

**Town of Litchfield, NH**  
**Board of Selectmen Meeting**  
**October 11, 2021**

**In Attendance:**

**Selectmen:** F. Robert Leary, Sr., Vice Chairman; Richard W. Lascelles; Kevin A. Lynch; and Kimberly M. Queenan

**Town Administrator:** Troy Brown

**Absent:** Steven J. Webber, Chairman

**In Attendance:** Police Chief Ben Sargent, Officer Taylor Dezotell, Bobby Jacques,

**1. Call to Order:**

- a. 6:00 pm - Paperwork Review
- b. 6:30 pm - Vice-Chairman Robert Leary called the meeting to order, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

**2. Review and Approval of Consent Items:**

- a. A/P Manifest: 10/05/21 - \$125,121.03 and 10/12/21 - \$99,204.21
- b. P/R Manifest: 10/07/21 - \$59,280.61
- c. Intent to Cut - State Forest

**Discussion:** No Discussion

**Motion:** (Selectman K. Lynch / Selectman R. Lascelles) Motion to accept the Review and Approval of Consent Items.

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

**3. Request for Additional Items / Other Business:**

- a. None

**4. Virtual Meeting Attendance:**

Vice-Chairman Robert Leary commented that Chairman Steve Webber was absent but may attend later, remotely. He noted that the Select Board would need to vote to allow Mr. Webber to participate in the meeting.

**Discussion:** None

**Motion:** (Selectman R. Leary / Selectman R. Lascelles) Motion to allow remote participation for the Select Board meeting.

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

**5. Business:**

**a. Meeting Minutes:**

- i. September 27, 2021, Meeting Minutes

**Discussion:** No Discussion

**Motion:** (Selectman R. Lascelles / Selectman K. Lynch) Motion to accept the September 27 Meeting Minutes, as amended.

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

**b. Police Officer Appointment - Officer Taylor Dezotell:**

Police Chief Ben Sargent thanked the Select Board for their time and for the opportunity to speak tonight. Chief Sargent introduced Taylor Dezotell and commented that Ms. Dezotell applied for the position at the Litchfield Police Department. Chief Sargent commented that Ms. Dezotell participated in the hiring process, and the process consists of a physical agility test, an oral board interview, a background check, a medical and psychological exam, and an interview with the Chief of Police. Chief Sargent mentioned that Ms. Dezotell passed each phase of the test with flying colors.

Chief Sargent stated that there were a few things that stood out to him during the hiring process. The first thing that caught his eye was that Ms. Dezotell wrote that she was seeking a progressive agency that aligns with the personal and professional values that she holds and hopes to grow on. He added that there are very few Police Departments in Southern New Hampshire that are not recruiting for certified police officers. He liked that Ms. Dezotell had the opportunity to look elsewhere; instead, she applied to the Litchfield Police Department. Chief Sargent added that when Captain Scotti tried to set up her agility test, Ms. Dezotell stated that she could be at the police station in an hour.

Chief Sargent stated that Ms. Dezotell's oral board interview was unique. He noted that she was very candid, which allowed the board to believe that they knew who Ms. Dezotell was. She spent time speaking with Captain Scotti's family, and they reported back that Ms. Dezotell was very community-oriented. Chief Sargent mentioned that Ms. Dezotell lives in the Town of Derry with her husband, Kyle, and their son, Griffin. Ms. Dezotell has worked for the last two years with the Derry Police Department, and she has a Bachelor of Science Degree in Environmental Studies from the University of Vermont. She is an avid skier, has a Black Belt in Taekwondo, and she enjoys outdoor activities.

Chief Sargent asked for the Select Board's support and approval to appoint Taylor Dezotell as a full-time police officer.

**Discussion:** None

**Motion:** (Selectman K. Lynch / Selectman K. Queenan) I move to appoint Taylor Dezotell as a full time probationary police officer as recommended by Chief Sargent.

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

Chief Ben Sargent swore Taylor Dezotell in as a full-time police officer for the Litchfield Police Department, and the Select Board congratulated Ms. Dezotell.

**c. Veteran's Activities Updates:**

Bobby Jacques, Brian Pennock, and Steve O'Neil introduced themselves to the Select Board. Mr. Jacques mentioned that a group had just got back together again, and he thanked the Fire Department for letting the group meet once a month in the Community Room. Mr. Jacques mentioned that he was trying to sign up new members for the program at the Transfer Station. He noted that he is trying to create a program that has around 200 members.

Mr. Jacques commented that Steve O'Neil would spearhead the 3A flag project and noted that the Town suggested 32 flags, and he would like to expand it to 54. Mr. Jacques mentioned that cost was not a problem and that the Veteran's Group wants to do the project at no cost to the Town.

Mr. Jacques commented that the group was also going to do a raffle. He noted that the group already has a finance committee, and they are also working with someone about setting up a 501(c)(3). The group will have a raffle for a Mac Jones autographed helmet in a glass case, a Bobby Orr hockey stick, and a David Ortiz bat. The tickets are \$20 apiece, and he noted that the group was going to make the tickets available to the Select Board.

Mr. Jacques commented that the group wants to do things in the Town, but they also want to inform the Veterans of the benefits they could receive regarding health care.

Mr. Jacques provided the Select Board with the definition of a Veteran and that Veteran's Day is a day to only honor those who have completed their military service.

