

Town of Litchfield, New Hampshire

Board of Selectmen

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Meeting Date: 10/19/20

Call to Order: 6:30 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
Karen White, Finance Director
Ben Sargent, Police Chief (virtual)
Laura Gandia (virtual)
Andrew Collins, Rec Commission Chair (virtual)

Memo:

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

Selectmen absent:
1. None

Agenda Topic: Call to Order

Presenter: Chairman Steven J. Webber

1. 5:30 pm – Paperwork Review
2. 6:30 pm – Call to Order, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance
3. 6:31 pm – Chair Steven Webber mentioned that Inspector Peter Dionne passed away on Thursday. Chair Steven Webber asked for a moment of silence for Mr. Dionne.

Agenda Topic: Review and Approval of Consent Items

Presenter: Chairman Steven J. Webber

1. A/P Manifest: 11/03/2020 – \$93,989.83, and 11/10/20 – \$2,189,038.04
2. P/R Manifest: 11/05/2020 – \$61,977.63, and 11/12/20 – \$72,107.71
3. Treasurer Reconciliation – August
4. Abatements (5)
5. CARES Grant Acceptance – \$3,678.95
6. Transfer of Trust Funds
 - a. Fire Facilities – \$10,785.33
 - b. Building Systems – \$6,000
 - c. Technology & Communications – \$15,548.82

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

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

Agenda Topic: Items Moved from Consent

Presenter: Chairman Steven J. Webber

1. None

Agenda Topic: Items Added to Consent

Presenter: Chairman Steven J. Webber

1. None

Agenda Topic: Approval of Meeting Minutes

Presenter: Chairman Steven J. Webber

1. October 19, 2020, Meeting Minutes
2. October 30, 2020, Meeting Minutes

Motion: (Selectman K. Lynch / Selectman J. Pinciario) Motion to approve the Meeting Minutes from October 19 and October 30, 2020.

Vote: (4-0-1) The motion carried (Selectman R. Lascelles abstained)

Agenda Topic: Business

Presenter: Chairman Steven J. Webber

Laura Gandia, Police Appreciation Drive Report:

Town Administrator Troy Brown commented that Laura Gandia had contacted Chairman Steven Webber and him and asked if she could update the gift drive for the Litchfield Police Department.

Laura Gandia, 3 Chamberlin Drive, mentioned that several town residents wanted to show appreciation to the law enforcement; Ms. Gandia organized a Litchfield Police Association Appreciation Drive on September 26. The appreciation drive collected money and gift cards for Litchfield law enforcement. Ms. Gandia noted that signs were made, and permission was obtained. She mentioned that some of the significant residents involved in the appreciation drive were:

1. Fred and Brenda French
2. Peg Graveline
3. Pete and Diane Plansky
4. Debbie Stone
5. Ralph Boehm

Ms. Gandia informed the Board of Selectmen that the Litchfield Police Association Appreciation Drive raised over \$3,000 for the Litchfield Police Department. Ms. Gandia mentioned that residents told her stories of how the police department had been helpful. She stated that once the money and gift cards were collected, the gift bags were made for each member of the police roster. Each bag consisted of \$152 of gift cards to area establishments.

Selectman Leary commented about how he heard from residents how great the Litchfield Police and EMT Departments are. Chief Benjamin Sargent thanked Laura Gandia for her support and noted that seeing signs supporting the police department was very emotional. Chief Sargent added that every member of the department received a handwritten card.

Election Budget - Delegation of Authority:

Town Administrator Troy Brown commented that a question was brought forward about who has ownership of the Town Meeting Budget. Town Moderator Frank Byron spoke to the Town Administrator, and the Town Moderator talked with the Town Clerk about the issue. The Town Clerk believed that since she prepares the budget, she should control the Town Meeting Budget. Town Clerk Terri Briand has the oversight of the budget and approves the expenditures from that budget. Moderator Byron informed Town Administrator Brown that the town needs to plan who is in charge of the Town Meeting Budget.

Ms. Briand informed Mr. Brown that she has been responsible for putting the budget together over the past several years, consulted with the Town Moderator, and approved all the expenditures. Mr. Byron does not care who is responsible, but the town needs to be clear about who is responsible for the budget.

Chairman Webber stated that if the Town Clerk has been responsible for the last several years, the budget should reside with the Town Clerk. He added that he would like to see the teamwork continue between the Town Moderator and Town Clerk. Selectman Lynch agreed that the budget should stay with the Town Clerk, but the Town Clerk should work with the Town Moderator. Selectman Leary was not comfortable deciding, and requested tabling the decision until he did research.

Field Maintenance Contract:

Town Administrator Troy Brown mentioned that the Rec Commission prepared the bids for the field maintenance of the recreation fields at the Board of Selectmen's request. Mr. Brown noted that the RFP included the fertilization and herbicide treatment for the recreation fields. Mr. Brown said that the Rec Commission did their job by putting out the legal notices and waiting the 14 days as required by the Purchasing Policy. Only one contractor made a bid for the position.

