

**Board of Selectmen
September 9, 2020**

Present: Mark P. Duffy, Chair; Richard C. Edwards; Kenneth G. Fifield (via phone); and Toni Bodah, Secretary.

Mr. Duffy called the posted meeting to order at 6:31 p.m. **Mr. Duffy moved to enter Non Public Session under RSA 91-A:3, II (b). Mr. Edwards seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Mr. Fifield – ‘aye’; Mr. Edwards – ‘aye’; Mr. Duffy – ‘aye’.** The motion passed 3-0, and the Board immediately entered Non Public Session.

The Board returned to public session at 6:36 p.m. During the immediately preceding Non Public Session, the Board voted to hire Jennifer Wolforth as Assistant Town Clerk at the hourly rate of \$16.09. **Mr. Duffy moved to enter Non Public Session under RSA 91-A:3, II (e). Mr. Edwards seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Mr. Fifield – ‘aye’; Mr. Edwards – ‘aye’; Mr. Duffy – ‘aye’.** The motion passed 3-0, and the Board immediately entered Non Public Session.

The Board returned to public session at 6:45 p.m. During the immediately preceding Non Public Session, the Board voted to move forward with recommendations of Town Counsel regarding a pending lawsuit. Mr. Duffy called for a recess, during which time the Board moved to the Opera House, where the meeting reconvened at 7 p.m. Selectman Fifield was not present at this time. Those present included Jim Miller and Ted Taylor, videographers, and Joe Gore, Transfer Station Manager. Mr. Duffy led all in the Pledge of Allegiance.

1. Appointments

a) Joe Gore re: Roll Off Truck for Transfer Station – Mr. Gore (standing in for Brock Mitchell) referred to the Town’s previous purchase of a used roll off truck last year, for \$18,000. Use of said vehicle has resulted in significant savings. The present concern is what will happen if the current truck breaks down. Waste Management may not be able to meet our needs in a timely manner. Therefore, the possibility of renting has been researched. A new truck was found, with a lease-to-purchase option. We would be required to lease the truck for a minimum of 6 months. If we purchase the truck within the first year, 70% of our lease payments would be applied toward the purchase. Mr. Gore advised we have saved over \$40,000 in disposal costs this year by hauling our own material. Having a second truck would allow 2 employees to haul on Thursdays, when the facility is closed to the public, thereby reducing overtime. We could also haul our own metal if we had 2 trucks.

Mr. Gore confirmed to Mr. Duffy that there are sufficient funds remaining in the 2020 budget to cover the lease for the remainder of the year. He suggested we could then seek sufficient funds via a warrant article to pay off the truck in 2021. Tonight, however, he is seeking authority for the Town Administrator to complete/submit a credit application in order for the company to provide ‘hard’ numbers. Mr. Gore reiterated that Waste Management may not be available to meet our needs in the event of an emergency situation. **Mr. Duffy moved to allow the Town Administrator to execute the credit application on the Town’s behalf in order to investigate acquisition of a roll off truck as discussed. Mr. Edwards seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.**

2. Unscheduled Matters/Public Comment #1 – None forthcoming.

3. Unfinished Business – None scheduled.

4. New Business

a) Proposed Contract with Mae H. Williams – The Heritage Commission received a CLG grant for the purpose of listing the Union Station on the National Register of Historic Places. Such designation does come with certain restrictions on the property. [Selectmen Fifield attempted to join the meeting via Zoom at this point; however, only a visual presence was achieved.] Mr. Duffy stressed that the contract puts certain responsibilities on ‘the Town’, which should be construed to mean the Heritage Commission. **Mr. Edwards moved to authorize Mark Duffy to execute the contract with Mae H. Williams, as presented. Mr. Duffy seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.**

b) Proposed Auction of Tax Acquired Property – The Board agreed by consensus to conduct an auction of tax acquired property on October 24 via NH Tax Deed Auctions.

5. Proposed Capital Reserve Fund Expenditures

a) Landfill Closure \$2500 – This represents the cost to have the landfill mowed. **Mr. Edwards moved to approve this \$2500 expenditure from the Landfill Closure CRF as presented. Mr. Duffy seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.**

b) Invasive Species ETF \$7500 – [Selectmen Fifield is in attendance via Zoom and phone.] This represents payment to Balch Lake Improvement Assoc of the amount previously approved. **Mr. Edwards moved to approve this \$7500 expenditure as presented. Mr. Duffy seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.**

6. Correspondence

a) Clearview Community TV Quarterly Report – Provided for the Board’s information.

7. Unscheduled Matters/Public Comment #2 – [Selectman Fifield is no longer present via Zoom or phone.]

--Mr. Miller confirmed the new equipment will be installed later in the month, adding they are well within budget. However, Mr. Miller stressed that he needs help. CCTV does pay camera operators (but not board members). He noted that some towns are still struggling with the current situation; however, the Town of Wakefield has not missed a step!

