

Town of Litchfield, New Hampshire

Board of Selectmen

TEL – (603) 424-4046

EMAIL – townhall@litchfieldnh.gov

FAX – (603) 424-3014

Meeting Date: 1/14/19

Call to Order: 6:00 PM

Meeting Location: Town Hall

Meeting Called By: Board of Selectmen
Type of Meeting: Selectmen's Meeting
Facilitator: Brent Lemire

Note Taker: Matthew Sullivan
Minutes Approved: ___/___/_____

Five Selectmen were in attendance (Alphabetic Order):

1. Kevin Bourque
2. John Brunelle, Vice- Chairman
3. Brent Lemire, Chairman
4. Kurt Schaefer
5. Steven Webber

* Troy Brown, Town Administrator in attendance

Agenda Topic: Call to Order

Presenter: Selectman B. Lemire

- 5:00 PM - Paperwork Review
 - 6:00 PM - Call to Order
 - 6:01 PM - Pledge of Allegiance
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Agenda Topic: Review and Approval of Consent Items

Presenter: Selectman B. Lemire

- Approval of Board of Selectmen Meeting Minutes from December 17, 2018
 - Approval of Tax Collector's Reconciliation from January
 - Approval of Town Clerk's Reconciliation from November 2018
 - Approval of Tax Credits and Exemptions – (12)
 - Approval of Page Road Purchase Order - \$75,000
 - Approval of ACH School Payment Authorization
 - Approval of Accounts Payable Manifest from January 10 of \$359,507.39 and January 15 of \$83,505.96.
 - Approval of Payroll Manifest from January 10 of \$53,698.96 and January 17 of \$53,492.79.
 - **Discussion:** None
 - **Motion** (Selectman Bourque / Selectman Brunelle) To approve the Items of Consent.
 - **Vote:** (5-0-0) The motion carried.
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Agenda Topic: Items Moved from Consent

Presenter: Selectman B. Lemire

- None
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Agenda Topic: Business

Presenter: Troy Brown, Town Admin

Municipal Resources Incorporated (MRI):

- Medard Kopczynski is representing Municipal Resources Incorporated.
- Mr. Kopczynski appeared to answer any question the Board of Selectmen or Town Administrator had of the report.
- Mr. Kopczynski thanked the Board of Selectmen, the Town Administrator, and the Town Administrator's staff.
- Kevin Lynch was also thanked for his help with answering MRI's questions.

- The approach used for the assessment included interviews with the Town Administrator, Deputy Fire Chief, Fire Chief, part-time contract Building Inspector, Administrative Assistant to the Planning Board, Administrative Assistant in the former Building Inspector, and the Chair of the Zoning Board of Adjustments.
- Samples of the policies and permit applications, inspection requests, calendar plans, fee schedules, certificates of occupancy, and the permitted activity spreadsheet were supplied the town staff for review.
- MRI did a deep analysis of the last four years of permits. Three were complete, and one was partial because at the time it was only a partial year.
- Contact was made with neighboring communities with samples of inspection permits and policies provided by the city of Nashua, the town of Bedford, and the town of Milford. This was done to discuss the permit operations in the county of Hillsboro.
- Best practice is broken down into three parts:
 - National
 - Regional
 - State (what one does in their neighborhood)
- There are standards that one really should pay attention to:
 - Operations themselves were compared to the ISO building code effectiveness grading system.
 - New Hampshire Building Officials handbooks
 - Review of the software Litchfield currently does not have.
- Mr. Kopczynski was willing to take questions at the time from the Board of Selectmen.
 - Most of the Board of Selectmen agreed they needed time to digest the material provided by MRI.
 - Selectman Brunelle asked Mr. Kopczynski to grade the town of Litchfield. He did not provide a grade but stated 'what's important in the end is what is best for the community, what the community values.'
- Selectman Lemire suggested taking two weeks to read the report. In two weeks the Board of Selectmen will either request MRI come back and answer some questions or the Selectmen could mail MRI their questions.

