

TOWN OF LITCHFIELD BOARD OF SELECTMEN

January 08, 2018

Selectmen's Meeting

Members Present: Brent T. Lemire, Chairman
Steven D. Perry, Vice Chairman
John R. Brunelle
Kevin C. Bourque
Kurt D. Schaefer

Also Present: Troy Brown, Town Administrator

5:00 p.m. Paperwork review
6:00 p.m. Call to Order

Pledge of Allegiance

Review and Approval of Consent Items:

1. Approval of Board of Selectmen Meeting Minutes from December 27, 2017
2. Approval of Account Payable Manifest 1/9/2018 (\$130,039.26) & 1/9/2018 (\$67,460.74)
3. Approval of Payroll Manifest 12/30/2018 (\$57,944.25) & 1/11/2018 (\$50,771.54)
4. Earned Time Expendable Trust Fund Transfer - \$4,769.06
5. New Hire - Kevin Robinson, Part-Time Camera Operator

Approval of Consent Items

Selectman B. Lemire reads aloud the Consent Items

Selectman S. Perry **motioned** for the Board of Selectmen to approve the Items of Consent

Selectman J. Brunelle **seconds** the motion. **Vote carries 5-0-0.**

Request for Additional Items/Other Business - None

Business

Discuss Fire Station Bond Financing

Town Administrator T. Brown tells the Board now they know the dollar amount attached to the proposed Fire Station is 5.5 million dollars. He reached out to the NH Municipal Bond Bank and they supplied him with several schedules for he and the Board to look over and review. The information he has shared with the Board includes payment information on 15, 20, 25 and 30 year bonds, on "level principal" and "level debit" financing for homes valued from 300k to 450k. He tells the Board at upcoming meetings with residents he feels the number of years and interest rates for the proposed bond will be a topic for questions. He mentions he did not know that along with the term of the note and the interest rates there are other complications such as deciding on payments with level principal or level debt.

Board asks Troy what these terms mean.

Troy states level debt means pretty much a steady payment throughout the life of the loan, level principal means the principal payment stays the same but the interest adjusts.

Board reviews and discusses a few options.

Selectman K. Schaefer states he feels 15 years would be the easiest way to go, as far as paying off quickly and with the least interest paid.

Troy feels the building will meet the needs of the community for well over 30 years, and some residents will feel it should be financed for 25-30 years so all (the new/the old) pay their share, and payments are kept down for all involved also.

Selectman K. Schaefer states the difference of \$40 a month (25-15 yr note) is not much and it saves a lot in interest, almost half over the length of the loan.

Selectman S. Perry states \$40 more a month is a lot to someone on a fixed income.

Selectman B. Lemire asks if the School bonds are all paid off. If so there should be money to offset some of these figures for the taxpayer.

Board states they were paid off last year or the year prior.

Selectman S. Perry states all the money is being spent by the School, none is going back to offset taxes for the taxpayers.

Troy mentions if the Warrant Article passes this grants the Board of Selectmen the authority to go out and negotiate note and bond pricing.

Troy mentions this is a traditional way of financing a project through the Municipal Bond Bank. But he learned from Chief Fraitzl the town of Milton used a company they were lease purchasing their fire engines from to finance the building of their new Fire Station, because the company offered a better interest rate than the Bond Bank. So he mentions the way the Warrant is written it is not restrictive and the Board has to use just the Municipal Bond Bank.

Board agrees to see what the residents and Budget Committee say at the meetings being held this week.

Review 2018 Draft Warrant Article

Troy mentions there was a question at the last meeting, about if the Board of Selectmen are required to recommend the Operating Budget. He learned as far as the state laws are written there is no requirement for the Board of Selectmen to do so, only on any special Warrant Articles.

Selectman B. Lemire states he thought so because this is the Budget Committees number and not the Board. He asks what is the will of the Board to recommend the Operating Budget or not.

Selectman S. Perry **motioned** for the Board of Selectmen to recommend Article 5 - 2018 Operating Budget as written.

