

# Town of Litchfield, New Hampshire

## Board of Selectmen

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Meeting Date: 04/13/20

Call to Order: 6:32 pm

Meeting Location: Town Hall

**Meeting Called By:** Board of Selectmen  
**Type of Meeting:** Selectmen's Meeting  
**Facilitator:** Steven J. Webber  
**Note Taker:** Matthew Sullivan

**Selectmen in attendance:**  
1. Steven J. Webber, Chairman  
2. F. Robert Leary, Sr., Vice Chairman  
3. Richard W. Lascelles  
4. Kevin A. Lynch  
5. John E. Pinciario

**In Attendance:** Troy Brown, Town Administrator  
**Memo:** John Brunelle hosted the virtual meeting by using Webex

**No Selectmen were absent:**

**Agenda Topic:** Call to Order

**Presenter:** Chairman S. Webber

1. 5:30 pm – Paperwork Review
2. 6:32 pm – Call to Order, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance

**Agenda Topic:** Review and Approval of Consent Items

**Presenter:** Chairman S. Webber

1. Meeting Minutes
2. A/P Manifest: 4/7/2020 - \$1,943,809.77 & 4/14/2020 - \$88,983.66
3. P/R Manifest: 4/9/2020 - \$53,655.08 & 4/16/2020 - \$55,454.14
4. (2) Gravel Tax Levy
5. (1) Intent to Excavate
6. (7) Veteran Exemptions

**Discussion:** None

**Motion:** ( Selectman R. Leary / Selectman J, Pinciario ) Motion to accept the Review and Approval of Consent Items.

**Roll Call Vote:**

1. Selectman R. Leary - yes
2. Selectman J. Lascelles - yes
3. Selectman K. Lynch - yes
4. Selectman J. Pinciario - yes
5. Selectman S. Webber - yes

**Vote:** ( 5-0-0 ) The motion carried.

**Agenda Topic:** Items Moved from Consent

**Presenter:** Chairman S. Webber

1. None

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**Agenda Topic:** Items Added to Consent

**Presenter:** Chairman S. Webber

1. None

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**Agenda Topic:** Business

**Presenter:** Chairman S. Webber

1. **Trustee of Trust Funds:**

- a. **Resignation of Steven P. Calawa D.D.S. and Appointment of John Poulos:**

- a. Steven Calawa sent correspondence to the Board of Selectmen asking that the Selectmen accept his resignation. Mr. Calawa recommended the Selectmen appoint John Poulos as Trustee of the Trust Funds. If approved Mr. Poulos would complete the term of Mr. Calawa.
- b. Mr. Poulos has been very active with the town's Trust Funds, he also manages the funds. Mr. Calawa would like Mr. Poulos to stay on the Board of Trustees. Mr. Poulos would be able to help train the new members of the Board of Trustees.
- c. Selectman R. Leary commented that Mr. Poulos was not re-elected to the Board of Trustees during the March 10, 2020 election. Mr. Calawa believes that it is very important to have Mr. Poulos on the Board. Mr. Calawa believes he should resign and allow Mr. Calawa to take Mr. Calawa's spot on the Board of Trustees.

**Discussion:** None

**Motion** ( Selectmen R Leary / Selectman R. Lascelles ) Motion to accept the resignation of Dr. Calawa and appoint John Poulos in his place as Trustee of the Trust Funds.

**Roll Call Vote:**

1. Selectman R. Leary - yes
2. Selectman J. Lascelles - yes
3. Selectman K. Lynch - yes
4. Selectman J. Pinciario - yes
5. Selectman S. Webber - yes