The one contractor who bid for the job was Total Lawn Care. TLC is located in Litchfield, and the last time they maintained the recreation fields were in 2018 and 2019. Mr. Brown stated that TLC's bid came in a bit high. The Town Administrator asked the Chairman of the Recreation Commission to talk about the Recreation Commission's process and where they are now in the process. Mr. Brown stated that the Board of Selectmen are responsible for approving contracts and would need to vote on the Recreation Commission's only proposal. The Town Administrator pointed out that since only one proposal was received, the Board of Selectmen can require the Recreation Commission to put out another RFP.

Chair Andrew Collins said that the Recreation Commission put out an RFP, similar to the one put out for several years. The Recreation Commission received one sealed bid, and the proposal came from TLC. The proposal provided two different numbers.

1. Lawn cutting and fertilization of all the facilities - \$59,700
2. Lawn cutting and fertilization of all the facilities, except the John Bryant River Access, the area in front of the tennis courts and alongside the road at Sawmill Park, - \$50,000

The Recreation Commission requested the two options. The Recreation Commission wanted to see if they could save money by having the Highway Department maintain the areas that the contractor would not maintain. The Highway Department would then charge the Recreation Commission for the work that they performed.

Chairman Collins noted that the Recreation Commission approved the proposal provided by TLC. Chairman Collins confirmed that TLC's proposal to do all the maintenance and lawn mowing was \$59,700. Mr. Webber informed the Town Administrator that the Recreation Commission does not know how much it would cost the Highway Department to maintain a portion of Sawmill Park and the John Bryant River Access.

Chairman Webber mentioned that the cost to mow the recreation facilities is \$25,300, and the cost to fertilize is \$24,700. He reminded the Board that the bid last year was \$49,072.40, and the proposal this year is \$59,700. He was concerned that the town could not afford an increase of around \$10,000. The Chairman mentioned that Naticook Lawn & Landscape chose not to bid for the job this year.

Discussion: Chairman Webber stated that he believed the Board should push the Recreation Commission to request another RFP and have them do direct solicitation. If TLC is still interested in the job, the contractor would need to enter a new proposal.

Motion: (Selectman R. Leary / Selectman J. Pinciario) Motion to put it back out to bid.

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

Inspector Position:

Town Administrator Troy Brown said that Inspector Peter Dionne passed away on Thursday, November 5. Mr. Brown mentioned that Chief Frank Fraitzl has been reaching out to his contacts and finding to see what the town of Litchfield can do. The Town Administrator has reached out to Municipal Resources Incorporated (MRI), and he said the last time the town was without a Building Inspector, MRI provided Peter Rowell as an inspector. The town is trying to secure Mr. Rowell on a short-term basis.

Mr. Brown said that the town of Hudson was able to loan Mr. Steve Dube. The Board member’s agreed that finding an Inspector has become very difficult. The Board discussed the possibility of moving the Building Inspector position back under Town Hall and not under the fire department. If they choose to move the Building Inspector position back to Town Hall, they agreed now is the time to do it. Selectman Lynch agreed to help out as long as he is able.

FEMA & CARES Grants:

Town Administrator Troy Brown commented that Litchfield had received \$203,760 from the Governor’s Office For Emergency Relief and Recovery (GOFERR) funds. After subtracting \$121,535.38 in expenses, the town is left with a balance of \$82,224.62.

Mr. Brown added that the town of Litchfield received FEMA reimbursements totaling \$16,517.79. The town also received \$3,478.95 in GOFERR reimbursement for the September Primary Election.

Mr. Brown mentioned that municipalities could not receive reimbursement from both FEMA and GOFERR for the same expense. The municipality needs to choose which state or federal agency to request reimbursement.

Chairman Steve Webber requested that a Selectman make a motion to accept the FEMA and GOFERR Revenue and to accept the summary as shown.

Discussion: The Board thanked Finance Manager Karen White for her hard work.

Motion: (Selectman R. Leary / Selectman K. Lynch) So moved.

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

Agenda Topic: Public Input @ 7:29 pm

Presenter: Chairman Steven J. Webber

- 1. None

Public Input closed at 7:30 pm.

Agenda Topic: Business (Cont.)

