

**Board of Selectmen
June 23, 2021**

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

Mr. Duffy called the posted meeting to order at 6:30 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. Fifield – ‘aye’; Mr. Edwards – ‘aye’; Mr. Duffy – ‘aye’.** The motion passed unanimously, and the Board immediately entered Non Public Session.

The Board returned to public session at 7:03 p.m. in the conference room. During the immediately preceding Non Public Session, the Board agreed to increase the FF/EMT wage line by 2%, with the understanding that data for this line will be sought for reconsideration at the next meeting.

Mr. Duffy led all in the Pledge of Allegiance. Those also present at this time included Sgt. Michael Fenton, and several people via Zoom. Brock Mitchell joined the session in progress via telephone.

1. Appointments – None scheduled.

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

3. Unfinished Business

a) Perambulation – The Board members for the Town of Ossipee have requested we delay walking this line until September. Mr. Scala will attempt to schedule this event for September 13.

b) Parking Ordinance – The Board reviewed a parking ordinance drafted by Police Chief John Ventura. Mr. Fifield noted that fees listed in the proposed ordinance would be payable to the Town Clerk and would remain in the Town’s funds. He also noted that this ordinance, if approved, would be in addition to existing parking ordinances, which cover specific areas in town. The public hearing on this proposed ordinance is scheduled for July 14.

c) MA Bean Contract – This project (for the bridge on Canal Road) was approved by the voters of Acton ME. MA Bean has prepared 2 separate contracts (one for Wakefield, the other for Acton). The bridge itself will be constructed by July 1. The actual project will be complete by the first week in August. **Mr. Edwards moved to authorize the Chair to execute the agreement with MA Bean as presented. Mr. Fifield seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.** MA Bean has done some study and site work to confirm that this project will not adversely affect the existing historical bridge. However, we all know that the existing bridge is red-listed and is falling apart. The bridge will continue to deteriorate, until such time as the Heritage Commission decides to address same. Mr. Edwards stressed that the road will be closed for up to 2 weeks during construction.

4. New Business

a) Waste Management Contract – Brock Mitchell has reviewed the contract, including the increase in cost of services, and recommends that the Board approves same. **Mr. Fifield moved to authorize the Chair to execute the contract with Waste Management as presented. Mr. Edwards seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.**

b) Warrant for Unlicensed Dogs – Mr. Fifield moved to execute the Warrant for Unlicensed Dogs, provided by the Town Clerk, as presented. Mr. Edwards seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.

5. Proposed Capital Reserve Fund Expenditures

a) PRP Assoc \$2500 – Mr. Edwards moved to release the \$2500 requested by PRP Assoc. Mr. Fifield seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.

6. Correspondence

a) GWRC Minutes – The minutes were provided for the Board's information. Mr. Scala met with Victor Becker and discussed whether the roof needs to be replaced. Mr. Becker is having difficulty obtaining quotes for that work. Mr. Edwards is willing to assist in that regard. Mr. Duffy wondered whether we should consider installing a metal roof. Mr. Edwards did not believe that would be to our advantage. He stated that metal is more expensive and does not last any longer than shingles available today.

Mr. Scala also spoke with Mr. Becker about the next phase for the Town Hall. Mr. Becker is currently focused on the GWRC; however, he is willing to discuss timing of the other project with the Board.

7. Unscheduled Matter/Public Comment #2 – None forthcoming.

8. Administrative Matters

a) Town Administrator's Update

--Mr. Scala has received a request from the Transfer Station staff to be closed Labor Day. A similar request was received last year. Holidays are listed in the Transfer Station Ordinance, which must be revised only by vote of the Town. Mr. Fifield noted that many people will be closing their camps that weekend and, if the Transfer Station is closed, we are likely to find trash left on the side of the roads. After considerable discussion, no change was made to the Transfer Station holiday schedule at this time. All Board members agreed that the Transfer Station is a valuable department of the Town, and the staff continues to do a great job.

