

**Minutes of Meeting  
CONWAY BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
January 9, 2024**

The Selectmen's Meeting convened at 4:08 pm at Conway Town Hall with the following present: Mary Carey Seavey, Carl Thibodeau, John Colbath (4:50 pm), 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.

Ms. Seavey noted that Mr. Colbath would be arriving late as he had stayed later to testify in Concord.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Ms. Seavey noted that they would be adding agenda item 5a. Update from Chief Solomon.

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

PUBLIC HEARING ON THE PROPOSED RIVER TURN II AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROJECT  
CDBG APPLICATION

Ms. Seavey opened the Public Hearing on the Proposed River Turn II Affordable Housing Project CDBG Application at 4:02 pm.

Donna Lane noted that there were informational handouts available on the table.

Ms. Lane read the following:

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds are available to municipalities through the NH Community Development Finance Authority. Up to \$500,000 annually is available for Economic Development Projects, up to \$500,000 for Housing Projects, up to \$500,000 for Public Facility Projects, up to \$350,000 in Emergency Funds, up to \$25,000 per Planning Study grant. All projects must directly benefit a majority of low- and moderate-income persons.

This is a proposed application to the Community Development Finance Authority for up to \$500,000 in CDBG Housing Grant Funds. Of the funds, \$30,000 will be retained by the town for administrative and compliance costs associated with the project, and \$470,000 of the funds will be subgranted to Avesta Housing, or a subsidiary, toward the infrastructure/construction of approximately 40 units of housing of which approx. 30 will be affordable housing at River Turn Phase II, Council Road, Conway, NH. Avesta, or a subsidiary, will then loan the funds to a related entity.

This project conforms with Conway's Housing and Community Development Plan's goals of:  
Goal: Address issues of affordable housing. Encourage safe, decent, attractive and affordable housing for all segments of the population.

Ms. Seavey opened the floor for public comment.

Mark Hounsell stated that he believed this project to be an excellent use of CDBG funds and urged its support.

Ms. Seavey closed the public hearing at 4:04 pm.

Ms. Seavey opened the Public Hearing on the Residential Anti-Displacement and Relocation Assistance Plan for the Proposed River Turn II Affordable Housing Project at 4:05 pm.

Ms. Lane read the following:

This plan outlines measures, under the Uniform Relocation Act, required for CDBG projects that involve any displacement or relocation of persons (or businesses), if the Town were to undertake a CDBG project which involved displacement or relocation they would follow this plan. The plan outlines the measures they would take to find comparable, suitable housing for persons (or businesses) displaced or relocated. No displacement or relocation is anticipated as this is new construction.

Ms. Seavey opened the floor for public comment.

There were no public comments.

Ms. Seavey closed the public hearing at 4:06 pm.

#### NECESSARY VOTES FOR CDBG APPLICATION

**Mr. Thibodeau moved, seconded by Mr. Shepard, to approve the submittal of the CDBG application and vote to authorize the Town Manager to sign and submit the CDBG application, and upon approval of the CDBG application, authorize the Town Manager to execute any documents which may be necessary to effectuate the CDBG contract, and any amendments thereto. The motion carried unanimously.**

**Mr. Thibodeau moved, seconded by Mr. Porter, to adopt the Antidisplacement and Relocation Assistance Plan. The motion carried unanimously.**

#### UPDATE FROM CHIEF SOLOMON

Chief Solomon read the following:

December 18 and 19 2023 saw the fourth time in the last 16 years we have had the "100 year flood"

We saw flooding all along the Saco from North Conway, up and down the West Side, Washington St, Hillside, Main St, and Rebecca Lane in Center Conway.

We are tracking property damage at 41 properties including single family homes, apartment buildings, Lindsay's Paint, The Robert Frost Charter School, and the Brown Church. Some of these buildings will not be occupiable again for months and a few will never be occupiable again. There are likely other flood damaged properties that we are not yet aware of. Homes that had minor damage probably didn't report. We have second homes that we know were flooded but there is no evidence that anyone has been to those properties since the flood.

As we did after Irene, we have residents in the Transvale Acres neighborhood that have been displaced and have nowhere to go. But this time, we also have houses on the West Side Rd, Hillside Ave, East Main St, and Rebecca Lane that have significant damage and are not habitable.

