Mr. Porter stated that the Planning Board meets on Thursday.

Mr. Weathers noted that the Conway Fire Department had a Holiday Open House that had a great turnout.

### PUBLIC COMMENTS AND MEDIA QUESTIONS

Stacey Sand apologized that she wasn't here at the last Board meeting to speak against paid parking.

She stated that she resented the Board for saying that they did not hear from Conway residents that they were against paid parking as she had submitted a letter from her and her wife.

Ms. Sand noted that other Towns who have paid parking on the main streets also have another free parking options somewhere close.

Ms. Sand asked who was going to monitor the parking lots of the businesses in the Village.

She stated that as a budget committee, she does not want to see any budgeting for new hires.

She also questioned why the hours were only from 12:00 pm to 5:00 pm on Sundays.

Sindi Munro inquired as to what the Town was doing about affordable housing as many are having to move away.

Mr. Colbath noted that they do have an answer.

Alec Tarberry noted that Mr. Colbath gave a lot of great examples earlier in the meeting.

He explained that he is not against paid parking, but thinks that the current proposal has some things to work out.

He stated that he believed that they could bring both sides together and he would volunteer to work with the Town on a proposal that helps both the Town and the business community.

Sheila Duane noted that it would be great a committee of Town Staff and the business folks could come together.

She stated that she was more than happy to volunteer her time.

She noted that Mr. Smith has done a great job.

Mike DiGregorio stated that the holiday flags would be put up the next day in Conway Village.

He noted that the American flags currently on the polls were originally bought by the Fire Commission and were looking a little old.

He stated that anyone who wished could donate to the Fire District in order to help purchase new ones.

Mr. DiGregorio explained that at the School Board meeting on Monday he wanted to start a conversation about shutting down two schools and moving more children to the Middle School but he was told that because the Recreation Center is there, there is not enough room.

He explained that their decision in previous years to not build a new recreation center was now affecting the potential to save more taxpayer money.

Mr. DiGregorio stated that he believed the tourists were still going to come to Town regardless of parking fees.

Mr. Colbath stated that when they looked at the recreation center move, a lot of work went on with multiple stakeholders including the school.

Ms. Seavey agreed with Mr. Colbath and stated that a lot of the nice upgrades in the Recreation Center were funding by private donations and fundraising efforts.

Daymond Steer from the Conway Daily Sun asked if there was a way to include paid parking in the master plan.

It was stated that it has not been brought up as there seems to be other pressing issues.

Mr. Porter explained that while it may look like the Town isn't doing anything to help with affordable housing, they are stuck because the area does not have a housing authority and is therefore limited in what we can do.

Mr. Steer asked about the amount for the Boat Ramp grant.

It was stated that there is not an exact number at this time and Mr. Smith was looking into things.

The plan would be for construction to happen in Fall of 2023 when the water levels are lower.

Mr. Steer asked if the donor plan had any trouble landing at the Eastern Slope Airport.

Mr. Thibodeau said no because they utilized the new GPS instrument approach.

**At 6:53, Mr. Colbath moved, seconded by Ms. Seavey, to go into non-public session under RSA 91-A:3 II (L). The motion carried unanimously.**

NON-PUBLIC RSA 91-A:3 II (L) LEGAL ADVICE

At 7:34 pm, the Board returned to public session.

**Mr. Colbath moved, seconded by Mr. Thibodeau, to seal the minutes from this non-public session as divulgence of the information would render the proposed action ineffective. The motion carried unanimously.**

ADJOURN

At 7:34 pm, the meeting adjourned at the call of the Chair.

Respectfully Submitted,

Krista Day  
Executive Secretary