Presenter: Chairman Steven J. Webber

NHMA Legal Services:

Town Administrator Troy Brown wrote a letter to the New Hampshire Municipal Association (NHMA), and the message will be sent to the Legal Services department. Mr. Brown wrote the letter to notify the NHMA which Litchfield officials are authorized to receive information. The authorized officials are:

- 1. Steven Webber, Board of Selectmen Chair
- 2. Andrew Cutter, Budget Committee Chair
- 3. Michael Croteau, Planning Board Chair
- 4. Richard Riley, Jr., Zoning Board of Adjustment Chair

5. Joan McKibben, Conservation Commission Chair
6. Andrew Collins, Recreation Commission Chair
7. Karl Frank, Heritage Commission Chair
8. Troy Brown, Town Administrator
9. Benjamin Sargent, Police Chief
10. Frank Fraitzl, Fire Chief
11. Vicki L. Varick, Librarian
12. Kevin Brown, Road Agent
13. Theresa Brians, Town Clerk / Tax Collector
14. Frank Byron, Town Moderator
15. Building Inspector when hired

The Board of Selectmen will always be copied when information is sent to any of the authorized officials. Mr. Brown requested permission to send the letter to the NHMA Legal Services department.

Discussion: None

Motion: (Selectman K. Lynch / Selectman R. Leary) Motion to add the Building Department as well, and we approve this list.

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

2020 Budget Review:

Town Administrator Troy Brown stated that the Budget Review would stay on the calendar for the remainder of the year. Mr. Brown and the Board of Selectmen will keep an eye on the budget for the rest of the fiscal year. Mr. Brown noted that the numbers had not changed significantly.

The Town Administrator said that, as of the meeting, the town is expecting a turnback of \$184,000. As the Board gets closer to the end of the year, the Town Administrator will be requesting the Board to authorize purchases or encumbering funds. He added that the Radio Tower Project could require additional funding. Mr. Brown noted that he would like to encumber some funds for 2021 paving.

2021 Warrant Articles:

Town Administrator Troy Brown commented that he would not review the Warrant Articles. Mr. Brown noted that the Board of Selectmen would need to have a serious discussion about the Warrant Articles at the next Board meeting. The Budget Committee is planning on reviewing the Warrant Articles in December.

Mr. Brown stated that he had received all the letters of request. He will be meeting with a committee to recommend a dollar amount that the committee would like to raise. He will also have information about the solar panels at the next meeting.

Agenda Topic: Other Business

Presenter: Chairman Steven J. Webber

1. None

Agenda topic: Administrator's Report

Presenter: Town Admin. Troy Brown

Conference Room use for the School Board:

Superintendent Michael Jette sent Town Administrator Troy Brown an email requesting the use of the conference room located in Town Hall. Dr. Jette wrote that the School Board is asking to use the conference room, so the public can view those meetings with clear audio and live video. The School Board is proposing the following guidelines:

1. The Board understands the room limit of 12 persons and will never exceed that limit. The School Board meetings consist of 5 board members, up to 4 district employees, plus 1 LCTV personnel (up to 10 people).
2. The Board would like to allow a single member of the public to personally access the meeting room to speak during public input. We propose to schedule such access in advance, will require the wearing of a mask, and will clean and disinfect between each member of the public. The Board will manage this segment with speakers waiting outside of the building until called to present.
3. The Board will continue to leave the space clean and germ-free at the end of each meeting.

Discussion: None

Motion: (Selectman R. Lascelles / Selectman K. Lynch) I make a motion to allow the School Board to have public meetings here as long as they follow the twelve-person limit.

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

Town Administrator Troy Brown thanked everyone that was involved in the elections last week.

Agenda topic: Selectmen Reports

Presenter: Chairman Steven J. Webber

Selectman Richard W. Lascelles - Heritage Commission:

1. The Heritage Commission is meeting on Tuesday, November 11. Selectman Lascelles mentioned that Pennichuck wants to raise the water rates, and they have 45 days to submit the paperwork to apply for the increase. He will be keeping an eye on Pennichuck to see if they submit the paperwork. If Pennichuck submits the paperwork, Selectman Lascelles said he would put together a public effort to combat the increase. The Board discussed the number of fire hydrants that have been installed by Pennichuck, the lack of usage the hydrants receive, and how to decommission the hydrants.
2. Selectman Lascelles commented on the election. He found it interesting that the local offices went Republican, and the federal offices went Democrat.

Selectman Robert Leary Jr. - Budget Committee:

1. The Budget Committee is meeting twice a week and discussing the School Budget.

Selectman Kevin A. Lynch - Planning Board:

1. Nothing to report.

Selectman John E. Pinciario - Conservation Commission:

1. Nothing to report.

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

1. The Rec Commission will meet on November 10.

November 9, 2020

Agenda Topic: Adjournment

Presenter: Chairman Steven J. Webber

The public meeting adjourned at 7:56 pm. The Board moved to a non-meeting to discuss the police union negotiations. The next meeting will be held on November 23, 2020.

Approved by the Board of Selectmen:

Steven J. Webber, Chairman

F. Robert Leary, Sr., Vice Chairman

Richard W. Lascelles

Kevin A. Lynch

John E. Pinciario