

**Board of Selectmen  
December 22, 2021**

**Present:** Mark P. Duffy, Chair; 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. Fifield moved to enter Non Public Session under RSA 91-A:3, II (a). Mr. Duffy seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Mr. Fifield – ‘aye’; Mr. Duffy – ‘aye’. The motion passed 2-0, and the Board immediately entered Non Public Session.**

The Board returned to public session at 6:40 p.m. During the immediately preceding Non Public Session, the Board authorized an increase for Jared Rowell to \$21.59/hour. As the need for another Non Public Session no longer existed, Mr. Duffy called for a recess. He called the session back to order at 7p.m. in the conference room and led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance. Those also present at this time included Jen Czynsz, Strafford Regional Planning Commission; and Howie Knight. Police Sgt. Mike Fenton joined the session in progress.

**1. Appointments**

**a) Jen Czynsz, SRPC** – Ms. Czynsz stated that she is checking in with communities in the region and provided background on the Commission, Metropolitan Planning Organization and the Economic Development District. Ms. Czynsz noted that Evan McDougal, present via Zoom, is Wakefield’s representative to SRPC. She noted that the Technical Advisory Committee section of the MPO could use representation from Wakefield.

Ms. Czynsz provided hard copies of the background information, the SRPC Annual Report, as well as the existing contract for assistance provided to the Planning Board. She noted that SRPC has been asked for a more involved contract for 2022 at a slightly higher cost. After a brief discussion, it was decided that 2021 funds could not be encumbered towards the 2022 contract. \$2500 has been budgeted for these services in the proposed 2022 budget. Discussion followed as to whether this appropriation should be increased. The amount of assistance required from SRPC will be dependent upon staffing, which situation is unclear at this time. **Mr. Fifield moved to approve the 2022 contract with Strafford Regional Planning Commission in the amount of \$2500, and to authorize the Town Administrator to execute same on behalf of the Town. Mr. Duffy seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.**

Ms. Czynsz spoke to several of their programs as follows: CHAT (Communities for Healthy Aging Transitions) including a draft community assessment for Wakefield, about which she would welcome feedback from the Board; POP (Promoting Outdoor Play), an on-line resource/activity tool; and Data Snapshot, information on regional demographics, which will be updated on an annual basis. She also shared an overview of how municipal dues are utilized. Mr. Duffy referred to the bus service that Wakefield enjoyed for a while, which was a huge benefit for this area. Ms. Czynsz stated that COAST only goes as far north as Farmington now.

Mr. Knight suggested that information on the Wakefield Food Pantry be included in the CHAT document. He also noted that the local health care center did not close—only the walk-in service was removed. Mr. Fifield stressed that this information is important when applying for grants. Mr. McDougal noted that he watches what happens south, assuming it will be coming our way.

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

**3. Unfinished Business**

**a) Town Warrant**

--Mr. Duffy noted that the Board is considering a bond article but will need to table the issue for this evening as more information is needed. Mr. Knight referred to the possible need for 2 articles (rather than 1 combining both projects), and shared his opinion that since the buildings would share both septic and a well, they could be considered as one project, thereby requiring only one article. He is concerned that only one project is likely to pass if there are two articles. Mr. Scala will be discussing issues with bond counsel on Thursday and will share the results of that conversation. Mr. Knight stated that the bond rate in July 2021 was 1.98% and estimated it will be 2.5% in July 2022. In addition, the Town valuation will increase. Mr. Duffy stated that the public will need to be convinced to support both projects. Mr. Fifield suggested some kind of public forum. The Board needs a little more time to gather information prior to the January 5, 2022, public hearing.

--Article #22 - \$8000 for an electronic key fob system for the Public Safety Building. **Mr. Fifield moved to recommend this article. Mr. Duffy seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.**

--Article #23 – Operating Budget @ \$6,472,412; Default Budget @ \$6,124,756. **Mr. Fifield moved to recommend this article. Mr. Duffy seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.**

**4. New Business**

**a) Encumbrance of 2021 Funds** – Mr. Fifield moved to encumber \$6230 from 01-42201-740 (F/A New Equipment) as the Town's portion of the grant for new radios. **Mr. Duffy seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.**

**5. Proposed Capital Reserve Fund Expenditures**

**a) Fire Truck CRF \$12,657.02** – This represents equipment and software purchase. **Mr. Fifield moved to approve this expenditure as presented. Mr. Duffy seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.**

**b) Highway Garage CRF \$907.40** – This represents concept development for the proposed highway garage for the month of October. **Mr. Fifield moved to approve this expenditure as presented. Mr. Duffy seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.**

**c) Highway Garage CRF \$2480** – This represents concept development for the proposed project for the month of November. **Mr. Fifield moved to approve this expenditure as presented. Mr. Duffy seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.**

**6. Correspondence**

**a) Carroll County Sheriff's Department** – Mr. Duffy explained that this correspondence reflects the result of an investigation requested by a commission member. He suggested it be included as part of these minutes. Mr. Fifield stressed that the Board did its due diligence by having an outside agency conduct the investigation. The results indicate no criminal offense. **Mr. Fifield moved to include this report from the Carroll County Sheriff's Department as part of the minutes of this meeting. Mr. Duffy seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.**

**7. Unscheduled Matters/Public Comment #2**

--Mr. Fifield noted that the new carpet at the Public Safety Building looks really nice. Now it is obvious that the walls need to be repainted!

**8. Administrative Matters**

**a) Town Administrator's Update**

--COVID 19 Update: Wakefield currently has 36 active cases. Data for surrounding towns was unavailable. An Emergency Management meeting was held recently with department heads and the School. We are trying to obtain some equipment for Town Hall.

