

**Minutes of Meeting
CONWAY BOARD OF SELECTMEN
January 24, 2023**

The Selectmen's Meeting convened at 4:08 pm at Conway Town Hall with the following present: C. David Weathers, Mary Carey Seavey, Carl Thibodeau, John Colbath, Steve 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 noted that there were three additions:

4a. Master Plan Update

4b. Discussion of Map/Lot 203-41

12a. Gibson Center Craft Fairs (5/27/23, 5/28/23, 7/1/23, 7/2/23, 9/2/23, 9/3/23, 10/7/23, 10/8/23)

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

DISCUSSION OF TOWN CEMETERIES

Mr. Eastman stated that this topic was brought up when someone contacted the Town about who they should contact regarding obtaining a cemetery plot in Center Conway.

When speaking with Brian Wiggin, the issues of maintenance and upkeep as well as the issue of running out of space in the current cemeteries was brought to light.

Brian Wiggin appeared with Nancy Leavitt of Center Conway, as well as Lorraine Cormack and Jan Quint of the Conway Village Cemetery.

Mr. Wiggin explained that they are running out of room in all four cemeteries.

Ms. Leavitt stated that there are only 7 plots left in the Center Conway Cemetery.

He also noted that he himself has spent over 500 hours cleaning headstones and footstones.

He wondered if the Town could allocate funds to help with the maintenance and upkeep of the cemeteries as we owe it to our citizens.

Mr. Weathers stated that it sounded like a long term project and suggested a petitioned warrant article for annual appropriations.

Mr. Eastman stated that he has started to look into possible Town-owned properties that could be utilized as a cemetery as the Town was required to have a place to bury it's citizens.

However, he has come across various properties that would be unusable because of wetlands.

Ms. Seavey stated she would like to see a mausoleum built as well.

Ms. Cormack told the Selectmen that the Historical Society had created a booklet of all the cemeteries in the Conways.

She added that the cemeteries in Town were being maintained as private non-profit organizations.

Lorraine Cormack: Historical Society put booklet of all of the cemeteries in the Conways in 2015

We have always been told that Conway village and center Conway are private non profits.

Ms. Cormack read the NH RSA that stated that every municipality is required to provide for their dead.

She emphasized that they need help.

There was a brief discussion of the trust funds in the care of the Town that may have funds available for each group.

Mr. Eastman will look into that.

Mr. Eastman noted that the Parks and Rec Department has been taking care of the grass in most of the Town Cemeteries.

However, the Town has no partnership or agreement.

Ms. Seavey suggested writing an appeal letter.

Mr. Eastman suggested that they do a petitioned warrant article and come to speak about it's importance at Deliberative.

Ms. Seavey suggested that each individual cemetery do their own petition.

Mr. Colbath stated that he believed this issue was bigger than the Town.

He suggested looking to the State for guidance.

Ms. Quint noted that they have talked about grants and appeal letters but need volunteers to assist.

Ms. Seavey explained that she may have some RSVP volunteers who could help.

Mr. Wiggin thanked the Board.

MASTER PLAN UPDATE

Planning Director Jamel Torres gave the Board a quick update on the Master Plan process.

He stated that the SE Group has been meeting regularly.

They will be in Town for their first visit February 8, 2023-February 10, 2023.

There will be an open house at Tuckerman Brewery on the 8th to get public input.

Mr. Torres noted that he would get the committee list for the steering committee to the Selectmen.

Mr. Thibodeau where the Town stood in regards to the Invest NH grant for the master plan efforts.

Mr. Torres noted that they will be applying for phase two once they finish the initial analysis.

It was stated that the SE Group should have very specific suggestions in terms of zoning changes that should be made.

DISCUSSION OF MAP/LOT 203-41

At the previous meeting, Mr. Weathers explained that the Conservation Commission was unanimously in favor of the Town donating lot 203-41 to the Upper Saco Valley Land Trust.

Ms. Seavey had requested that we reach out to the abutter, Dawn Brauel.

Mr. Eastman had spoken with Ms. Brauel and she said that she did not have concerns about the Upper Saco Valley Land Trust taking ownership of the land, however, she would like to purchase the lot if it was buildable.