**Vote:** ( 5-0-0 ) The motion carried.

2. **Salt Shed and Storage Shed Emergency Repairs:**

- a. TA T. Brown explained that the Highway Department has two ClearSpan buildings. The buildings are steel structures and covered with the fabric material. The buildings are primarily used to store equipment. During the winter, the smaller shed is used to house sand and salt mixtures.
- b. This winter, the material on the back end of the small building blew off. Damage also occurred to the side cover material.
- c. The large structure was sagging in between the spans of the building.
- d. Dave Mellen, Solid Waste Department, received a recommendation to contact Iron Horse company. Iron Horse Structures provided a quote of \$6,000 to repair both structures. The company received authorization to come down and repair both structures.
- e. TA. T. Brown requested that the Selectmen approve the use of these funds for emergency repairs from the Buildings Systems Expendable Trust Fund. This fund was created for such a situation. The Operating Budget does not carry enough money to pay for these types of repairs. Iron Horse Structures replaced the torn material, tightened up the ratchets, added some supports, and some additional work will still be done.

- f. Iron Horse Structures recommended that the town reduce the span of the large building from 20 feet to 10 feet. A proposal to reduce the span length will be introduced at a later date.
- g. Selectman R. Leary mentioned that he did not have a problem with the request, he just would have liked to have looked at the damage. TA. T. Brown commented that Kevin Brown and Dave Mellen were involved with the process and were pleased with the outcome.
- h. Selectman J. Pinciario added the structure that was being repaired was the structure that replaced the building that collapsed. The current structures were recommended by the company that manufactures them. The smaller building is just ten years old and the larger structure is about five or six years old.

**Discussion:** None

**Motion:** ( Selectman R. Leary / Selectman K. Lynch ) Motion to authorize the payment to the Iron Horse Structures in the amount as agreed upon with T.A. Troy Brown for the repairs to the shed as specified. The funds will come from the Building Systems Expendable Trust Fund.

**Roll Call Vote:**

- 1. Selectman J. Lascelles - yes
- 2. Selectman R. Leary - yes
- 3. Selectman K. Lynch - yes
- 4. Selectman J. Pinciario - yes
- 5. Selectman S. Webber - yes

**Vote:** ( 5-0-0 ) The motion carried.

3. **COVID-19 Budget and Revenue Impacts:**

- a. TA T. Brown discussed how he reached out to the department heads and inquired as to what was going on in their departments. He found that he was not finding large numbers when it came to expenses. A lot of the expenses are being spent on Personal Protection Equipment (PPE), this includes hand sanitizer. Some of the additional expense revolves around over-time.
- b. Town Hall is closed and this has caused an increase in online expenses. These expenses include postage and envelope costs. In the past, transactions would be performed over the counter. As of April 13, the town has captured approximately \$10,000 in expense figures. The town realizes that once the pandemic is over, the town will be reimbursed for these figures. Any expenses that are related to the State of Emergency should be reimbursed up to 75%.
- c. TA T. Brown expects in a matter of a couple of weeks that the Department of Homeland Security will start hosting some online training. The online training will show how municipalities should go about processing reimbursement for their expenses.
- d. Unless something drastically changes, T.A. T. Brown is not overly concerned about the increase in expenses.
- e. TA T. Brown believes it is too early to understand the impact of the town revenue figures. A reason was given why he believes this way:
  - i. One of the largest revenue sources Litchfield has is car registration fees. Comparing 2019 versus where the town is at in 2020 and the car registration fees are down \$10,000. Troy expects that number to increase. Governor C. Sununu has extended the 20-day plate registration, this extended time would allow residents not to pay the registration fee for a month and a half. Once the pandemic is over, how will the economy recover? Will the confidence in the American economy be lower? Many people will be recovering from unemployment. The town could see a loss of up to \$75,000 in revenue, but the town will not see the loss until late July or August.
- f. Selectman R. Leary mentioned that some town residents have questioned him about paying registration fees by check. Selectman R. Leary informed the residents that they should contact the Town Clerk's Office if they are concerned about paying the fees online. TA T. Brown agreed with the answer that Selectman R. Leary

provided to the residents. He also suggested that residents call the Town Clerk's Office and state they will be placing a registration fee check in the town's dropbox.