Town Flag Update:

- Matt Lepore presented an example flag of how he thought the town flag might look.
- Matt presented a white, blue, and green flag with the town seal in the top right-hand corner.
- Matt mentioned that residents might want another logo in the top right-hand corner on the flag. The residents will have the option to offer their opinions at the town hearings to select a flag.
- Matt expressed his support to have at least two public hearings.
- He thanked the Board of Selectmen and Town Administrator for their efforts and support with the project. He also thanked the surrounding towns and the state of New Hampshire for their information and helped with how they created their flags.
- Selectman Brunelle asked Matt if all the other towns went through the same process of selecting a town flag as Litchfield. Matt answered that the other towns all had similar but different ways of selecting their flags.
 - Most towns selected their flags by town ordinance; an example was the town of Rye.
 - Milford had a town meeting and adopted the town flag.
 - Manchester had a strange hybrid selection. Manchester started with 288 designs; a sub-committee selected four designs out of the 288 designs. The resident's then voted on one of the four options for the town flag.
- Selectman Brunelle brought up the fact the town hall only has one flag pole, and the town flag is not allowed to be on the same pole as the United States flag. The Selectmen discussed this fact, and a suggestion was made to hang the flag outside the meeting chamber. All the other flagpoles in town are being used.
- The Board of Selectmen thanked Matt Lepore for his hard work and dedication.

Hiring a Full-Time Position at the Highway Garage:

- Town Administrator Troy Brown offered Kevin Brown the position.
- Kevin Brown approached the town about the position. He worked for the town last year as one of the contract plow drivers.

- The Town of Litchfield and Kevin agreed, and he will be an equipment operator/mechanic for the Highway Dept. His full-time employment status started on January 2, 2019.
- The Road Agent, Jack Pinciario, highly recommended Kevin Brown for the position. The employment of Kevin Brown gives the Road Agent another layer of support.
- **Motion:** (Selectman Brunelle / Selectman Schaefer) To ratify the full-time employment of Kevin Brown as an equipment operator/mechanic for the Highway Department, effective January 2, 2019.
- **Vote:** (5-0-0) The motion carried.

Agenda topic: Public Input – Started at 6:18 pm

Presenter: Selectman Lemire

Peter Psaleda, 31 Pearson St. – Peter thanked the Board of Selectmen and Town Administrator for their hard work. Peter supported the work that Matt Lemore is doing with the town flag. He thought it was nice to see a young man with so much passion and dedication to the town. Peter wanted to know if it is a public record to find out who created a petition article. The answer was ‘Yes, it is public record.’. Peter also wanted to voice his concern over Article XIV, he has worked closely with Troy Brown and knew Troy Brown works hard and has Litchfield’s best interest at heart. Troy is responsible for representing the Board of Director’s, listening to the town resident’s, and works for the town from morning until night. The Town Administrator is responsible for all negotiations, hiring, responsible for making sure the town complies with the state laws. Troy also submits grants for the town of Litchfield, without someone to submit the grants the town would lose out on a lot of money. It makes no sense to eliminate the Town Administrator position, and he would hope the Selectmen do not support the Article.

Steve Gammon, 12 Nesenkeag Dr. – Steve agrees with Peter Psaleda, the town is growing and cannot afford to eliminate the Town Administrator position. He believes Troy Brown is doing an excellent job and eliminating the position would decrease the the town’s efficiency. Steve also commented on the salary of the Town Administrator. Troy Brown’s salary is currently in-line with towns that are the same size and population. Steve pointed out that if the Town Administrator job were eliminated, the responsibilities would fall on the Board of Selectmen. The Selectmen already have full-time jobs, volunteer, and work as the town’s Selectmen. If the town of Litchfield eliminates the Town Administrator position, it will have a negative impact on the town and its residents.

Joe Cabral – Joe Cabral admitted to creating the five Articles. Joe said he created the articles because there has been chaos within Town Hall. Joe stated part of the problem was a created little bit by the Town Administrator and a little bit by the Board of Selectmen. Joe went on to speak about the command vehicle; he is happy the Board of Selectmen has listened to him about the vehicle leaving town. Joe was also interested in knowing when the lettering will be put back on the command vehicle. Joe thought the purpose part of the article was supposed to be with the warrant article. The Selectmen informed Joe that was not the case. If Joe wants to know the purpose of an article, he needs to come into Town Hall and ask. Joe felt the Fire Chief was increasing the overtime, with previous Fire Chiefs the overtime was low. He is concerned too much money is being spent with the fire department, especially with the training. Joe suggested to save money; the town could decide not to buy a plow for the new command vehicle.

Dianne Plansky, 144 Talent Road – Dianne agrees with Steve and Peter. Article XIV does not benefit the town of Litchfield. She hopes the Selectmen will choose not to support the article. She believes Litchfield is a professional town and needs an Administrator to run the town. She believes if the article passes then the Board of Selectmen will be forced into performing the Town Administrators job.