--Brock Mitchell is considering purchase of a camera system to scope the wastewater lines and pipes at the lagoon. The cost of purchasing the equipment was compared to amounts recently spent for similar services. Mr. Edwards referred to the serious issues with the sewer lines encountered earlier this week, whereby cameras were needed to locate some problem areas. It may be useful for the Town to purchase this equipment given the cost to hire this work out; however, the cost of the equipment is higher than Mr. Edwards expected (for use on 6" lines), and he would want to know in what other areas said equipment could be used, if purchased. Mr. Edwards noted that grease is building up in the system. Mr. Mitchell (via telephone) advised that this equipment is not a necessity at this time; however, it will eventually be needed. We have 6" and 8" lines (4" lines are inside houses). The entire system was camera'd in October 2020. Another section was camera'd in January when a line was broken. We have another invoice coming for a recent sewer issue. The cost of these 3 projects would have covered the cost to purchase the equipment. Mr. Duffy asked how we clean pipes when the camera indicates it is needed. Mr. Mitchell stated we might need a jetter to clear pipes; however, we are not there yet. He is not sure of the cost of a jetter. Mr. Fifield suggested addressing these needs in a warrant article.

Mr. Edwards referred to a water issue behind Town Hall this week. Mr. Scala is looking at 2 revenue sources for several projects. He has already applied for a DES grant. Perhaps such a grant would cover purchase of this equipment.

--Mr. Mitchell has asked that the Board put the 2006 F250 plow truck (approximately 160,000 miles) out to bid. [Note: The subject vehicle is actually a 2005 F350.] The truck has a number of deficiencies; however, it would make a good truck for someone to use in their yard. OK!

--The Town has a bubble camera system that was received from the School District. He suggested posting it for bid on the website. Another OK!

--The Tax Collector reports that \$5,272,594 was collected during the month of June in 2020. To date for June 2021, \$4,342,532 has been collected, with 2 weeks to go. Mr. Duffy wonders what percentage of bills that have been paid. Mr. Scala will determine that percentage.

--American flags and Town Seal flags have been ordered – 6 of each. They will be hung in the downtown area, alternately with the existing banners.

--Ambulance Write-Offs: Mr. Scala presented a list of potential write-offs, and bills to be sent to Experian. Barbara Schnurbush does a great job attempting to contact people, and several payment plans have been established. Mr. Edwards noted that we seem to write-off many bills and questioned how we can solve this issue. Mr. Scala has discussed this with the Fire Chief and Captain. The paramedics can't get that information while they are actively working on a patient. The problem occurs at the hospital, where the administrative staff does not obtain sufficient information. Mr. Edwards suggested a Town representative make a second visit to the hospital to obtain this information. Mr. Scala will discuss this with Ms. Schnurbush as well as with hospital administration to try to find a solution. Mr. Scala advised Mr. Fifield that having the bill sent to Experian adversely affects one's credit. **Mr. Edwards moved to write-off ambulance bills totaling \$5343.73 and to send bills totaling \$1704.17 to Experian, as recommended. Mr. Fifield seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.**

b) Building Permit Releases – None forthcoming.

c) Membership Appointment – The Conservation Commission has recommended the Board reappoint Donna Ackerman as a member for 3 years. **Mr. Fifield moved to reappoint Donna Ackerman as a member to the Conservation Commission for a term through March 2024, as recommended. Mr. Edwards seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.**

d) Payment Manifests – Mr. Fifield moved to approve PR #13 in the amount of \$95,639.59. Mr. Edwards seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.

Mr. Fifield moved to approve PR #14 in the amount of \$96,361.53. Mr. Edwards seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.

Mr. Edwards moved to approve AP #16 in the amount of \$433,905.26. Mr. Fifield seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.

e) Minutes – Mr. Edwards moved to approve the minutes of the June 9, 2021, public session, as presented. Mr. Fifield seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.

Mr. Edwards moved to approve the minutes of the June 9, 2021, Non Public Sessions #'s 1-7, as presented. Mr. Fifield seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.