ARTICLE 5 - 2018 OPERATING BUDGET

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate as an operating budget, not including appropriation by special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately, the amounts set forth in the budget posted with the warrant or as amended by the vote of the first session, for the purposes set forth there in, totaling \$6,215,024. Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be \$6,112,492 which is the same as last year with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Town of Litchfield or by Law; or the governing body may hold one special meeting, in accordance with RSA 40:13, X and XVI, to take up the issue of a revised operating budget only. Estimated 2018 tax rate increase is \$0.07

Selectman J. Brunelle **seconds** the motion. **Vote carries 5-0-0.**

Selectman B. Lemire asks the Board if they wish to make a motion for Article 4.

Selectman S. Perry **motioned** for the Board of Selectmen to approve Article 4 - Fire Station Bond as written.

ARTICLE 4 - FIRE STATION BOND

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$5,500,000 for the purpose of constructing and equipping a new Fire Station building, and to authorize the issuance of not more than \$5,500,000 of bonds or notes in accordance with the provisions of the Municipal Finance Act (RSA 33), and to authorize the selectmen to issue and negotiate such bonds or notes and to determine the rate of interest thereon and the maturity and other terms thereof; and to authorize the selectmen to take any other action relative thereto (3/5 ballot vote required). Estimated 2018 tax rate impact: \$0.00.

Selectman J. Brunelle **seconds** the motion. **Vote carries 3-1-1.**

Selectman S. Perry mentions he was a stickler on the Fire Station Bond and the Road Improvement Project Warrant Article for \$200,000 not being put on as warrant articles together, he felt it was too much to be asking of the voters. But since finding out even if Article 4 the Fire Station Bond is approved by the voters, there will be no taxation impact to the voters no financial impact until 2019. He would like to see if the Board would be willing to reinstate Warrant Article 7 for the Road Improvement Projects for the voters to decide on for this year. Then take a year off next year to absorb the cost of the proposed fire station bond if it passes. Board agrees.

Troy mentions the Board can do so, but the Budget Committee has acted on everything presented and has a package put together which is within the tax cap. This would change everything for them.

Selectman S. Perry states he expects them to vote against this change. He is not trying to make this difficult for anyone, thinks its about balancing out the needs of the Town and payments. He was the one that picked the road work to be removed and feels its the right thing to bring up and see if the Board is in agreement. Board agrees.

Selectman S. Perry **motioned** for the Board of Selectmen to reinstate the draft Warrant Article 7 Road Improvement Projects as was written.

ARTICLE 7 - ROAD IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$200,000 for the purpose of road improvement projects. It is anticipated that these funds will be used toward the cost of repairs to Broadview Drive, Kemo Circle, Pakesso Drive, Sata Way, Kokohehas Circle and other roads as necessary. Estimated 2018 tax rate impact: Estimated 2018 tax rate impact \$0.22.

Selectman J. Brunelle **seconds** the motion. **Vote Carries 5-0-0.**

Surplus Property - Voting Booths

Town Administrator T. Brown states he is looking for the Boards permission. He and the Town Clerk have been trying to update the town's voting booths over the past 2 years, with a new style that are much easier to setup and breakdown as well as store. This year when Terri Briand went to the Tax Collectors Conference they were discussing how some other Communities are updating their booths also. One clerk from Middleton heard we were going to have all our old booths as a surplus, she asked if Litchfield would donate them, she could use them to replace some of their booths and use others as parts. They would be willing to come pick them up, and

this would allow us to empty out the trailer where they are being stored and help out another town at the same time.

Troy states where this is Town property only the Board of Selectmen can authorize the disposal of property.

Selectman J. Brunelle **motioned** for the Board of Selectmen to donate the old surplus voting booths to the Town of Middleton.

Selectman K. Bourque **seconds** the motion. But asks if we have all new booths that are replacing those we are giving away.

