

**Board of Selectmen
December 9, 2020**

Present: Mark P. Duffy, Chair; Richard C. Edwards; Dino A. Scala, Town Administrator; and Toni Bodah, Secretary.

Mr. Duffy called the posted meeting to order at 6:15 p.m. **Mr. Duffy moved to enter Non Public Session under RSA 91-A:3, II (a). Mr. Edwards seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Mr. Edwards – ‘aye’; Mr. Duffy – ‘aye’. The motion passed 2-0, and the Board immediately entered Non Public Session.**

The Board returned to public session at 6:37 p.m. During the immediately preceding Non Public Session, the Board authorized an increase for Seth Garland to \$25.52/hour. **Mr. Edwards moved to enter Non Public Session under RSA 91-A:3, II (a). Mr. Duffy seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Mr. Edwards – ‘aye’; Mr. Duffy – ‘aye’. The motion passed 2-0, and the Board immediately entered Non Public Session.**

The Board returned to public session at 6:42 p.m. During the immediately preceding Non Public Session, the Board authorized an increase to \$22.43/hour for Michael Laughy. **Mr. Edwards moved to enter Non Public Session under RSA 91-A:3, II (a). Mr. Duffy seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Mr. Edwards – ‘aye’; Mr. Duffy – ‘aye’. The motion passed 2-0, and the Board immediately entered Non Public Session.**

The Board returned to public session at 6:49 p.m. During the immediately preceding Non Public Session, the Board authorized an increase to \$23.88/hour for Joe Gore. **Mr. Edwards moved to enter Non Public Session under RSA 91-A:3, II (a). Mr. Duffy seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Mr. Edwards – ‘aye’; Mr. Duffy – ‘aye’. The motion passed 2-0, and the Board immediately entered Non Public Session.**

The Board returned to public session at 6:54 p.m. During the immediately preceding Non Public Session, the Board authorized an increase to \$17.09/hour for John Norton. **Mr. Edwards moved to enter Non Public Session under RSA 91-A:3, II (c). Mr. Duffy seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Mr. Edwards – ‘aye’; Mr. Duffy – ‘aye’. The motion passed 2-0, and the Board immediately entered Non Public Session.**

The Board returned to public session at 6:57 p.m. **Mr. Duffy moved to seal the minutes of the immediately preceding Non Public Session indefinitely. Mr. Edwards seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Mr. Edwards – ‘aye’; Mr. Duffy – ‘aye’. The motion passed 2-0, and the minutes were sealed.**

Mr. Duffy moved to enter Non Public Session under RSA 91-A:3, II (a). Mr. Edwards seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Mr. Edwards – ‘aye’; Mr. Duffy – ‘aye’. The motion passed 2-0, and the Board immediately entered Non Public Session. The Board returned to public session at 7:00 p.m. During the immediately preceding Non Public Session, the Board authorized accumulation of earned time at 10.67 hours per month for Dino Scala.

At this point, the Board joined those also present in the Opera House, including Police Chief John Ventura, Denny Miller and Jim Miller (Clearview TV). Mr. Duffy led all in the Pledge of Allegiance.

1. Appointments

a) Police Chief John Ventura – Chief Ventura referred to the Highway Safety Grant in the amount of \$6121. This grant is less than in previous years and is now a performance based grant—if you don't generate numbers, you get less money. There is also less of a pool of money to draw from. No quota is involved. **Mr. Edwards moved to approve the HSG in the amount of \$6121. Mr. Duffy seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.**

Mr. Edwards moved to authorize the Chair to execute documentation as necessary on behalf of the Board. Mr. Duffy seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.

Mr. Duffy then referred to the possibility of moving the expense for the 2021 cruiser from a warrant article to the operating budget. Mr. D Miller noted that this expense does not fit with other warrant articles expenses, as the police cruiser is replaced every year. Other vehicles are not replaced every year and should be funded through a warrant article. Mr. Duffy questioned whether it is always necessary to purchase an SUV. Chief Ventura stated that the vehicles have an SUV body; however, the engine is the same as in previous cruisers. Ford no longer is producing the cruisers, and Chief Ventura does not like the Dodge product. Mr. Duffy suggested the Town could have a couple of cruisers for use on certain roads/in certain areas. Mr. D Miller stressed that ½ the roads in town are gravel. He is in favor of purchasing a vehicle that can go anywhere. Chief Ventura stated that regardless of the type of vehicle purchased, the cost should be in the operating budget as it is purchased every year. For the next 2 years he will seek \$20,000 in a warrant article to replace the supervisor's vehicle (in 2022). Thereafter, he will seek \$12,000 - \$13,000 for replacement of the supervisor's vehicle and the K9 vehicle. Mr. Scala referred to the cost to outfit the cruiser. Chief Ventura advised that is already in the operating budget. This equipment is re-used as long as possible. Mr. Edwards asked whether the Chief had any concerns regarding the voters not approving the operating budget if the Police Budget increases. Mr. D Miller stated the Budget Committee does not care whether the \$30,000 purchase is in the operating budget or the warrant article. He added that the voters pay more attention to the warrant articles than to the Town operating budget. He stressed we cannot afford to lose the cruiser funds. The Board can address this potential change at the end of the work session on December 15.

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

3. Unfinished Business

a) Comprehensive Public Rights-of-Way Regulations – Mr. Scala stated that the Board had previously agreed to join with other towns to have DTC develop these regulations, much of which relates to communication towers, etc. This draft document will be submitted to the Planning Board for their review.