Command Vehicle:

- The history of the fire department command vehicle:
 - The command vehicle is a 2007 Chevrolet Tahoe. The vehicle is a 4x4 with 99,600 miles on it. The vehicle was purchased new on July 12, 2007, for \$32,672. It is equipped with low profile emergency lights in the front and the back, it has LED strobe lighting, a siren, and it is registered with government plates. It is a safe vehicle for emergency and non-emergency use.
 - The vehicle was assigned to Thomas Schofield, the former fire chief. He used it to respond to calls and commute to and from work.
 - Chief Fraitzl was hired on March 14, 2012, and his employment contract included the use of a town vehicle. Troy Brown provided an exhibit of Chief Fraitzl's contract to the Board of Selectmen. Chief Fraitzl chose to use his vehicle to drive to and from work, and attend other department functions.
 - Since the command vehicle was no longer being used by the fire chief, the on-call officer took the vehicle home and was used for other administrative purposes. Within the past three to four months, Chief Fraitzl started using a town vehicle by his employment agreement. Depending on the work schedule and needs, different vehicles were used by Chief Fraitzl. His primary vehicle of use was the command vehicle.
 - In November 2018, Warren's Auto Body removed the body rust and painted the rear quarter panels, the front hood, and other body parts. The rear tailgate door was removed and replaced because it was not cost effective to repair the door. Warren's Auto Body removed some of the vinyl lettering and striping because the remaining vinyl lettering and striping was faded and peeling, it was also removed. To replace all the vinyl lettering and striping was estimated to cost \$2,500. The vehicle was valued between \$5,000 to \$8,000, for this reason, the fire department was not planning to replace the vinyl lettering and striping.
 - Chief Fraitzl is using the vehicle for administrative and emergency purposes. It is common practice not to mark public safety vehicles assigned to the police and fire departments. The Litchfield police chief, and police captain vehicles are unmarked. They are used for emergency, limited personal use, and are taken home each night.
 - As of Troy Brown's memo, Chief Fraitzl has stopped using the command vehicle and is thinking about putting the vinyl lettering and stripes back on the vehicle.

2019 Mileage Rate:

- It is the practice of the Board of Selectmen, on an annual basis, to ratify the mileage rate that is set by the Internal Revenue Service. This year, 2019, the increase is three and a half cents at 58 cents a mile.
- **Motion:** (Selectman Brunelle / Selectman Webber) To ratify the 2019 mileage rate at 58 cents per mile.
- **Vote:** (5-0-0) The motion carried.

2019 Warrant:

- Troy Brown mentioned to the Board of Selectmen that the next time the Selectmen meet would be too late to take action on the Warrant items. If the Selectmen want to take action, they need to take action this evening, January 14, 2019. The Selectmen agreed to take action this evening.

- **Article Two (Operating Budget):**

To see if the town will vote to raise an appropriate as an operating budget, not including the appropriation by special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately. The amount outlined in the budget posted with the warrant or as amended by the vote of the first session for the purpose set forth therein totaling \$6,757,953. Should this article be defeated, the default budget should be \$6,713,245, which is the same as the 2018 operating budget with certain adjustments required by previous actions of the town of Litchfield, by law, or the governing body may hold one special meeting. By RSA: 40:13, 10, and 16 sections to take up the issues of a revised operating budget only estimated 2019 taxes impact of eight cents.

- **Motion:** (Selectman Brunelle / Selectman Webber) To recommend the Article Two budget.
- **Vote:** (5-0-0) The motion carried.

- **Article Four (Health and Human Services):**

- **Motion:** (Selectman Brunelle / Selectman Schaefer) To reopen Article Four.
- **Motion:** (Selectman Brunelle / Selectman Schaefer) To recommend Article Four for review.
- **Vote:** (5-0-0) The motion carried.

- **Article Ten (Petition Article):**

This Article seeks to implement one of the recommendations of the Municipal Resources MRI report. The study recommended more man-hours for the Litchfield Highway Department. Currently, the department does not have the proper staffing to provide appropriate safety standards on the job.

- **Discussion:** Selectmen Brunelle mentioned that even if the Selectmen recommend Article Ten, there is no funding for the Article. Troy Brown mentioned (1) it does not raise or appropriate any funding, (2) it is not binding for anything, because it just says implement the MRI report. He also mentioned that it was likely the petitioner's intent was to hire two full-time highway employees. Unfortunately, the petitioner did not include the two positions in the Article. Selectman Brunelle mentioned if this Article passes it would allow the Selectmen to go to the Budget Committee to open up two new positions. Selectman Lemire mentioned that even if it passed, the Selectmen would still have to create a new Article for next year's town meeting.
- **Motion:** (Selectman Brunelle / Selectman Bourque) To recommend the Article as described.
- **Vote:** (5-0-0) The motion carried.