Troy states they have ordered another set, and have some earmarked in the budget. There are enough now for the election in March and they will have the others in time for the next Presidential elections. Jack asks if this includes the two handicap booths. Troy states no they will be keeping those booths. **Vote carries 5-0-0.**

Review of Accounts Receivables

T. Brown mentions they have not reviewed the accounts receivables in awhile and where its end of year he wanted to bring the Board up to date. He reminds the Board the Town adopted an Accounts Receivable Write-Off Policy on June 27, 2016, at the recommendation of the auditors. At the time a large amount was written off due to overdue ambulance bills that were determined to be uncollectible. So he tells the Board the Fire Special Detail has no receivables. The Police Department's Special Detail has \$4,305.50 of outstanding bills, but they are companies the Town does business with (Asplundh, Eversource, Audley Construction etc) and know these bills will be paid they are just going through the processing. The Ambulance has a total amount of \$36,924.19 which is still outstanding. He mentions this amount goes back to 2012, and are all actively being managed by the Collection Agency. So no action is required by the Board at this time, but he will keep them updated.

Deliberative Session Legal Counsel Representation

Troy mentions he had a conversation with the Town Attorney Laura Spector Morgan, she has reviewed the draft warrant articles and in her opinion feels we do not need legal counsel to attend the Deliberative Session. However, if the Board would like representation she will make arrangements. Troy mentions a few years ago Laura was unable to attend the Deliberative Session and another firm was used. Troy told her he felt the Board of Selectmen would want representation to attend especially due to the bond article. The Board of Selectmen are in agreement they would like legal counsel to attend the Deliberative Session to represent the Town, because there is always a question that legal counsel is needed to confirm or answer. Troy states he will make the arrangements.

Charles Bancroft Highway - Winter Maintenance

Selectman B. Lemire states this past storm was unusual, it took 4-½ hours for the first State plow to make a pass down Charles Bancroft, and there was at least 3-4 inches of snow. Road Agent Jack Pinciario states they will not come unless there has been 6 inches.

Selectman B. Lemire states he made some calls and found out that is not the case. He also asked Troy to make some phone calls, and to have this on the agenda this evening for

discussion.

Town Administrator T. Brown states after receiving a call from Lemire stating the roads were not in good shape there was a least 3 inches of snow. Troy called district 5 and spoke with dispatch who stated they would check and call back. Troy states they called back and said a truck was just dispatched which was per their policy regarding after a certain amount of accumulation had fallen and depending on the time of day. Jack states he was told they would not dispatch a plow truck during commuting times. Selectman B. Lemire states the northbound lane of 3A was not plowed until 11:40, he called Richard Radwonski and mentioned our Town Administrator was told the State would not plow until 3 inches of snow has fallen. Mr. Radwonski stated that was not true. Selectman B. Lemire informed him of the situation, and stated he would be bringing this up to the Board, because they received other complaints from people in Town and it was an unsafe situation. Selectman B. Lemire feels it would be beneficial if the Town writes a letter stating the situation and their concerns and request the State to give them information on their policies. Board is in agreement with this and would like the Town Administrator T. Brown to follow up with a letter for the Board to sign.

Public Input - None

Administrator Report

Town Administrator T. Brown states there has been continuing discussions and comments regarding the maintenance of sidewalks during the winter months in Town. It involves should the town or hired contractors be doing the work with the approximate 10 miles of sidewalks/bike paths. Troy mentions he spoke with the Road Agent (who is here this evening) about the expectations of the community to maintain these highly used areas within the town. People use these areas during and after a winter storm and are very vocal about their expectations of wanting the paths cleared almost immediately after a storm. He tells the Board over the past few years the contractors use a snowblower which enables them to clear and remove (in one pass) the snow from these paths very efficiently and much easier than a plow truck could do the job. The snowblowers can be more strategic in how they place the snow and get into hard area.