- g. Selectman K. Lynch mentioned that he spoke with David Mellen. Their conversation was how COVID-19 has caused an increased usage of the Transfer Station. TA T. Brown agreed that the Transfer Station was seeing an increase in usage and it is because people are home. Troy has spoken with David and they believe the increased usage of the Transfer Station will level out over the year. The Transfer Station is currently seeing a peak. During the summer, they believe the Transfer Station will see a decrease in the amount of waste. Troy Brown commented that the town has a healthy Recycling Fund. The town can tap into this fund for any recycling costs.
- h. Selectman R. Leary asked T.A. Troy Brown if the Board of Selectmen should hold off spending the money painting the old Town Hall and purchasing of a plow truck. Both items were approved by voters on March 10, 2020. Selectman R. Lascelles agreed that the Selectmen should not immediately spend the money on a plow truck and painting the old Town Hall. commented that he was concerned the revenue the town once received from small businesses will not be available. The small businesses are closed and will likely not re-open. Troy Brown commented that two of the largest revenue streams the town receives from the state are the highway Block Grant and Room and Meals Tax. The town budgets the Block Grant for around \$200,000 and the Room and Meals Tax is budgeted for \$400,000. The Block Grant funding is generated using numbers from 12 months ago. These numbers are locked in for the paving. Troy is concerned about The Room and Meal Tax numbers. TA T. Brown contacted the DRA to find out how those numbers were generated. The DRA was unable to say if those numbers were generated from figures six or twelve months ago. The Room and Meals Tax is received once a year and is received in December. Troy believes the revenue from these two sources will most likely be impacted in 2021 and not 2020. The Board of Selectmen agreed they should advise the department committees that they put a hold on non-essential expenditures. T.A. T. Brown mentioned that the Plow Truck was voted for with a Special Warrant Article. The town appropriated \$100,000 from the unassigned fund balance and the town just purchased the truck last week. The next step is to get the plow equipment installed on the truck. This purchase was not based on tax revenue.

**Discussion:** None

**Motion:** ( Selectman J. Pinciario / Selectman R. Leary ) Motion to authorize the Town Administrator to speak to the department committees about putting a hold on all non-essential expenditures.

**Roll Call Vote:**

- 1. Selectman J. Lascelles - yes
- 2. Selectman R. Leary - yes
- 3. Selectman K. Lynch - yes
- 4. Selectman J. Pinciario - yes
- 5. Selectman S. Webber - yes

**Vote:** ( 5-0-0 ) The motion carried.

#### 4. **Review Conference and Travel Policy:**

- a. TA T. Brown mentioned that over the next three meetings the Board of Selectmen will review some of the town policies. The first policy reviewed tonight was the Conference and Travel Policy. The policy was discussed tonight and will be adopted at the next Board of Selectmen's meeting.
- b. The Conference and Travel Policy provide information on the covered costs such as lodging, airfare, and meals.
  - i. Travel 100 miles or less in one direction - The town is not responsible for providing a daily allowance for food. The policy sets out the mileage reimbursement, at the IRS levels, if an employee uses their car.

- ii. Travel over 125 miles in one direction - The town uses the IRS guidelines which allows a certain allowance daily. The allowance will cover the food and lodging.
- iii. If family members attend the conference, the policy reads that only the costs of the employee will be covered. The Board of Selectmen agreed that canceling non-essential conferences is the correct thing to do, at this time.
- c. The board agreed that the department heads need to decide what they believe is an essential expense. The department heads would then bring the expense to T.A. Troy Brown and request approval for the expense. If the Town Administrator believes that the expense is essential he will bring the request to the Board of Selectmen for approval.
- d. Selectman R. Lascelles commented that the department heads need to understand the need to only spend money on essential expenses, He believes that the town is very close to laying town employees off.
- e. Chairman S. Webber commented that the town has strong department heads who will always do what is in the best interest of the town.