We reached out to Red Cross for some immediate aid and they provided some aid to those we could prove were residents effected by the flood. We have had some request for aid from people that we could not confirm were residents of Town effected by the flood. They may have been living here but were doing so under the radar- in a situation they didn't want to town to know about- or they may be attempting to commit fraud.

Long term relief for these people is unclear. We don't yet know if there will be any FEMA assistance for these people. It doesn't look great, but both the Town and State have been pushing for it. It is possible there will be NO AID for residents who suffered flood damage or lost their homes and belongings.

Town Staff are doing a few things. Compiling information such as names of those who have been displaced or are living in damaged properties, taking appropriate levels of enforcement action to get damaged properties and debris taken care of especially from camp and second home owners, and we are looking into hazard mitigation monies to purchase and remove these flood damaged properties. All this will take months to accomplish.

I would suggest that the Town proceed with a floodplain acquisition project to purchase any and all damaged properties whether in Transvale or not. There are three grant programs for this. They will all likely require a local match. HMGP is 25%, SC is 0%-25% match but has strings, NRCS EWP 25% match. After Irene we had an \$800,000 grant. 25% local match that was mostly 'soft match'

Mr. Thibodeau asked if the Lindsays Paint Store building would qualify for any funding.

Chief Solomon was unsure on if they would qualify for any of the three different grant programs.

Mr. Eastman took this opportunity to thank Chief Solomon for his service to the Town of Conway.

Chairman Seavey presented Chief Solomon with a certificate of appreciation for his service.

#### DISCUSSION OF CHAPTER 72: HOUSING STANDARDS

The Board decided to wait until Mr. Colbath arrived to have this discussion.

#### VOTE ON GIFT OF LAND MAP/LOT 251-149.3

Mr. O'Connor explained that they had taken this piece of property in the past on a tax lien.

He explained that the Town has no use for this sliver of land that the recommendation was to gift the property to the two abutters with the condition that the owners shall complete a lot line adjustment and lot merger to be approved by the Planning Board within 24 months.

**Mr. Porter moved, seconded by Mr. Shepard, to gift map/lot 251-149.3 to the owners of map/lot 251-150 and 251-148 with the condition that the owners shall complete a lot line adjustment and lot merger to be approved by the Planning Board within 24 months. The motion carried unanimously.**

VOTE ON POLLING LOCATION FOR APRIL AND SEPTEMBER

**Mr. Porter moved, seconded by Mr. Shepard, to hold the April and September elections at the Town Garage. The motion carried unanimously.**

REVIEW OF RECEIPTS

The receipts were available for review.

SIGNING OF DOCUMENTS

(none)

CONSIDERATION OF BILLS

- a. AP Manifest dated 1/11/2024
- b. Payroll dated 1/11/2024

**Mr. Shepard moved, seconded by Mr. Thibodeau, to sign the AP manifest and payroll dated 1/11/2024. The motion carried unanimously.**

RATIFICATION OF DOCUMENTS SIGNED OUT OF SESSION

(none)

REVIEW AND CONSIDERATION OF SPECIAL EVENT APPLICATION(S)

- a. Mt. Washington Valley Chamber Chili Cookoff (4/7/2024)

**Mr. Porter moved, seconded by Mr. Thibodeau, to approve the special event application as listed above. The motion carried unanimously.**

CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES

- b. Regular and Non-Public Minutes from 12/19/2023
- c. Regular Minutes from 1/2/2024

**Mr. Porter moved, seconded by Mr. Shepard, to adopt the minutes as listed above as written. The motion carried unanimously.**

TOWN MANAGER REPORT

Incoming Conway Fire Chief Phil Remington introduced himself to the Board.

Mr. Eastman explained that the Budget Committee would be meeting the next evening.

Mr. Eastman stated that he had spent the day in Concord with many other Town Staff, three members of the Board of Selectmen, and many other Conway committee members and residents to testify for both the Homestead Exemption Bill and HB 1254 which is the per night fee for hotels and short term rentals.

He stated that he believed this was the start of something good and that now people need to call and voice their opinions.

Mr. Eastman reminded the public that petition warrant articles for zoning/building were due the next day at 5:00 pm.

BOARD REPORTS AND COMMENTS

Mr. Thibodeau wanted to give a big shout out to Representative David Paige for the tremendous job he did at the hearings today.

He said that he would urge the Conway Daily Sun to print the name and contact information for those Representatives and Senator's sitting on these committees.

He emphasized that the Board and staff have done all they can to speak in support of these bills and it is now up to the people to do the work to express their wishes.

