

# Town of Litchfield, New Hampshire

## Board of Selectmen

TEL – (603) 424-4046

EMAIL – townhall@litchfieldnh.gov

FAX – (603) 424-3014

Meeting Date: 07/27/20

Call to Order: 6:42 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

**In Attendance:**

Troy Brown, Town Administrator  
Theresa Briand, Town Clerk

**Selectmen in attendance:**

1. F. Robert Leary, Sr., Vice Chairman
2. Richard W. Lascelles
3. Kevin A. Lynch
4. John E. Pinciario

**One Selectman was absent:**

1. Steven J. Webber, Chairman

**Memo:**

John Brunelle hosted the virtual meeting by using Webex

**Agenda Topic:** Call to Order

**Presenter:** Vice-Chairman R. Leary

1. 5:30 pm – Paperwork Review
2. 6:42 pm – Call to Order, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance

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

**Presenter:** Town Admin. Troy Brown

1. A/P Manifest: 7/21/2020 – \$94,255.41, and 7/24/2020 – \$65,274.86
2. P/R Manifest: 7/23/2020 – \$65,522.78, and 7/30/2020 – \$56,812.89
3. PA 16 Form – State Forest Tax Reimbursement
4. PA 28 Form – Inventory of Taxable Property
5. June – Police Detail A/R – \$13,691.00
6. June – Ambulance A/R – \$40,039.98
7. June – Tax Collector Reconciliation
8. June – Town Clerk Reconciliation

**Discussion:** Vice-Chairman Robert Leary requested a motion to approve the items of consent.

**Motion:** ( Selectman Richard Lascelles / Selectman Kevin Lynch ) So moved.

**Vote:** ( 4-0-0 ) The motion carried.

**Agenda Topic:** Items Moved from Consent

**Presenter:** Vice-Chairman R. Leary

1. None

**Agenda Topic:** Items Added to Consent

**Presenter:** Vice-Chairman R. Leary

1. None

---

**Agenda Topic:** Public Input @ 6:48 pm

**Presenter:** Vice-Chairman R. Leary

1. None

Public Input closed at 6:49 pm.

---

**Agenda Topic:** Business

**Presenter:** Vice-Chairman R. Leary

1. **Pennichuck Water: (Donald Ware, PE)**

- a. Donald Ware, PE, did not attend the meeting.

2. **Removal of July 13, 2020, Meeting Minutes:**

- a. Selectman Rich Lascelles mentioned that he felt strongly that the meeting minutes are a fair reflection of the Board of Selectmen's Meeting. He said that when the Board of Selectmen approves the minutes, they cast the minutes in concrete. Selectman Rich Lascelles requested that the Selectmen receive hard copies of the minutes.
- b. Vice-Chairman Robert Leary asked T.A. Troy Brown if the request by Selectman Rich Lascelles would be a problem. T.A. Troy Brown mentioned that the request was a change in the board's procedures, but the request was worthy of motion.
- c. Vice-Chairman Robert Leary said he liked the idea of receiving a hard copy. Selectman Rich Lascelles commented that he did not remember ever signing the minutes.
- d. T.A. Troy Brown mentioned that since COVID-19 affected the signing of minutes around the time Selectman Rich Lascelles was elected, T.A. Troy Brown pointed to the corner of the table by the front door, and said he would place folders down on the table. The folders were for the Accounts Receivable, Accounts Payable, Consent, and Correspondence. Selectmen would come in during the week and sign the documents.
- e. T.A. Troy Brown said sending the meeting minutes in pdf form to the Selectmen in advance would be helpful.
- f. Selectman Rich Lascelles asked T.A. Troy Brown if he had received the town's overall valuation from Avitar's Chad Roberge. T.A. Troy Brown said he had not received the information but was expecting to receive the information soon.

**Discussion:** None

**Motion:** ( Selectman Kevin Lynch / Selectman Rich Lascelles ) Motion to change the procedure for which the minutes are transferred.

**Vote:** ( 4-0-0 ) The motion carried.

3. **Road Agent Appointment:**

- a. T.A. Troy Brown mentioned that during a non-public session, the Selectmen took action to make interim Road Agent Kevin Brown the official Road Agent. Kevin Brown's contract as Road Agent will run until March 31, 2023.
- b. The position is typically a three-year term, but Litchfield tries to get all contracts to end on March 31. If there are no changes, the town will consider Kevin Brown for re-appointment at the end of his term.
- c. The Selectmen welcomed Kevin Brown as Road Agent.