5. **Review Credit Card Policy:**

- a. The second policy reviewed tonight was the Credit Card Policy. The policy was discussed tonight and will be adopted at the next Board of Selectmen’s meeting.
- b. The town has credit cards that are distributed out to certain employees. The Board of Selectmen authorizes the issuance of the credit cards.
- c. The town uses the Peoples Bank as the provider for the credit cards. The town has a line of credit of \$30,000. The credit line is divided up between the employees authorized to have a credit card. The employees have different levels of credit.
- d. The town has nine employees with credit cards. The credit limit ranges from \$500 up to \$10,000.
  - i. The IT Department has a credit card limit of \$10,000.
  - ii. The Police Department has a credit limit of \$5,000.
  - iii. The custodian has a credit limit of \$500.
  - iv. The other six credit cards have credit limits of \$2,500.
- e. Cash advances are not allowed with credit cards.
- f. A receipt needs to be provided with each charge.
- g. Selectman R. Lascelles mentioned that if the town runs into a revenue issue, the board may have to approve a purchase before the credit card may be used.
- h. T.A. Troy Brown will email the policy to each of the Selectmen.

**Agenda Topic:** Public Input @ 7:20 pm

**Presenter:** Chairman S. Webber

- 1. None

Public Input Closed at 7:20 pm

**Agenda Topic:** Other Business

**Presenter:** Chairman S. Webber

- 1. None

1. T.A. T. Brown mentioned the town's paving project was started and as of last Friday, the project is 100% completed. The shoulder work is completed. The paving went well. The town did not receive any complaints from the residents. The traffic was minimal because people are working from home.
2. The town has set itself up well for the first-year of the five-year plan with the Capital Improvement Committee.
3. At the last meeting, the Board of Selectmen authorized the HVAC work in the police department. The work started last week and is continuing. The HVAC work is going extremely well.
4. T.A. Troy Brown has not received an update from the company performing the work, but he has seen three to four trucks at the police station every day.
5. Affiliated Services, a local company, has worked with the police department and understands the operation.
6. The previous Board of Selectmen encumbered funds in the 2019 Budget. The Town Clerk's countertop has lost some of the formica coatings. The loss of the formica has caused a safety hazard for the employees and damage to the employees' clothing.
7. The brackets that provide support are underneath the countertop. These brackets are no longer in the correct place. The brackets are currently in the way of the employee's legs and knees.
8. The work to correct the countertop problem has begun. The measurements are being taken and the measurements will be sent to the factory for manufacturing.
9. The hope is the countertop project will be finished before Town Hall reopens to the public.
10. Last year the town purchased a piece of land. T.A. Troy Brown hired Jeffrey Land Survey, a town resident, to survey the property and mark the property lines. Then go behind the Highway Department garage and mark the whole perimeter.
11. The next step would be to find a timber company. The hope is the timber company would come in and cut down the trees for no charge. The timber company would be allowed to take the trees they cut down.
12. No one can be brought in to cut down the trees until the town knows the property lines.
13. The surveying work will begin on April 20, 2020.
14. Litchfield Landing is a mobile home park on Route 102. They have been having problems with their water system.
15. The residents of Litchfield Landing are looking to receive some federal grant funds to do a study of their existing water distribution system.
16. Litchfield Landing can not apply for themselves, but the town can apply for the Litchfield Landing association. The previous Board of Selectmen agreed to assist the Litchfield Landing association.
17. The town has filled out all the paperwork and submitted the documentation. The application is currently listed as pending.
18. The grant is for \$25,000 and the association has a very good chance of receiving the grant. If approved, the town would front the money and be reimbursed.
19. If they receive the grant, a study would be performed and a plan created. The association would then likely apply for a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) to install a new water distribution system.
20. The Election Law Division of the Attorney General's Office received two complaints from a Litchfield resident. The resident was concerned that the Litchfield Voter's Guide, that was mailed out, was political advertising. Mr. Kearns also mentioned that the information in the guide was misleading. The complaint was regarding certain Articles having no tax impact. Both concerns were with the town and the school warrants. The Chairman of the School Board and Chairman of the Board of Selectmen signed the response sent back to Mr. Kearns relating to his first complaint. T.A. Troy Brown was just informed of the second complaint. Legal is comfortable with everything the town has done.
21. T.A. T. Brown updated the board on the union grievance brought regarding the termination of an employee. The employee was not terminated for any wrongdoing. The reason provided for the termination was a medical type issue. The town administrator submitted the board's position to the union. The Board of Selectmen were concerned, because of COVID-19, they would not be able to respond to the union within the proper amount of time. The union

confirmed the town did not exceed the time limits with the town's response to the grievance. The town is now waiting for the union's response.