--Lower Level Air Quality: After consulting with professionals, we anticipate installation of 3 air flow units (in the Assessing office, Code/Planning area, and Welfare office) as early as tomorrow. We are also having work done on the heating system for that area.

--Bond Hearing: Mr. Scala shared the public notice for the bond hearing that will run in *The Fosters* on December 27. The hearing is scheduled for January 5, 2022, at 6 p.m. here at Town Hall.

--Ambulance Write-Offs: Mr. Scala is seeking authorization to write-off \$5901.21 in outstanding ambulance bills for lack of sufficient billing information, as well as \$1195 in hardship applications. **Mr. Fifield moved to write off both the \$5901.21 and \$1195, as requested. Mr. Duffy seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.**

**b) Building Permit Releases** – None received.

**c) Payment Manifests** – Mr. Fifield moved to approve PR #28 in the amount of \$117,934.66. Mr. Duffy seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.

Mr. Fifield moved to approve PR #29 in the amount of \$120,149.74. Mr. Duffy seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.

Mr. Fifield moved to approve PR #30 in the amount of \$103,871.17. Mr. Duffy seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.

Mr. Fifield moved to approve AP #34 in the amount of \$456,801.08. Mr. Duffy seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.

**d) Minutes** – Mr. Fifield moved to approve the minutes of December 8, 2021, as presented. Mr. Duffy seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.

Mr. Fifield moved to approve the minutes of December 8, 2021, Non Public Session #'s 1,2 & 3, as presented. Mr. Duffy seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.

**e) Selectmen's Work Session**

--This being the last Selectmen's meeting scheduled for 2021, Mr. Duffy wished all a Merry Christmas and Happy Holiday Season--See you next year!

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

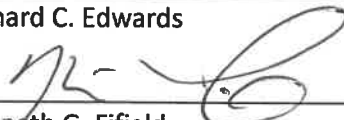
Respectfully submitted,  
Toni Bodah, Secretary

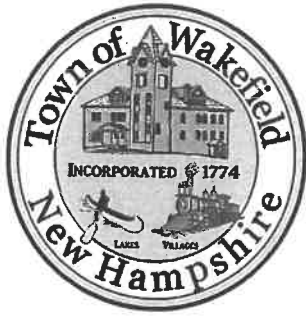
Approval of Minutes:

  
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Mark P. Duffy, Chair

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Richard C. Edwards

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Kenneth G. Fifield



## TOWN OF WAKEFIELD, NEW HAMPSHIRE

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S OFFICE

DINO A. SCALA

2 HIGH STREET

SANBORNVILLE NH 03872

TELEPHONE: (603) 522-6205 X307 FAX: (603) 522-6794

TOWNADMIN@WAKEFIELDNH.COM

### MEMORANDUM

October 13<sup>th</sup> 2021

To: Board of Selectmen

From: Town Administrator

RE: Summary of Internal Investigation of Wakefield's Conservation Committee

On August 25<sup>th</sup> 2021, at the Wakefield Board of Selectmen's meeting Conservation Committee member Relf Fogg requested an independent, internal investigation into an assertion from Conservation Chair Mrs. Natalie Kelly. In her letter of resignation, Mrs. Kelly characterized Mr. Fogg's actions during meetings and official Conservation committee duties, of being such that he hinders and effects Mrs. Kelly's ability as well the ability of the committee, to conduct their business.

At that same Board of Selectman's meeting, it was agreed by the board to contact Wakefield's Chief of Police Chief Ventura and request assistance in this matter. Chief Ventura determined it appropriate to contact the County Sherriff as a "neutral" party and ask for the investigation.

The following is an email summary of the findings by the Carroll County Sheriff's department:

Lt. Santuccio and I have reviewed and discussed the information provided. It is a bit confusing. The sense is that Mr. Fogg is replying to Mrs. Kelly's assertion of some behavior by Mr. Fogg that disrupts the meetings or the abilities of the boards.

If this is the case the remedy would be to post local law enforcement at the meetings to asses and take whatever further actions, they deem necessary, if at all. Law enforcement would only act on any acts they deem as criminal.

If this is Mr. Fogg asking then it certainly would not be a best practice to go back and watch the videos to see if any criminal offenses had occurred or not so that Mr. Fogg can be proven right that he has done nothing wrong.

We don't see a complaint of any criminal offenses made such as disorderly conduct, to investigate. The Chairperson resigned due to Mr. Fogg supposedly disrupting meetings. The Chairperson should have had control of the meetings and if law enforcement is needed due to the public being disruptive then the Chair should have called for a police presence.

In this instance the Chairperson, stepped down due to the disruptiveness and her issues seem to have been addressed by the TA Scala.

Unless there is something that we missed here there is no complaint or reason for a criminal investigation. As to a public integrity investigation that would need to go through the NHAG's Office then passed to the County Attorney. That being said I don't see any reason for that type of investigation either.

I did not watch all videos in the entirety but the last one of August 30 seemed to be the most peculiar. I think from the vote on the resignation, the return of the Chairperson taking a seat as a public member and then being allowed to basically participate as a board member from the public position indicates too many emotions and a lack of control over the meeting. That probably should have been stopped and the "Chair - member" either is part of the board and conduct business as it should have been or only allowed during public comment to speak. Very awkward and most likely not correct

Domenic Richardi  
Sheriff

This reflects the email in its entirety. Respectfully Submitted,

Dino A. Scala

Town Administrator  
Wakefield

Cc. Board of Selectmen  
Administration Assistant Toni Bodah  
Wakefield Conservation Committee