**Discussion:** None

**Motion:** ( Selectman Kevin Lynch / Selectman Rich Lascelles ) Motion to appoint Kevin Brown as Road Agent, as previously voted by the Selectmen ( 4-0-1 ).

**Vote:** ( 3-0-1 ) The motion carried. Selectman John Pinciario abstained from voting.

4. **Zoning Enforcement Officer Appointment:**

- a. T.A. Troy Brown mentioned that the Selectmen had previously taken action with the appointment of Peter Dionne as the Zoning Administrator. The position does not have a termination date; the job is an appointment. Peter Dionne has the authority to enforce the zoning ordinances on behalf of the Board of Selectmen.
- b. Vice-Chair Robert Leary thanked T.A. Troy Brown for filling in as interim Zoning Administrator.

5. **Conservation Commission Donation - David P. Michaud (\$300):**

- a. T.A. Troy Brown commented that David and Elizabeth Michaud donated \$300 to the town of Litchfield for the upkeep of the trails, and the conservation properties.
- b. David and Elizabeth Michaud are residents of Litchfield and enjoy walking the trails during the pandemic.
- c. Selectman Rich Lascelles thanked Matt LePore for his upkeep of the conservation properties. Selectman Kevin Lynch thanked Matt LePore for his help in removing graffiti from a tree at Moore's Falls.

**Discussion:** Vice-Chair Robert Leary asked a Selectman to make a motion to accept the \$300 donation for the upkeep of the conservation properties.

**Motion:** ( Selectman Rich Lascelles / Selectman Kevin Lynch ) Motion to accept

**Vote:** ( 4-0-0 ) The motion carried.

6. **School ACH Payment Authorization:**

- a. T.A. Troy Brown commented that the Board of Selectmen acts on the school ACH payments twice a year. The one that the board acted on tonight is a preliminary schedule. The figures are based on last year's tax rate. The School District consulted with the Board of Selectmen, and the Board of Selectmen consulted with the town's financial team and the Town Treasurer. The financial schedule was determined to be fair and reasonable.
- b. As in the past, if the town should find itself in a cash flow problem, the School District has been willing to work with the town.
- c. The scheduled payments are:

Payment to the School	Amount
August 1, 2020	\$3,000,000
September 1, 2020	\$1,500,000
October 1, 2020	\$1,000,000
November 1, 2020	\$1,500,000
Total:	\$7,000,000

- d. The School District has been willing to work with the town to defer payments until December 15.
- e. When the tax rate has been set, the Board of Selectmen will vote on another school ACH payment in the fall. The payments will cover the months of January through June 2021.
- f. Selectman Rich Lascelles asked T.A. Troy Brown if he had heard that the State Revenues were down by 5.5%. T.A. Troy Brown mentioned that he is keeping his eye on the Road Block and the Highway Block funding.

T.A. Troy Brown had not received anything, for this fiscal year, that the town would be impacted. He has not received any reports on the 2021 fiscal year. T.A. Troy Brown expects the reports to come out in the fall for both the 2020 and 2021 fiscal years.

- g. T.A. Troy Brown commented that the town receives approximately \$200,000 a year. This figure is driven by the economy and the gasoline tax.

**Discussion:** Vice-Chair Robert Leary asked a Selectman to make a motion to accept the preliminary school payment schedule.