Mark Hounsell thanked Mr. Thibodeau and the rest of those who traveled to Concord.

He noted that the Town has stepped up and done the right thing.

He stated that he had never seen a presentation as well done at Representative Paige.

He emphasized that our Town depends on this.

Shawn Bergeron stated that the Homestead Tax is not only good for Conway, but realistically every tourist community in the State.

He suggested that Mr. Eastman have conversations with Select Boards and Town Administrators around the State.

Mr. Colbath arrived at 4:50 pm.

The Board went back to discuss Chapter 72: Housing Standards.

DISCUSSION OF CHAPTER 72: HOUSING STANDARDS

Mr. DegliAngeli reviewed that this year they have embarked on the new rental licensing program with the intent to ensure adherence to life safety.

He stated that some folks have expressed that they do not feel this was the right approach.

Council and Staff felt that the Board was exercising their Selectmen's powers as given by the voters.

Mr. DegliAngeli stated that he wanted to recognize Joy Tarbell, Ed Menard, Shawn Bergeron and Eliza Grant for their work on drafting an amendment to Chapter 72: Housing Standards which is something that was voted in by the legislative body in the 1960s.

See attached for full proposed amendment.

Mr. DegliAngeli explained that as a group they started working on what the concerns were and drafted a detailed ordinance.

He noted that Eliza Grant did the lion's share of the work.

Mr. Thibodeau noted that he was concerned that the whole document would have to appear on the warrant.

Mr. O'Connor noted that we would work to summarize it.

Mr. Colbath asked if we were going to stop what they were doing already or continue.

Mr. DegliAngeli stated that this is the question.

Mr. Porter stated he supported this because it further shows the residents that they are doing all they can. Public Meeting.

Mr. DegliAngeli stated there would be two public hearings for this warrant article.

Ms. Grant explained her opinion and mindset on the amendment and thanked everyone for working on this.

Mark Hounsell emphasized how much pride he felt for the Town of Conway today.

**Mr. Thibodeau moved, seconded by Mr. Porter, to place the amendment of Chapter 72: Housing Standards on the 2024 Warrant. The motion carried unanimously.**

RETURN TO BOARD REPORTS

Mr. Colbath noted that he went to the hearings today and everyone did an excellent job.

Mr. Shepard noted that again the Daily Sun was paraphrasing his works incorrectly after last week's meeting.

He wanted to emphasize to the public that there is a sense of decorum that the Board follows during their meetings.

He urged those who were upset with the Board after the meeting where the revaluation was discussed to attend more meetings to see how things go and to become more educated.

He also noted that he had read the letter to the paper urging the Board to resign.

He stated that he was not resigning.

Mr. Colbath noted that the ZBA would be meeting on January 17, 2024 and the Economic Council was meeting on January 24, 2024.

Mr. Porter explained that he also read the letter to the paper and took personal offense to it.

He stated that he was raised to be civil and have conversations.

He also noted that he was not resigning.

He also noted that he hoped to have wording to designate North South Road as a parkway on the warrant this year.

Ms. Seavey noted that she was not resigning either.

#### PUBLIC COMMENTS AND MEDIA QUESTIONS

Planning Board Chair Ben Colbath explained that he was very encouraged with the amount of representation that Conway had in Concord.

He noted that he did not see any of the citizens who were at the meeting for the revaluation down in Concord.

He stated that one of the things he realized after getting into public service was just how uneducated the public is.

He wanted to make it clear that the Town's hands are tied with the State of New Hampshire.

He thanked the Board for all they do.

Daymond Steer from the Conway Daily Sun stated that he had watched both hearings and thought everyone did an excellent job.

He stated that he would like to see the Assessment Review when it was complete.

Mr. Steer questioned whether the Fire Departments could just start invoicing the Town for more money for inspections since they did not have a written agreement.

**At 5:50 pm, Mr. Colbath moved, seconded by Mr. Shepard, to go into non-public session under RSA 91-A:3 II (B). The motion carried unanimously.**

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

**At 6:48, the Board returned to public session.**

**Mr. Colbath moved, seconded by 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.**

**At 6:48 pm, Mr. Colbath 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) TAX MATTER

**At 7:01 pm, the Board returned to public session.**

**Mr. Colbath moved, seconded by 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 7:01 pm, Mr. Colbath moved, seconded by Mr. Shepard, to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried unanimously.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Krista Day  
Executive Secretary