--David Lee (via Zoom) referred to COVID 19 problem areas, from which people are fleeing. He questioned whether the Town of Wakefield will do anything to maintain the rural character of the community—such as controlling any influx of people from other states. He stressed that the Town must be ready and not wait until the last minute. Mr. Duffy has conferred with the Police Chief (who is also the Emergency Management Director) and is looking at the numbers. We are currently seeing a decline, but he agrees that more people are around. Mr. Duffy added that we will need to change our thinking if we see a spike in numbers. Our revenues continue to come in, and the town as a whole has been pretty responsible. Although there has been some concern expressed about use of masks, the Board maintains a 6’ distance.

8. Administrative Matters

a) Town Administrator’s Update (read by Ms. Bodah in the absence of Mr. Scala)

--26.4% of registered voters participated in yesterday's primary. Absentee voting was up about 50%. Masks were worn, and social distancing was not an issue. The November election will be held at the Paul School.

--The previous Town Administrator was paid a \$30/month stipend for use of her personal cell phone used for Town business. Mr. Scala also uses his personal cell phone, which is connected to the Town's email. The Board agreed by consensus to pay a \$30/month stipend (effective immediately) to Mr. Scala for use of his personal cell phone.

--Highway Garage Furnace: Mr. Mitchell has obtained quotes for replacement of the furnace (On Tap Plumbing & Heating @ \$11,900; Arsenault Heating & Air Conditioning LLC @ \$12,897.05); however, he wonders whether we should continue to use large band aids for a while to see where the joint building project goes. Mr. Edwards stated it is time to bite the bullet. He noted that Arsenault has done some work to help us get by. Mr. Duffy stated that Mr. Mitchell should be reminded to put such bid solicitations on the Town's web site in the future. He added that we are getting close to winter and should make a decision. **Mr. Edwards moved to accept the bid of Arsenault Heating & Air Conditioning LLC at \$12,897.05 to replace the furnace at the Highway Garage. Mr. Duffy seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.**

--Mr. Scala has reviewed about ¼ of 2021 budget requests with department heads, with more meetings scheduled into next week. He suggests the Board begin its review of the proposed budget by the end of September. A schedule of weeknight meetings, to begin at 5p.m., will be drafted and distributed.

--DTC currently represents the Town, as well as a number of other towns, with respect to Tax Appeals filed by PSNH/Eversource for tax years 2017 and 2018. PSNH/Eversource has now filed an appeal for the 2019 tax year. We are seeking confirmation from the Board to include the 2019 appeal in DTC's representation of the Town. **Mr. Duffy moved to include the 2019 tax appeal of PSNH/Eversource in DTC's representation of the Town. Mr. Edwards seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.**

--The Town has an opportunity to apply for a sub-grant through the CARES Act Grant Program, which grant would reimburse the Town for a portion of election costs (both Primary and General Election). We may already be 'covered' to apply for this sub-grant via the Board's vote on May 27, 2020; however, better to be safe. **Mr. Duffy moved to apply for a sub-grant under the CARES Act Grant Program for reimbursement of election costs (both Primary and General Election), without a public hearing or notice being published in a newspaper 7 days in advance, by acting under the provisions of RSA 21-P:43 and subject to the terms of the GOFERR Coronavirus Relief Fund Grant Agreement, and to authorize Dino A. Scala to execute documentation as necessary. Mr. Edwards seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.**

b) Tax Collector's Monthly/Yearly Comparisons – Provided for the Board's information.

c) Building Permit Releases – None forthcoming.

d) Letter to Dave Tinkham – Signed by the Board with respect to Mr. Tinkham's resignation from the Conservation Commission.

e) Payment Manifests – Mr. Edwards moved to approve AP #23 in the amount of \$932,497.38 as presented. Mr. Duffy seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.

Mr. Edwards moved to approve PR #19 in the amount of \$94,914.61 as presented. Mr. Duffy seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.

f) Minutes – Mr. Edwards moved to approve the August 26, 2020, minutes of Non Public Session #'s 1 – 7, as presented. Mr. Duffy seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.

Mr. Edwards moved to approve the minutes of August 26, 2020, public session as presented. Mr. Duffy seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.

g) Selectmen's Work Session

- Mr. Edwards noted that Parks & Rec's 2nd Annual Car Show will be held at the ballfields on Sunday, September 13. Another car show will be held at the Blue Bay Restaurant on Saturday, September 12.
- Mr. Duffy received correspondence regarding the history of Towle Farm Road, which information will be shared with the other Board members.
- Mr. Duffy has been approached as to whether the Fall Festival will be held in East Wakefield this year. Mr. Edwards believes the residents look forward to it and are ready to go. It is a free event, mostly run by local businesses. Mr. Duffy encouraged all to follow safety guidelines.
- Mr. Duffy stated that the turn-out for the primary was good, and he is grateful to all volunteers. However, he encouraged voters to vote for legitimate candidates only. Phil Twombly gets a gold star for counting all the absentee ballots. Mr. Duffy referred to the process used for voters who came in without masks, as well as the sanitizing process used.

Mr. Edwards moved to adjourn at 7:51 p.m. Mr. Duffy seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.

Respectfully submitted,
Toni Bodah, Secretary

Approval of Minutes:



Mark P. Duffy, Chair



Richard C. Edwards

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Kenneth G. Fifield