**Motion:** ( Selectman Rich Lascelles / Selectman John Pinciario ) So moved

**Vote:** ( 4-0-0 ) The motion carried.

#### 7. **COVID-19 Town Operations:**

- a. T.A. Troy Brown said that the Board of Selectmen wanted to get the Town Clerk, Town Admin, and Operations Departments open to the public at the last meeting. He worked with the Emergency Management Team, Town Clerk's Office, and Police Chief Ben Sargent. At this time, the Police Chief does not believe it makes any sense to open the Dispatch window. The Police Chief is trying to protect his staff and limit the contact they have with the town residents. The police currently interact with residents in the parking lot.
- b. Town Clerk Terri Briand is concerned about the staffing issues, and at the same time, managing the workload. T.A. Troy Brown mentioned that the Town Clerk's Office had worked very hard the last three months, getting a process in place. The staff is working hard to make sure the turnaround time is one day.
- c. T.A. Troy Brown commented that if the town opened Town Hall to the public, they would need to set up a procedure to allow residents to social distance. He does not believe that opening Town Hall to the public is possible. He thinks the maximum amount of residents who could fit in Town Hall is two.
- d. Town Hall does allow walk-ins. If an employee is available, a resident has everything he/she needs; then, the resident will be permitted into Town Hall.
- e. Town Clerk Terri Briand commented that things are working more efficiently this way. The Town Clerk's office is booking appointments for residents. The appointments are for 15 minutes.
- f. Vice-Chair Robert Leary said he believes the Board of Selectmen should allow the Department Heads to run their departments.
- g. Selectman Kevin Lynch empathized with residents who want to enter Town Hall when they have free time, and not make an appointment. He understands that the town does not have an employee who can delegate where the residents stand and wait.
- h. T.A. Troy Brown stated that he receives the most comments from the committee and board members. The members want to meet in the Town Hall conference room. T.A. Troy Brown mentioned that four more protection shields would be going up in the conference room. LCTV and the I.T. Director John Brunelle have worked hard to get better equipment for sound quality and cast the meetings for better quality.
- i. The committees and boards have nine to eleven seats available for use, and one seat for LCTV. T.A. Troy Brown said that committees should schedule times for non-members to make their presentations. The room capacity is eleven, and any number above eleven would need to wait outside. At this time, the general public is not allowed to attend the meetings.
- j. Selectman Kevin Lynch suggested that Alternate Members of specific committees should still attend the meetings virtually.
- k. T.A. Troy Brown said that the community room over at the fire station is still not open to the public. The Emergency Management Team meets in the community room.
- l. The Transfer Station is going to remain the same. The town is working on getting signage for the Transfer Station. The signs will inform the residents to wear a mask, and only one person in a car is allowed.

8. **Grant Updates:**

- a. T.A. Troy Brown informed the Selectmen that things have changed with the GOFERR (Governor's Office For Emergency Relief and Recovery) Grant to the town. The amount to the town was \$203,000. Two requests have been put in to be paid.
  - i. The first request for \$10,910 was already paid.
  - ii. The second request is pending. The request was for \$47,561, and the amount should also be paid in full.
  - iii. The town non-emergency employees receiving hazard pay.
  - iv. T.A. Troy Brown believes the town should purchase a large printer-scanner for the Building and Planning Department. The cost of the equipment is around \$8,000.
  - v. T.A. Troy Brown held off on the final two because he wanted to make sure the items would be eligible for reimbursement.
- b. GOFERR is not providing much information or guidance. They do not want to tell a town one thing, and another town, something else.
- c. Last week, the news came out that GOFERR would reimburse the towns for the time that the police and fire departments worked since the State of Emergency. The reimbursement does not include overtime pay.
- d. Finance Manager Karen White calculated the amount paid out for all the straight time salaries and benefits. The amount will pretty much cover the grant amount for the town.
- e. The third request will be for the straight time salary paid out to the police and fire department personnel.
- f. Selectman John Pinciario asked T.A. Troy Brown if the town would pay the police and fire department personnel hazard pay. The board members said they already voted to approve hazard pay for the police and fire department. T.A. Troy Brown added that before the town paid out the hazard pay, he wanted to make sure the pay was eligible to be reimbursed.
- g. Selectman Kevin Lynch asked T.A. Troy Brown if the town had the computer technology to handle the scanning. T.A. Troy Brown confirmed that the town did have the necessary software.

9. **Purchasing Policy - 2nd Reading:**

T.A. Troy Brown reviewed the Purchasing Policy.

- a. This policy is also reviewed on an annual basis by the Board of Selectmen.
- b. The Purchasing Policy applies to all Town Departments, Boards, Committees, Commissions, Elected and Appointed Officials under the Board of Selectmen's authority.
- c. All purchases require prior approval by the Department Heads or designee.
- d. **Purchasing Policy Thresholds:**
  - i. **Board of Selectmen** - any amount greater than \$12,000 needs to be approved in advance.
  - ii. **Town Administrator** - signs off on purchases anywhere from \$5,000 but less than \$12,000.
  - iii. **Department Heads** - signs off on amounts below \$5,000
  - iv. **Competitive Bidding** - any amount greater than \$12,000 requires three competitive bids.
    - a. Pre-Approved Vendors ( Appendix A ) - do not require competitive bidding.

Some of the factors considered when determining the 'best overall value' as referenced in Section 1.c are:

- a. Price
- b. Quality
- c. Warranty
- d. Service
- e. Availability
- f. Past Performance of the Vendor
- g. References

Disposal of Surplus Property:

- a. Department Heads should notify the Town Administrator at least annually about any property considered surplus.
- b. Policy Thresholds:
  - i. Less than \$100 - Department Heads may dispose of the items as appropriate following the Town Administrator's notification.
  - ii. \$100 but less than \$1,000 - The Town Administrator will have the authority to transfer property from one department to another, including surplus equipment as trade on replacement equipment, authorize placement in state surplus auction, retaining parts, or authorizing the sale by public, or electronic auction.
  - iii. Greater than \$1,000 (excluding real estate) - All items declared surplus with an estimated value of greater than \$1,000 would be reported to the Board of Selectmen with the board retaining authority to authorize the form of disposition.