- **Article Eleven (Petition Article):**

This Article seeks to see if the town will reverse the Code Enforcement Officer, Health Inspector, and the Zoning Administrator back to a single appointed position, reporting to the Board of Selectmen and being independent of the fire department. If passed, the Article will take effect within 30 days.

- **Discussion:** Troy Brown mentioned this would be an advisory vote.
- **Motion:** (Selectman Brunelle / Selectman Bourque) To recommend the Article as described.
- **Vote:** (5-0-0) The motion carried.

- **Article Twelve (Petition Article):**

To see if the town will discontinue the appointed office of Highway Agent and are authorized to elect the Highway Agent. The current Highway Agent will continue to hold the office until the 2020 Annual Town Meeting election. At this time, the town will elect a new Highway Agent.

- **Discussion:** Troy Brown mentioned that if this Article passes, it is binding. The feeling of the Board of Selectmen is if this Article passes, the town will be moving backward.
- **Motion:** (Selectman Brunelle / Selectman Bourque) To not recommend the Article as described.
- **Vote:** (5-0-0) The motion carried.

- **Article Thirteen (Petition Article):**

To see if the town will reverse the appointed office of part-time Fire Chief to an elected position. The current Fire Chief will continue to hold office until the 2020 Annual Town Meeting election. At this time, the town will elect a part-time Fire Chief.

- **Discussion:** The feeling of the Board of Selectmen is if this Article passes, the town will be moving backward.
- **Motion:** (Selectman Brunelle / Selectman Schaefer) To not recommend the Article as described.
- **Vote:** (5-0-0) The motion carried.

- **Article Fourteen (Petition Article):**

To see if the town will slash/dissolve the position of Town Administrator. If this Article passes, the position will be dissolved 30 days from the 2019 Annual Town Meeting election.

- **Discussion:** The Board of Selectmen believed this Article was written as a personal attack. This Article hurts the town more than it helps. The Selectmen referred back to the Public Input comments.
- **Motion:** (Selectman Brunelle / Selectman Webber) To not recommend the Article as described.
- **Vote:** (5-0-0) The motion carried.

- **2019 Default Budget:**

Troy Brown mentioned the default budget had been submitted, the forms have been submitted, and all the Warrant Articles have been submitted to the DRA. The default budget for 2019 is \$6,713,245. The default budget is \$44,708 less than the proposed operating budget. Troy Brown is confident in the proposed operating budget because of how small the monetary gap is between the proposed and default operating budget

- **Motion:** (Selectman Brunelle / Selectman Webber) To not recommend the Article as described.
- **Vote:** (5-0-0) The motion carried.

- **Recreation Donation Acceptance:**

Troy Brown mentioned he received a letter and a check in the amount of fifty dollars. The donation was made by Margaret and Bob Hansen. They donated to the Recreation Commission in the memory of Elizabeth Betty Darling. Elizabeth Darling was very active with the Litchfield Seniors Group. The intention of the donation was for the Recreation Commission to help support the Litchfield Seniors Group. The Senior Group has an annual Christmas Lunch, and the wish is for the Recreation Commission to continue the annual Christmas Lunch.

- **Motion:** (Selectman Webber / Selectman Schaefer) To accept the donation from Margaret and Bob Hansen in the amount of \$50 to the Litchfield Recreation Commission for continuous support of the Litchfield Seniors Group.
- **Vote:** (5-0-0) The motion carried.

Town Administrator, Troy Brown:

Conference Tables:

- The funds that were encumbered for the conference tables were used before the year's end. The conference tables were ordered and will be delivered this Friday, January 18, 2019. The tables are similar to the tables currently, except they can fold up. This will allow the conference room to be used for something else. The tables will have grommets and have the ability for internal wiring. The tables will also have internal outlets. Two people should be able to sit at each table.
- The current tables in the conference room will be used by the fire department. The tables are too large for the fire department conference room; the tables will be cut, remove about a foot, and re-attached to make the tables smaller.
- Dick and Russ need to be contacted about the new conference tables. They will need to pull apart and re-install the cable wiring.

Fire Department Overhead Doors:

- The fire department needed to make some electrical modification to allow the overhead doors to be installed.
- The sheetrock on the inside of the bay area was not able to be installed.
- The overhead doors should be installed next week.
- Chief Fraitzl noticed the motion detectors were not installed. This was a mistake by the architect. The problem has been solved, and now the motion detectors work.

Welcome to Litchfield Sign:

- 588 met with the DOT official about the location for the sign. The person Troy Brown met with does not have the authority to issue a sign permit. Concord will issue the permit.
- The official who Troy met with was pleased with the location of the sign. The sign will be ten feet back from the edge of the pavement.
- Troy Brown will prepare the sign permit so that he will receive permission for the sign.
- The sign has been completed by the sign company, Troy is just waiting for the DOT to inform the town about the type of posts to use.
- Dig Safe was contacted last week, and Dig Safe will give the marking for the spot to jackhammer the holes out; then the town will wait for the sign permit.

