

**Minutes of Meeting
CONWAY BOARD OF SELECTMEN
November 21, 2023**

The Selectmen's Meeting convened at 4:00 pm at Town Hall with the following present: Mary Carey Seavey, Carl Thibodeau, John Colbath, Steve Porter, Ryan Shepard, Town Manager John Eastman and Executive Assistant Krista Day.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Ms. Seavey led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Colbath moved, seconded by Mr. Porter, to approve the agenda as written. The motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARING ON PROPOSED PLANNING BOARD FEES

Ms. Seavey opened the public hearing at 4:03 pm.

Town Planner Ryan O'Connor reviewed the proposed Planning Board fees (See Attached).

Mr. Colbath asked how these proposed fees compare to other Towns.

Mr. O'Connor noted that these were based upon figures from similar Towns in terms of scale of development and number of Planning Board applications.

It was emphasized that these fees are necessary to combat the actual costs that were being incurred
Is this fee necessary to combat actual costs

There were no public comments.

Ms. Seavey closed the public hearing at 4:05 pm.

VOTE ON PROPOSED PLANNING BOARD FEES

Mr. Colbath moved, seconded by Mr. Thibodeau, to accept and adopt the proposed Planning Board fees as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

DISCUSSION OF TREE CUTTING ON ROUTE 16

Town Planner Ryan O'Connor explained that the Town did not have proper notification of the cutting that was done on Route 16 from about Burger King to the 110 Grille.

The NH Electric Coop did not pull the proper permits.

He explained that these properties have site plan restrictions in regards to trees so they are reviewing each site and will be working with the Coop to come up with a reclamation plan.

Mr. Porter explained that the fact that the Town staff was not aware of this upset him.

He criticized the lack of communication on the power company's part.

He does not believe it should be on the property owners to replace the trees.

DISCUSSION OF POLICE BOND

Chief Mattei appeared before the Board to present some bond information for a potential Bond for the renovation of the Police Station.

See attached document for bond figures.

There was discussion regarding how the renovation process would go in order for business to continue as usual.

It was noted that the addition would be completed first and then the renovation would be completed in two sections.

There was a discussion regarding the potential of using unreserved fund balance to cover the first one to five years of bond payments.

The next step would be for the Board of Selectmen to decide if this is something they would like to move forward with and have a warrant article written.

There would then be public hearings in the future.

There was discussion regarding the need to put an additional warrant article together to cover the immediate repair needs such as the windows and HVAC in case the bond failed.

It was also noted that if members of the public would like to take a tour in order to see why these repairs/renovations are necessary, they should reach out to the Police Department.

DISCUSSION OF NH HIGHWAY SAFETY GRANT FOR SPEED PATROLS

Chief Mattei explained that they would like to participate in the Safety Grant for Speed Patrols.

He gave a summary of the grant.

Mr. Porter moved, seconded by Mr. Shepard, to sign the grant application for Speed Patrols. The motion carried unanimously.

DISCUSSION OF PARKING SPACE BY NORTH CONWAY PUBLIC LIBRARY

Mr. Eastman noted that they had talked about some issues with parking spaces in North Conway Village over the summer and he had received another call from Glenn Saunders regarding the space on the corner by the North Conway Library.

The Board reviewed pictures.

There was discussion regarding putting motorcycle parking there instead.

Mr. Porter moved, seconded by Mr. Thibodeau, to remove the parking space on the corner of Mechanic Street by the North Conway Library at this time and to revisit the discussion of potential motorcycle parking in the Spring. The motion carried unanimously.

DISCUSSION OF TOWN CAR FLEET

Mr. Smith explained that he is seeing the need to look into purchasing at least one or two new cars for the Town Hall staff to use.

He explained that a small SUV was looking to be priced around \$30,000-\$33,000.

Mr. Thibodeau inquired as to what the use was of the vehicles.

Mr. Smith noted that the Building Inspector uses his vehicle everyday around Town and to and from work, the Custodian uses the Town Jeep daily, and the Code Enforcement Officer and Assistant Building Inspector use one at least once a day.

Normally Town cars are taken when the Police Department retires the vehicle.

Mr. Smith also noted that he has a small truck that he uses but has also been looking into a stipend for mileage and having that truck used for other Town staff.

Mr. Thibodeau questioned why they were only looking into purchasing new.

He suggested looking at used models.

Mr. Smith noted that they had \$12,000 in the Capital Reserve Fund but that perhaps they could use ARPA funds.