4. New Business

a) Encumbrances of 2020 Funds – Mr. Scala advised that no requests for encumbrances have been received yet; however, he will raise this issue at the December 16 department head meeting. He suggested the Board revisit this topic at the last meeting in December.

b) Investment Policy – This policy is reviewed/adopted each year by the Board. **Mr. Duffy moved to adopt the Investment Policy as presented. Mr. Edwards seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.**

c) Town Hall Heating System Maintenance – Mr. Scala advised we had no responses to our solicitation; however, one proposal was received after the deadline, from Pioneer Mechanical in the amount of \$750. Discussion followed as to when the system will be due for a cleaning. **Mr. Edwards moved to approve the proposal from Pioneer Mechanical in the amount of \$750. Mr. Duffy seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.**

5. Proposed Capital Reserve Fund Expenditures – All 6 proposed expenditures relate to the Transfer Station Facility CRF:

- a) \$4140.08** – Installation of power to the scale house.
- b) \$45,231.67** – Grind/sweep joints and paving.
- c) \$666.67** – CBR and coarse washed sand.
- d) \$1092.79** – More CBR and coarse washed sand.
- e) \$1903.20** – Relocation of scale.
- f) \$6500** – Refurbish on site of scale.

Mr. Edwards moved to approve all 6 expenditures from the Transfer Station Facility CRF as presented. Mr. Duffy seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.

6. Correspondence

a) Mr. Duffy referred to an email he received from the Towle Farm Road Treasurer. Mr. Duffy stressed that the purpose of the work session is to get all parties together to suggest a viable solution to the road problems in the area. The Town is not trying to steal a road. Mr. Edwards added that we are trying to come up with a solution that is good for the entire community—not just residents of Towle Farm or Bonnyman Road—all taxpayers. Mr. Scala noted that the Board has been consistent in its intent to gather information at the work session—no decision is expected to be made.

7. Unscheduled Matters/Public Comment #2

--Mr. J Miller noted that the December 15 work session will not be televised live because there is a regular school board meeting that night. Rather, it will be recorded and replayed several hours later. Mr. Scala advised that meeting notices were mailed to Towle Farm/Bonnyman Road property owners, which included all Zoom information, so all can attend (either via Zoom or in person).
--The Board thanked Mr. J Miller for the new video equipment/set up. Working great!

8. Administrative Matters

a) Town Administrator's Update

--Corona virus update: #'s in Wakefield appear to be dropping (1-4 cases). We continue to keep safety precautions in place at Town Hall, including face coverings and appropriate distancing. With respect to relief funds, The Town will receive a total of \$134,260 (State and Federal funds) as follows:

- \$121,297 – State CARES Act for supplies/wages for the Fire and Police Departments
- \$ 10,456 – Secretary of State for primary and general elections and processing of additional absentee ballots
- \$ 2,505 – FEMA for PPE.

Thanks to Barbara Schnurbush and Michelle MacDonald for all their hard work securing these funds!!
--Ambulance Write-offs: The Board reviewed a list of potential write-offs totaling \$14,032. **Mr. Edwards moved to write off \$14,032 in ambulance bills as presented. Mr. Duffy seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.** In addition, it is recommended that bills totaling \$1071 be sent to Experian. One hardship request has been received, and one payment plan (\$400/month) has been requested. Mr. Edwards noted many of these bills are either missing social security numbers or have bad addresses. He is concerned that the taxpayers are paying when these bills are written off, and it seems to be trending higher (that we are not receiving necessary information). He is all about helping someone with a hardship. Mr. Scala advised that the Town receives about 70%-72% in amounts billed through Comstar. He will get more information regarding the information collection process from the EMT Captain. **Mr. Edwards moved to send \$1071 to Experian, as presented. Mr. Duffy seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.**

Mr. Edwards moved to approve the hardship request and the payment plan of \$400/month. Mr. Duffy seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.

--The Board has received a hardship request to waive the penalty associated with redemption of tax acquired property at Map 124, Lot 3, in the amount of \$14,983.96. **Mr. Edwards moved to waive the \$14,983.96 penalty for redemption of Map 124, Lot 3 (based on the hardship request), if the remaining amount due is paid in full by December 31, 2020. Mr. Duffy seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.**

--Another tax acquired property, Map 81 Lot 21, was recently redeemed. The Board was presented with a deed transferring the property back to the former owner. **Mr. Edwards moved to execute the deed transferring Map 81 Lot 21 back to the former owner, as presented. Mr. Duffy seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.**

--Mr. Scala noted that this is the last regular Selectmen's meeting in the opera house. We now have the capability of broadcasting in the conference room, thanks to Jim Miller. We will still have Zoom capability. The Board agreed that the next meeting (and the last meeting for 2020) will be held on December 30.

--Mr. Scala encouraged the public to visit our website for notices of upcoming meetings. Deliberative session is scheduled for January 30, 2021.

b) Building Permit Releases – Mr. Edwards moved to approve the building permit releases for Crystal Lane and Lovell Heights Road as presented. Mr. Duffy seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.

c) Treasurer's Reports for October – Provided for the Board's information.

d) Tax Collector's Reports for November 2019/2020 and YTD – Provided for the Board's information.

e) Payment Manifests – Mr. Edwards moved to approve PR #25 in the amount of \$140,114.93. Mr. Duffy seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.

Mr. Edwards moved to approve AP #29 in the amount of \$734,664.44. Mr. Duffy seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.

Kenneth G. Fifield