Mr. Torres explained that he had a conversation with Ms. Brauel's daughter, Callie and son in law, Nathan about Ms. Brauel's .6 acre lot.

They were told that because it is in the wetlands, they would need to hire a soil scientist in order to determine if they could potentially build.

Mr. Weathers explained that in dealing with the wetlands board, crossing wetlands could be an issue.

Mr. Weathers explained that when this property was brought before the Conservation Commission, they believed that the USVLT's land use planning and goals were similar to the goals of the Conservation Commission and were in favor of donating the land to them.

It was stated that the Town could not just sell the property to the Brauel's, it would have to go to public auction.

Mr. Thibodeau explained that perhaps they would be better off to retain ownership of the property and contract with the USVLT to manage the property.

Ms. King stated that while it is 'cleaner' if the USVLT owns it, they initially approached the Conservation Commission to manage it.

Mr. Weathers reiterated that the Conservation Commission would like to see it donated.

Mr. Porter stated that it is our property and he would like to see it donated.

Mr. Porter moved, seconded by Mr. Thibodeau, to donate Map/Lot 203-41 to the Upper Saco Valley Land Trust. The motion carried unanimously.

DISCUSSION OF VALLEY PRIDE DAY/AMNESTY DAY

It was stated that Valley Pride Day would be occurring on May 6, 2023, and Mr. Smith would like to know if the Board would like to hold their "Amnesty Day" at the same time.

It was stated that 6 items would be allowed to be disposed up for free.

Mr. Porter moved, seconded by Mr. Colbath, to hold Amnesty Day on May 6, 2023. The motion carried unanimously.

DISCUSSION OF CHARTER COMMISSION PROCESS

Mr. Eastman referred the Board to some information in their packet from Jac Cuddy outlining the Charter Commission process.

Mr. Eastman explained that the Town of Salem has done a Charter Commission and is in contact with their Town Manager regarding some of the details.

He noted that they will need to consider coming up with a budget for the Commission as the process will cost money.

He noted that they could potentially place an article on the warrant for these funds.

Costs include, but are not limited to, legal services, minute taker, and a special election.

Mr. Colbath noted that both Salem and Merrimack have some good information about the whole process.

He added that it would be at least \$85 dollars a meeting for a minute taker.

There were questions regarding whether or not there were alternates and whether a municipal official could run to sit on the commission.

Mr. Eastman will look into it.

LETTER TO THE PLANNING BOARD

It was stated that the applicant for the Shops at Norcross Place had fulfilled the request of staff for a parking study, therefore, it was the recommendation of staff that there would be no need for a rehearing.

Mr. Colbath moved, seconded by Mr. Porter, to authorize Chairman Weathers to sign the letter to the Planning Board to withdraw the Selectmen's request for a rehearing regarding The Shops at Norcross Place Project. The motion carried unanimously.

REVIEW OF RECEIPTS

The receipts were available for review.

SIGNING OF DOCUMENTS

- a. Permanent Application for Property Tax Credits/Exemptions on Map/Lot 219-64
- b. Permanent Application for Property Tax Credits/Exemptions on Map/Lot 247-6
- c. Permanent Application for Property Tax Credits/Exemptions on Map/Lot 254-29.149
- d. Permanent Application for Property Tax Credits/Exemptions on Map/Lot 254-29.165
- e. Permanent Application for Property Tax Credits/Exemptions on Map/Lot 259-102
- f. Permanent Application for Property Tax Credits/Exemptions on Map/Lot 266-7
- g. Permanent Application for Property Tax Credits/Exemptions on Map/Lot 263-34
- h. Permanent Application for Property Tax Credits/Exemptions on Map/Lot 263-88
- i. Permanent Application for Property Tax Credits/Exemptions on Map/Lot 254-29.108
- j. Permanent Application for Property Tax Credits/Exemptions on Map/Lot 255-40.047
- k. Permanent Application for Property Tax Credits/Exemptions on Map/Lot 259-104
- l. Permanent Application for Property Tax Credits/Exemptions on Map/Lot 203-25
- m. Permanent Application for Property Tax Credits/Exemptions on Map/Lot 255-86
- n. Permanent Application for Property Tax Credits/Exemptions on Map/Lot 219-303

Mr. Colbath moved, seconded by Mr. Thibodeau, to sign the documents listed above. The motion carried unanimously.