The Board of Selectmen spent time discussing the items located in the old Town Hall and the old fire station. Selectman Rich Lascelles and T.A. Troy Brown talked about what type of paperwork was required to purchase or sell items.

T.A. Troy Brown asked the Selectmen to approve changes to the disposal of surplus property threshold. Departments Heads would have the authority for items less than \$500. The Town Administrator would have the authority for amounts greater than \$500 but less than \$1,000. And the Selectmen would have the authority for amounts greater than \$1,000, but excluding real estate.

**Discussion:** None

**Motion:** ( Selectman John Pinciario / Selectman Rich Lascelles ) So moved

**Vote:** ( 4-0-0 ) The motion carried.

T.A. Troy Brown informed the Selectmen that the updated Purchasing Policy would be placed in the sign file before the next meeting.

10. **Draft Warrant Items:**

- a. T.A. Troy Brown said that the last Board of Selectmen's meeting the board discussed a solar panel exemption and other ideas for Warrant Articles. T.A. Troy Brown suggested the following ideas:
  - i. The Operating Budget - waiting for a final number from the Budget Committee
  - ii. Police Contract - The police contract expires this year. The union will approach the town soon to begin negotiations.
  - iii. Road Improvements - The Road Improvement Warrant Article has not been used in the last couple of years. T.A. Troy Brown suggested the Board of Selectmen bring the Warrant Article back. T.A. Troy Brown suggested \$200,000 for the Warrant Article. This amount would be in addition to the funds received from the Road Block Grant. The members of the CIP Committee agreed that a \$200,000 Warrant Article was a good idea. T.A. Troy Brown said that the CIP Committee would likely present this plan to the Board of Selectmen for a 2021 Warrant Article.
  - iv. Backhoe - The backhoe is currently ten years old. The Solid Waste and Highway Departments use the backhoe every day. The backhoe is getting to the point that it is more expensive to repair than replace. The timing is perfect for purchasing a backhoe, using Municipal Bidding, and the current backhoe's trade-in. T.A. Troy Brown will research the cost of a backhoe and the expected trade-in value of a 2010 backhoe. They estimated that the town might spend \$100,000 on a backhoe. T.A. Troy Brown is looking to use a portion of the Unassigned Fund Balance to purchase the backhoe. Vice-Chairman Robert Leary mentioned that he was concerned with spending money from the Unassigned Fund Balance. T.A. Troy Brown said that the auditors reached out to him and will meet the Board of Selectmen on August 10. He said that the town had another excellent year with the Unassigned Fund Balance.

- v. Fire Truck / Multi-Purpose Truck - Last year, the Selectmen decided to pull the fire truck off the Warrant Articles. The Board of Selectmen agreed to let the CIP Committee go through their process. T.A. Troy Brown believes the Selectmen will see a placeholder for a fire truck purchase.
- vi. Fire Station Bond Proceeds - T.A. Troy Brown believes that the Selectmen are at a point where they need to be prepared for the remaining balance, when they get to March 2020 or Deliberative Session. The Selectmen need to decide what to do with the remaining of the bond proceeds. Currently, the bond has \$33,000 left. T.A. Troy Brown stated that the proceeds belong to the voters. The Selectmen do not have the authority to do anything with the money. T.A. Troy Brown suggested asking the voters if they want the funds transferred to the Building Systems Expendable Trust Fund. Other towns have asked voters to approve using the funds towards payment of a bond. Vice-Chairman Robert Leary believed the remaining bond proceeds go back to the taxpayers.
- vii. Capital Reserve Fund - The town has a Capital Reserve Fund with about \$11,000 in the fund. The money was to be used on the creation of a new fire facility. T.A. Troy Brown suggested asking the residents to vote on what to do with the fund. He indicated that the residents could vote to authorize transferring the funds to the Building Systems Expendable Trust Fund.
- viii. General Assistance Trust Fund - The trust fund was created last year. The town raised \$10,000, and T.A. Troy Brown has spent \$1,000. T.A. Troy Brown mentioned that once unemployment runs out and eviction proceedings start, the town may see heavy use of the funds. The Selectmen may need to request more money for the General Assistance Trust Fund. Selectman Rich Lascelles asked if the town still had a Welfare Director. T.A. Troy Brown said that the position was delegated to him. Donna Baril assists with the collection of the application and going through all the financials. The Selectmen only get involved when T.A. Troy Brown is not comfortable making a decision. The decision is made during a non-public session.
- ix. Technology and Communication Trust Fund - The town tries to maintain \$50,000, and currently, the fund balance is \$27,000. The communications project will be completed later this year or early next year.
- x. Solar Panel Exemption - A Warrant Article would ask the residents if they want to create an exempt assessment for solar panels, and at what level did they want the exemption.
- xi. Human Services and Health Agencies - T.A. Troy Brown mentioned that the Human Services and Health Agencies is a yearly Warrant Article.