Mr. Porter also supported Mr. Smith looking at used mileage.

Mr. Smith will present at a future meeting after doing some research.

SACO/SWIFT RIVER ADVISORY COMMITTEE NOMINATION FORM

Mr. Colbath moved, seconded by Mr. Shepard, to nominate Mr. David Weathers for reappointment to the Saco/Swift River Advisory Committee. The motion carried unanimously.

2024 BUDGET REVIEW

a. Library

Mr. Eastman explained that the insurance benefit is higher than it will most likely be as staff is continuing to fill out paperwork and pick plans.

Library Director David Smolen noted that the budget was up 5.79% over 2023 with 90% of that increase in salary and benefits.

He explained that there are market rate adjustments for both the Library Director and Assistant Library Director.

The increase also included the sick time payout for Mr. Smolen as he was resigning in January.

Mr. Eastman wished Mr. Smolen well at his new position.

b. Town Clerk/Tax Collector

Town Clerk/Tax Collector Louise Inkell noted that her proposed budget was up 9% due to the fact that there would be 4 elections plus the Deliberative portion of Town Meeting in 2024.

She did note that there are no fees included for a special election in case the Charter passes.

Mr. Colbath asked about replacing electronic ballot machines.

Ms. Inkell noted that they have until 2026 to abide by new requirements for ballot machines.

c. Finance

Finance Director Kathleen Golding noted a proposed increase in the Finance department of 3.77%, mostly under the wages due to having another staff member come on in the last quarter of 2024 to prepare for the Town to take over the precinct.

d. TANS

Annually 2000

e. Revenue

Ms. Golding reviewed the projected revenue figures but it was noted that this would evolve.

f. Parks/Recreation & Patriotic Purposes

Mr. Eastman showed the Board the completed engraved granite stone at Washington Park.

Mr. Lane explained that the Rec Department's proposed budget was looking at an increase of 4.5%.

The biggest changes were noted in the electrical and maintenance lines.

Electrical costs for all park sites were now in the Rec Budget.

There was an explanation regarding that a member of the Conway School Board had been reviewing the Rec lease with the school and that the Town should be paying 4% to the school for maintenance.

Mr. Eastman explained that they had tried to work a deal as the Town plows Eagles Way, but legal had decided it was not the best decision so that was the major increase in the Rec Budget.

For the patriotic purposes budget, it was projected slightly higher due to the increasing cost of fireworks each year.

Mr. Lane stated that each year they ask the Selectmen to transfer money out of the Rec Revolving Fund, which is revenue from Rec Programs, and into the Rec Budget to offset the total costs.

This year he was requesting that \$98,158.78 be transferred.

Mr. Porter moved, seconded by Mr. Colbath, to transfer \$98,158.78 from the Recreation Revolving Fund into the Recreation Department's payroll line item. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Lane noted that the turkey trot had gone well and thanked Mr. Colbath for his help getting the donated turkeys.

Mr. Lane explained that they had not moved the skating rink and warming hut to North Conway yet due to their inability to find anyone to work it.

After discussion, the Board instructed Mr. Lane to go forward with the skating rink this year and to continue advertising for employees.

DISCUSSION OF ELECTION LOCATION

Mr. Eastman explained that they finally had a date for the Presidential Primary: January 23, 2024.

He noted that he had talked to the Superintendent of Schools and there was a State Law that prohibits Schools to close due to an election, therefore, the School would not be an option for voting.

He had reached out to the owners of the JCPenney building and they would be unable to lease that building.

Mr. Eastman explained that he had not yet heard back from the Druker Company to see if the Christmas Tree Shop building was available.

He noted that Public Works Director Andrew Smith had said that if they needed to, he would make the Town Garage work even though it would be in the middle of winter.

Ms. Inkell thanked Mr. Smith and noted that this would be less confusing for the voters.
Carl: how many trucks with block heaters

Mr. Thibodeau moved, seconded by Mr. Porter, to hold the Presidential Primary in January 2024 at the Town Garage. The motion carried unanimously.

REVIEW OF RECEIPTS

The receipts were available for review.

SIGNING OF DOCUMENTS

- a. Notice of Intent to Cut Wood or Timber on Map/Lot 224-3
- b. Certification of Yield Taxes Assessed on Map/Lot 201-17

- c. Certification of Yield Taxes Assessed on Map/Lot 250-206
- d. Certification of Yield Taxes Assessed on Map/Lot 230-122
- ~~e. Certification of Yield Taxes Assessed on Map/Lot~~
- f. Yield Tax Levy on Map/Lot 230-122
- g. Yield Tax Levy on Map/Lot 201-17
- h. Yield Tax Levy on Map/Lot 250-206
- i. Conditional License for Map/Lot 266-12
- j. Tax Anticipation Note

Mr. Colbath moved, seconded by Mr. Shepard, to sign the documents in a. through d. and f. through j. The motion carried unanimously.