22. T.A. T. Brown wanted the Selectmen to know how hard the department heads, the staff, the IT Director, the people working at Litchfield Community TV, the boards, and the committees are working. He mentioned how he had never seen communication and teamwork as strong as it is today.
  23. The Emergency Management Team has been meeting, from the start of the crisis, on a conference call three times a week. The Emergency Management Teams includes a school representative, school personnel, the superintendent, and the business administrator.
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1. **Next Meeting(s):**
    - a. April 27, 2020 @ 6:30 pm
    - b. May 11, 2020 @ 6:30 pm

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**Agenda topic:** Selectmen Reports

**Presenter:** Chairman S. Webber

**Selectman Steve J. Webber - Rec Commission:**

1. The Rec Commission will meet tomorrow night, April 14, at 7:30 pm. The meeting will occur on Webex.

**Selectman Robert Leary Jr. - Budget Committee:**

1. The Budget Committee will meet later this month. The Budget Committee meeting will be virtual.

**Selectman Kevin A. Lynch - Planning Board:**

1. The Planning Board has not met.

**Selectman John E. Pinciario - Conservation Commission:**

1. The Conservation Commission has not met.

**Selectman Richard W. Lascelles - Heritage Commission:**

1. The Heritage Commission has not met

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**Agenda topic:** Other Business

**Presenter:** Chairman S. Webber

**1. Rescheduling of the Litchfield Police & Fire 5k:**

- a. The Litchfield Police and Fire 5k was originally scheduled to occur on May 16, 2020. The race is being rescheduled for October 17, 2020, because of COVID-19.
- b. The police and fire department would like to know if the board would like them to amend their current permit or fill out a new permit.

**Discussion:** None

**Motion:** ( Selectman R. Leary / Selectman J. Pinciario ) Motion to authorize the police and fire department to amend the permit to October 17, 2020.

**Roll Call Vote:**

1. Selectman J. Lascelles - yes
2. Selectman R. Leary - yes
3. Selectman K. Lynch - yes

4. Selectman J. Pinciario - yes
5. Selectman S. Webber - yes

**Vote:** ( 5-0-0 ) The motion carried.

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**Agenda Topic:** Adjourn the Public Portion of Meeting

**Presenter:** Chairman S. Webber

**1. Motion To Enter Non-Public Session (Roll Call Vote)**

**Discussion:** None

**Motion** ( Selectman R. Leary / Selectman K. Lynch ) motion to enter non-public session per RSA cited below:

1. SA 91-A:3, II(c) - Reputation

**Roll Call Vote:**

1. Selectman J. Lascelles - yes
2. Selectman R. Leary - yes
3. Selectman K. Lynch - yes
4. Selectman J. Pinciario - yes
5. Selectman S. Webber - yes

(5-0-0) Motion passed

**2. Entered Non-Public Session:**

7:41 pm

**3. Reconvene Public Session:**

8:48 pm

**4. Motion to Adjourn:**

**Discussion:** None

**Motion** ( Selectman K. Lynch / Selectman J. Pinciario ) motion to adjourn the meeting.

**Roll Call Vote:**

1. Selectman J. Lascelles - yes
2. Selectman R. Leary - yes
3. Selectman K. Lynch - yes
4. Selectman J. Pinciario - yes
5. Selectman S. Webber - yes

**Vote:** (5-0-0)

The meeting adjourned at 8:49 pm

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Approved by the Board of Selectmen:

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Steven J. Webber, Chairman

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F. Robert Leary, Sr., Vice Chairman

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Richard W. Lascelles

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Kevin A. Lynch

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John E. Pinciaro