Back to the flags: One will also be placed on the flag pole at Town Hall. The link for ordering is not yet available to post on our website.

f) Selectmen's Work Session

Mr. Edwards referred to the potential for severe issues with the sewer system. The pumps have been running 24/7. Some problems can be patched; however, the system is old and many parts are no longer available. We are currently investigating several financial options in order to move forward. He stressed we will be in trouble if the pumps fail. Mr. Scala is applying for funds through the State (ARPA funds), totaling \$575,000; however, the project will cost \$750,000. In addition, half the ARPA funds would be paid in 2021, the other half in 2022. We need to address this situation, which must be included on the 2022 Town Warrant.

Mr. Edwards also referred to the number of complaints being received by various Town departments, many of which are anonymous. When he responds, Mr. Vinagro often finds no violation, which is a waste of taxpayer money. Mr. Edwards has no issue with registering a complaint; however, he does not believe that the Town should follow up on anonymous complaints (unless there is a severe situation). Most often it is just a neighbor that doesn't like what is going on. He hopes that the Board members will agree with him. If a complaint is legitimate, the individual should be willing to put his/her name on the complaint. The Town should not be put in the middle of civil situations. Mr. Fifield stated that if an anonymous complaint deals with public health or safety, we have an obligation to take a look. However, other anonymous complaints should not be recognized. Otherwise, we empower individuals to use the heavy stick of government to whack someone else. Several examples of illegitimate anonymous complaints were discussed. Mr. Duffy noted that the Code Department should use their judgement before investigating anonymous complaints. Mr. Scala asked Sgt. Fenton whether it is possible to submit a complaint, including your name, but ask for the name to be kept anonymous. Sgt. Fenton stated that it depends on the type of complaint received. Mr. Fifield stated we cannot encourage individuals to make complaints/reports anonymously. Mr. Duffy believes we had a legal opinion on this issue several years ago. He thinks we must accept such complaints, but can use our judgement as to whether to investigate same.

Mr. Fifield stated information is still being gathered regarding the Gage Hill/Route 16/Route 153 intersection. Many critical accidents occur in that area. Mr. Edwards referred to the traffic back-up on Route 16, especially on Sunday afternoons, and wonders why no officer is used keep the traffic moving. Mr. Fifield stated that an officer actually slows down the traffic. The issue is with the timing of the lights, which used to have a weekday and weekend setting. The traffic lights should be adjusted to make vehicles on side streets wait a longer time for the light to change, allowing the traffic on Route 16 to flow. He believes Chief Ventura is working on this.

Mr. Duffy announced to the public that the Board must return to Non Public Session, following which the meeting will adjourn.

Mr. Duffy moved to enter Non Public Session under RSA 91-A:3, II (a). Mr. Edwards seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Mr. Fifield – ‘aye’; Mr. Edwards – ‘aye’; Mr. Duffy – ‘aye’. The motion passed unanimously, and the Board immediately entered Non Public Session @ 8:38 p.m.

The Board returned to public session at 8:50 p.m. During the immediately preceding Non Public Session, the Board voted to promote John Smith to a fulltime position at the Transfer Station at the hourly rate of \$16.61. **Mr. Edwards moved to enter Non Public Session under RSA 91-A:3, II (b). Mr. Fifield seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Mr. Fifield – ‘aye’; Mr. Edwards – ‘aye’; Mr. Duffy – ‘aye’. The motion passed unanimously, and the Board immediately entered Non Public Session.**

The Board returned to public session at 9:00 p.m. During the immediately preceding Non Public Session, the Board voted to hire Zachery Summers as a beach attendant at \$10/hour, and to hire Emma McMillan as a camp counselor at \$10.50/hour. **Mr. Edwards moved to adjourn at 9 p.m. Mr. Fifield seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.**

Respectfully submitted,
Toni Bodah, Secretary

Approval of Minutes:



Mark P. Duffy, Chair



Richard C. Edwards



Kenneth G. Fifield