11. **Dog Warrant:**

- a. Town Clerk Terri Briand commented that the Dog Warrant is for any person that has not registered their dog. The dog is to be registered by April 30. The town gives the owner until the end of May to register his or her dog. In June, the town starts charging one dollar each month.
- b. On July 15, the town submits the names of all the dogs that have not been registered to the Board of Selectmen. The Board of Selectmen will then turn it over to the dog officer. The town charges the owner a \$25 fine and a \$5 administrative fee. The owners have a specified amount of time to pay the fine and fee before the town takes the owner to court for not registering the dog.
- c. The state veterinarian has not let up on the regulations. Residents claimed that they were unable to bring their dog into the veterinarian. The state veterinarian told Town Clerk Terri Briand that was not true, The owners can bring their dog to the veterinarian to get their rabies updated.

**Discussion:** Vice-Chair Robert Leary asked a Selectman to make a motion to approve the Dog Warrant for an unlicensed dog.

**Motion:** ( Selectman John Pinciario / Selectman Rich Lascelles ) So moved

**Vote:** ( 4-0-0 ) The motion carried.

1. **Next Meeting(s):**
  - a. August 10, 2020 @ 6:30 pm
  - b. August 24, 2020 @ 6:30 pm
  - c. September 14, 2020 @ 6:30 pm

---

**Agenda topic:** Administrator’s Report

**Presenter:** Vice-Chairman R. Leary

1. T.A. Troy Brown reached out to Steve Calawa and requested that the old Town Hall basement lights be turned off. The next day the lights were turned off.
2. He mentioned that the basement of the old Town Hall did not have fire department products. The police were storing old police items. Captain Scotti and Chief Sargent pulled out what they wanted to keep. The Highway Department is going down and will remove everything else. Chief Sargent has a key to a room in the basement. The room is storing all their old records.
3. The Fire Department has removed everything that was in the shed behind the old Town Hall. The Historical Society will be able to use the shed.
4. The back of the room for the Radio Tower Communications Project will be a cabinet with radio equipment. Currently, the old equipment is stored upstairs in the old Town Hall.
5. The work for the Radio Tower Communications Project has begun. The Highway Department is digging holes for the foundation. The towers for the Darrah Pond and the old fire station sites arrived today.
6. The Eversource Beautification Project, located at Hillcrest and Charles Bancroft Highway, is looking good. Eversource and Jayson Brennen have done a great job. There will be about 150 feet of white vinyl fence and some selected plantings.
7. The Selectmen discussed the area around the Eversource Beautification Project. Selectman Rich Lascelles mentioned that PSNH might have owned the surrounding area. Vice-Chair Robert Leary said that PSNH might have had a right-of-way on the property.

---

**Agenda topic:** Selectmen Reports

**Presenter:** Vice-Chairman R. Leary

**Selectman Steve J. Webber - Rec Commission & CIP Committee:**

1. Absent

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

1. Nothing to Report

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

1. Nothing to Report

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

1. Nothing to Report

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

1. Nothing to Report



---

**Agenda Topic:** Non-Public Portion of Meeting

**Presenter:** Vice-Chairman R. Leary

**Motion To Enter Non-Public Session (Roll Call Vote):** ( Selectman John Pinciaro / Selectman Kevin Lynch )

Motioned to enter non-public session per RSA's cited below:

1. RSA 91-A:3, II(b) - Hiring of an Employee
2. RSA 91-A:3, II(c) - Reputation

**Vote:** (4-0-0)

**Entered Non-Public Session:**

8:12 pm

**Reconvene Public Session:**

9:03pm

**Adjournment:**

**Discussion:** None

**Motion:** ( Selectman Lynch and Selectman Pinciaro moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:03pm

**Vote:** (4-0-0)

The meeting adjourned at 9:03pm.

Approved by the Board of Selectmen:

-----  
Steven J. Webber, Chairman

-----  
F. Robert Leary, Sr., Vice Chairman

-----  
Richard W. Lascelles

-----  
Kevin A. Lynch

-----  
John E. Pinciaro