Troy went back and calculated how much was spent on contracting out this service:

2013	\$6,500
2014	7,800
2015	9,600
2016	8,500
2017	7,000

Troy states in speaking with Jack the Highway Department could do the work but it would change how the maintenance would be done. It would be a low priority for the Department, all the Departments manpower would be out clearing and maintaining roads and parking lots making this their first priority. So depending on the amount of snow they could not promise when the sidewalks/paths would be completed. Also the equipment the Town has which is a pickup truck with a "v" plow, a one ton plow truck and a backhoe. All would be used depending on the manpower available and where the equipment may be needed in Town. Troy states in talking with Jack he learned it is not easy as one would think to drive a plow truck down the bike

path. In order to plow effectively you need to maintain a certain speed and this is difficult in narrow areas or when maneuvering fencing or curbing, and a plow truck can get pushed around at slower speeds...it's just not as easy as it would appear. Troy states he is not talking about the 3" storms, but the larger ones.

He just wants the Board aware the timing and efficiency of the work may change if they wish to have the Highway Department take on the work.

Jack states the Department can certainly do the work, but the contractors and their equipment are just more efficient and can get the job done easier and cleaner than with a plow truck. Jack also mentions he does not have a piece of equipment that can plow the sidewalks at the Griffin Memorial School, so something would have to be done there (this was a problem in the past). Selectman S. Perry states some of these storms the contractors changed 7 hours to complete the work. He states there is no way a plow truck could not of gotten that work done faster. Selectman K. Schaefer states the Town has paid out \$40,000 over the past few years, and could own a skid steer by now. Board continues to discuss options in renting or purchasing equipment in order for the Town to get this work done. They discuss using contractors only for large snow removals. Jack states the contractors are not going to sit around and wait to see if the Town can use them. They need to make money and will take their equipment and use it elsewhere if they are not contracted, leaving the Town having to wait ...if they are available or not to do the work.

The Board agrees to have Jack discuss this matter with the contractors to see if they are willing/able to be available only for larger storms. Also to get prices for equipment options that can do the winter maintenance and meet some of the roadside mowing needs the Town has. He will research and report back at a future meeting.

Board thanks Jack and the Department for his hard work with this last very difficult storm.

Troy tells the Board the New Hampshire Municipal Association (NHMA) has sent out a Legislative alert. There is a House Bill being presented to restrict NH State retired personnel from 32 hours to 25 hours.

Selectman B. Lemire states this will have a negative effect on small towns such as Litchfield, who have never had full time personnel and rely on retired professionals.

Selectmen J. Brunelle mentions the Board should reach out to our State Representatives some who are co-sponsoring this Bill and voice Litchfields concerns. The Board agrees to have Troy send a letter to all our Local and State Representatives stating that Litchfield is against this proposal. Troy states the meeting is Wednesday, January 10, 2018 @10:00am.

Troy tells the Board he received an email from Jay Whitelaw who is handling the Pennichuck Water Tax Abatement mediation. He notified Troy the meeting will be held on February 16, 2018 @ 11am in Concord and Mr. Whitelaw wanted to make sure some Selectmen could attend. He will send out this email and the Board can let him know who can attend.

Troy mentions he has a Stormwater Meeting with NRPC tomorrow at 1pm - 3pm

Selectman Reports

No reports at this time

Selectman Lemire mentions there are meetings being held as follows:

Budget Committee - (Fire Station Bond Discussion) Tuesday, January 9, 2018

@7:00pm at Campbell High School

Budget Committee - (Budget Hearing) Thursday, January 11, 2018 @7:00p

at Campbell High School

Fire Station Bond Hearing - Thursday, January 11, 2018 @7:00pm

at Campbell High School

Items moved from consent - None

Other Business - None

Selectman J. Brunelle **motioned** for the Board of Selectmen to adjourn.

Selectman K. Bourque **seconds** the motion. **Vote carries 5-0-0.**

The next Board of Selectmen's meeting will be on January 22, 2018 at 6:00pm at Town Hall

Brent T. Lemire, Chairman

Steven D. Perry, Vice Chairman

John R. Brunelle

Kevin C. Bourque

Kurt D. Schaefer