CONSIDERATION OF BILLS

- a. AP Manifest dated 1/26/2023
- b. Payroll dated 1/26/2023

Mr. Colbath moved, seconded by Ms. Seavey, to approve and sign the documents listed above. The motion carried unanimously.

RATIFICATION OF DOCUMENTS SIGNED OUT OF SESSION

(none)

REVIEW AND CONSIDERATION OF SPECIAL EVENT APPLICATION(S)

- a. Mt. Washington Valley Promotions 2023 Cupcake Battle (2/26/2023)
- b. Settlers Green OVP 35th Anniversary Celebration Fireworks (2/18/2023)
- c. Gibson Center Craft Fairs (5/27/23, 5/28/23, 7/1/23, 7/2/23, 9/2/23, 9/3/23, 10/7/23, 10/8/23)

Mr. Colbath moved, seconded by Mr. Thibodeau, to approve the special event applications as listed above. The motion carried unanimously.

It was clarified that the organizations had gotten their applications in on time, however, the Recreation Center held on to the applications until the Selectmen had a chance to review and vote on the new fees.

CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES

- a. Regular Minutes from 1/17/2023

Mr. Colbath moved, seconded by Ms. Seavey, to adopt the minutes from 1/17/2023 as written. The motion carried unanimously.

TOWN MANAGER REPORT

Mr. Eastman stated that he was in the process of working with Rick Sager to put four town-owned properties up for sale in April.

Mr. Eastman wanted to take a minute to recognize the hard work by the Highway Department and their long hours due to all of the storms.

BOARD REPORTS AND COMMENTS

Mr. Colbath noted that the Budget Committee was meeting tomorrow night with the Selectmen for the Non-Profit Presentations.

Mr. Porter stated that the Planning Board was meeting on Thursday evening at 6:00 pm.

PUBLIC COMMENTS AND MEDIA QUESTIONS

Daymond Steer from the Conway Daily Sun inquired as to what was in the proposed budget that would not be included in the default budget besides wage increases.

It was stated that the expansion of the building department and the revaluation would not be included in the default budget.

Mr. Steer asked if they knew the study that Mr. DegliAngeli had referenced in previous meeting saying that since the beginning of the pandemic an additional 3,000 people have moved to town.

Mr. Colbath stated that he believed the census is flawed.

Mr. Eastman stated that while Mr. Steer would need to ask Mr. DegliAngeli, the Assessing Office is seeing large amounts of land taken out of current use and being turned to house lots.

It was also noted that the size of our Police Department was not that of a Town of only 10,000.

Mr. Steer inquired as to whether only having three kiosks would be an ADA issue.

Mr. Weathers reiterated to Mr. Steer that this parking program is a work in progress and will be tweaked along the way.

Mr. Thibodeau explained that the parking program details are a moving target.

He stated that they have done the best we can do to make a certain number of suppositions.

Mr. Thibodeau stated that the people in opposition do not know more than the Staff and Selectmen do.

He said that it will be what it is and if it doesn't work, they will not do it anymore.

Ms. Seavey stated that the topic of paid parking has been beat up so badly.

She noted that the Board Members have other jobs on top of being Selectmen.

She told Mr. Steer that she took offense to him quoting her in the paper as being "too busy to think about parking".

Ms. Seavey stated that she was working and took his phone call and did not appreciate the way he portrayed her in the paper as if she did not care.

At 5:37 pm, Mr. Colbath moved, seconded by Mr. Thibodeau, to go into non public session under RSA 91-A:3 II (L). The motion carried unanimously.

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

At 5:49 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 and . The motion carried unanimously.

At 5:49 pm, Mr. Colbath moved, seconded by Ms. Seavey, to go into non-public session under RSA 91-A:3 II (A). The motion carried unanimously.

NON-PUBLIC SESSION RSA 91-A :3 II (A) – PERSONNEL

At 6:06 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 and . The motion carried unanimously.

ADJOURN

At 6:06 pm, Mr. Colbath moved, seconded by Mr. Thibodeau, to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Krista Day
Executive Secretary