Transfer and Waste Staffing:

- Dave Mellon informed Troy that one of his staff members could be out for personal reasons and for some time. Maybe nothing comes out of it.
- The staff at the Transfer and Waste staff is committed to helping Dave out and filling the shift.
- Dave is in contact with a couple of Litchfield residents to act as a 'substitute' while the employee is not at work.

Snow-Pusher at the Transfer Station:

- The snow-pusher came in today
- The town was able to purchase the snow-pusher before the year-end.

Lawn Mower:

- The mower came in around late November.
- The mower is currently stored away in a garage until such time they can do some training.
- HP Fairfield said they would come down and help with a little training.
- The mower will be available early this spring.
- The Road Agent agrees the best time to do the spring cleanup is before the leaves come out.

Litchfield Community TV:

- There have been emails going around about concerns that the cable studio is not handicap accessible.
- The studio does not have an elevator that can bring people up to the second floor.
- Troy Brown will work with Dick Pentheny, general manager of the Public Access Television for Litchfield, to find a solution.
- The staff of the cable studio believes they have plans where they can make accommodations for disabled members.
- The studio also does not have a bathroom for the members of the station. Selectman Brunelle mentioned the bathroom was one of the reasons the shed was abandoned. Selectman Brunelle also mentioned how the old town hall is being used by the Historical Committee. If the old town hall could be leveraged correctly, then the studio could be moved into that space. Troy Brown mentioned that he would have a conversation with Dick Pentheny about placing a Port-A-Potty outside the studio.

Dave Mellon and Pharmaceuticals:

- Dave Mellon attended a couple of sessions from the town's insurance company, Primax Insurance, worker's comp property liability insurance. Dave took a course in pharmaceuticals and sharps. Sharps are a big issue today with disposal. Dave now can dispose of needles and sharps.

Insurance Claim:

- Back in November 2018, we had a couple of snow storms and a couple of accidents. The insurance company notified Troy Brown that the damage done to the town vehicles would be covered under the town's insurance. Because of the way the contracts were written up, the town insurance company is not seeking damages from the driver's insurance company. The insurance company reminded Troy Brown that if he hires contract plow driver's, then the drivers need to use their equipment, plows, sanders or anything. The other option is to hire the plow drivers as seasonal employees and the employees would be covered under the town's insurance policy.

F-450 One Ton – Transmission:

- The Road Agent informed Troy Brown that the F-450 lost its transmission. The Road Agent stated he needed the F-450, the vehicle is part of the town's front line vehicle. Troy Brown told the Road Agent to have the transmission replaced, and the process of the replacement has begun. The verbal estimate to replace the transmission is \$5,000. The vehicle is a 2012 F-450.

Selectman K. Schaefer:

- Nothing to report. Selectman Schaefer was out of town on January 8, 2019.

Selectman K. Bourque:

- Nothing to report.

Selectman B. Lemire:

- Selectman Lemire attended the Heritage Committee meeting last Tuesday. The Heritage Committee adopted their new by-laws, and the Heritage Committee will meet once a month.

Selectman J. Brunelle:

- The Budget Committee met last week, the final votes on all the warrant articles were done. A good job was done by all the members of the Budget Committee. Selectman Brunelle wanted to remind everyone that the town is transitioning over to a new website and platform.
- Selectman Brunelle asked Troy Brown what he thought about creating a Town Administrator report that is about a roll-up of all the actions of the board for the week. Troy Brown liked the idea. Selectman Lemire suggested having the report bi-weekly.

Selectman S. Webber:

- Nothing to report.

Agenda Topic: Other Business

Presenter: Selectman Lemire

- None

Agenda Topic: Adjourn the Public Portion of Meeting

Presenter: Selectman Lemire

- **Motion:** (Selectman Brunelle / Selectman Schaefer) To adjourn the meeting.
- **Vote:** (5-0-0) The motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 7:20 pm.
- The next Board of Selectmen meeting will occur on January 28, 2019.
- **Reminder:** The 2019 elected positions, the filing period occurs from Wednesday, January 23 until Friday, February 1st at 5 pm.
- The next Deliberative Session will occur at Campbell High School on Saturday, February 2, 2019 at 10AM.

Action Items

Dick and Russ need to be contacted about rewiring conference room

Person / Group Responsible

Troy Brown

Deadline

ASAP