CONSIDERATION OF BILLS

- a. AP Manifest dated 11/23/2023

Mr. Colbath moved, seconded by Mr. Thibodeau, to sign the AP Manifest dated 11/23/2023. The motion carried unanimously.

RATIFICATION OF DOCUMENTS SIGNED OUT OF SESSION

- a. AP Manifest dated 11/16/2023
- b. Payroll dated 11/16/2023

Mr. Colbath moved, seconded by Mr. Thibodeau, to ratify the documents signed out of session as listed above. The motion carried unanimously.

REVIEW AND CONSIDERATION OF SPECIAL EVENT APPLICATION(S)

- a. MWVCC Tree Lighting at Schouler Park (11/24/2023)

Mr. Colbath moved, seconded by Mr. Thibodeau, to approve the MWVCC Tree Lighting at Schouler Park on 11/24/2023).

Mr. Thibodeau noted the lateness of the application and the fact that they were doing it on a Friday night.

The motion carried unanimously.

CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES

- a. Regular Minutes from 11/7/23

Mr. Colbath moved, seconded by Mr. Thibodeau, to adopt the regular minutes from 11/7/23 as written. The motion carried unanimously.

TOWN MANAGER REPORT

Mr. Eastman explained that he had reached out to the Department of Corrections to see about refinishing the benches in the meeting room.

The cost estimate would be \$88 per bench.

Mr. Thibodeau stated that he did not want to refinish the benches, he would rather them be restored.

Mr. Colbath stated he would like to see them refinished as they were old and falling apart.

After some discussion, Mr. Eastman will call and find out about the repair/restoration.

Mr. Eastman explained that he had attending the NHMA conference and Primex will be doing a cyber security audit for the Town.

Mr. Eastman is going to reach out to Lisa Weir regarding a potential lease for the information booth property.

BOARD REPORTS AND COMMENTS

Mr. Shepard stated that there would be a Historic District Commission meeting on December 6, 2023 at 6:00 pm and the Budget Committee would be meeting on December 13, 2023.

Mr. Shepard noted that after reading the teletalk regarding the Police Station renovation, he encouraged people to actually take a tour and see why it is so necessary.

Mr. Shepard wanted to remind everyone to be patient with others this Holiday Season.

Mr. Thibodeau added to Mr. Shepard's sentiment and stated that for those who cannot attend the BOS meetings, watch them on TV or Facebook.

He stated that people needed to stop writing things on Facebook without doing the research into what authority the Selectmen actually do or do not have.

Mr. Thibodeau gave the October 2023 airport report.

Mr. Colbath noted that the ZBA had six hearings at their last meeting.

Mr. Porter noted that the Planning Board met the previous week and that the Conway Poker Room and Casino had withdrawn their application.

He also noted that they finally have verbiage for outdoor dining.

Mr. Porter reiterated Mr. Shepard and Mr. Thibodeau's sentiments and added that people need to enjoy the Valley and stop judging people on what they are trying to do with the best of their ability.

He emphasized that they all care about the Valley.

Mr. Colbath encouraged everyone to go to the Festival of Trees at Settlers Green.

Ms. Seavey also encouraged everyone to come to the Festival of Trees as it was the fundraiser for her non-profit, RSVP.

PUBLIC COMMENTS AND MEDIA QUESTIONS

Daymond Steer from the Conway Daily Sun asked if the Town was still looking into electrical aggregation.

Mr. Eastman stated that they were still interested.

Mr. Steer had questions about the rental program and he was instructed to contact Mr. DegliAngeli.

At 6:56 pm, Mr. Thibodeau moved, seconded by Mr. Shepard, to go into non-public session under RSA 91-A:3 II (c). The motion carried unanimously.

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

The Board returned to public session at 7:01 pm.

Mr. Colbath moved, seconded by Mr. Thibodeau, to seal the minutes from this non-public session as it may affect adversely the reputation of any person other than a member of the Board. The motion carried unanimously.

ADJOURN

At 7:01 pm, the meeting adjourned at the call of the Chair.

Respectfully Submitted,

Krista Day
Executive Secretary