The Litchfield Veteran's Group is interested in adopting a couple of things. The first is the route 3A flag program that Pat Jewett started. The Veteran's Group acknowledged that the flags need to be replaced, and the Town will help support the venture. Mr. Jacques stated that the Veteran's Group wants to purchase a better quality flag and brackets to promote longevity. The Veterans would also like to assist with the installation and believe the flags should be put up before Memorial Day and taken down after Veteran's Day.

The next project was to install United States flagpoles with proper lighting at the Hillcrest, Pinecrest, and the church cemetery. Mr. Jacques explained that the Veteran's Group would raise money for a 30-foot flagpole, plus \$500 for shipping. Once the flagpoles were received, Mr. Jacques would have hired a company to install them. He noted that the Veteran's Group was also going to create scholarships for kids.

Mr. Jacques mentioned that the Veteran's Group is going to create a Veterans Helping Veterans Group. He stated that some Veterans do not like asking for help, and this group would be available for those Veterans.

Mr. O'Neil described the plan for flagpoles at the Town cemeteries but acknowledged that the space for the flagpoles was not available. The Board discussed the options for where the Veterans could place a flag by the cemeteries. Selectman Lynch mentioned that there is limited space inside the cemetery's fence, outside the fence is a right-of-way, and Hillcrest Road is a State Road. Town Administrator Troy Brown suggested that the Veteran's Group attend a Cemetery Trustee's Meeting and ask the Trustees to perform a site visit.

Mr. Brown supported the idea of installing the flagpoles at the cemeteries and noted that the base of the flagpoles only takes up about three to four feet. Ms. Queenan mentioned that her understanding was that the cemeteries closed during certain parts of the year (late November through mid-April). The Board discussed how the United States flag might be hung 24-hours a day if properly illuminated during the darkness.

Mr. Brown mentioned that the new flag pole outside Town Hall cost around \$6,000 and was an insurance claim. He added that the flagpole was a special order because of the footing underground. Ms. Queenan asked about the cleaning of the grave markers, and Mr. Jacques stated that if the Cemetery Trustees were going to continue using a professional company to clean the markers, the Veterans would not get involved.

No action was required by the Select Board.

The Board will provide a contact from the Litchfield School District for the Veteran's Group regarding scholarships.

**d. Public Input #1 @ 7:13 pm**

- i. None

Public Input ended at 7:14 pm.

**e. Road Acceptance:**

- i. Weatherstone Road

- ii. Horizon Drive

- iii. Greylock Circle

Town Administrator Troy Brown commented that the Select Board is aware of the developments. He noted that the Town had been contacted by the planning staff and Lou Caron, engineer. Road Agent Kevin Brown has worked with legal counsel, and everything is ready to be accepted by the Town.

Mr. Brown mentioned that the Select Board posted the Public Hearing and sent letters to all the residents of Weatherstone Road, Horizon Drive, and Greylock Circle. He noted that there is a \$100,000 performance bond that will remain in place for two years. If there are deficiencies with the roads, the bond would be used to pay for the repairs.

**f. Public Hearing @ 7:15 pm**

- i. Michelle Zayas, 27 Weatherstone Road -

Ms. Zayas mentioned that she is on the Board of Directors for the HOA and said that she has lived in Litchfield for two years. Ms. Zayas noted how grateful she was to have great neighbors during a pandemic and added that she has two children, and the neighborhood has quite a few children.

Mr. Brown commented that he had not communicated with the School District regarding the busses not allowed to drive down Weatherstone Road. Ms. Zayas mentioned that she would contact Executive Assistant Michelle Flynn as soon as the Select Board approves the roads.

Vice-Chair Robert Leary requested a motion to close the Public Hearing.

**Discussion:** None

**Motion:** (Selectman R. Lascelles / Selectman K. Lynch) I make a motion we close the Public Hearing.

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

Vice-Chair Robert Leary requested a motion to accept Weatherstone Road, Horizon Drive, and Greylock Circle as Town Roads.

**Discussion:** None

**Motion:** (Selectman R. Lascelles / Selectman K. Queenan) I move to accept Weatherstone Road, Horizon Drive, and Greylock Circle as Town Roads.

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

The Public Hearing ended at 7:19 pm.

**f. Budget Review and Adjustments:**

Town Administrator Troy Brown mentioned that he wanted to keep the Board up-to-date on the progress with the Budget Committee. He commented that both meetings had gone exceptionally well, and the Budget Committee is reviewing, asking questions, and not taking any action at this time. Mr. Brown noted that the conversations during the meetings showed where the Committee is a little concerned. He stated that he would like to evaluate their concerns and bring them back to the Select Board.

Mr. Brown reviewed the following:

**i. Health Insurance:**

The health insurance numbers were released on Friday, October 8. He noted that for the first time in his career, he had seen a reduction in the rates for health insurance. The rates decreased 8.1%, which caused a bottom-line decrease of around \$50,000 to the proposed budget.

**ii. Police Department Dispatch Overtime: -**

The Police Department has reviewed its budget and offered to reduce the Dispatch overtime by an additional \$500.

**iii. Recreation Playground Equipment: -**

The Recreation Commission was carrying \$3,500 for playground equipment upgrades. They have instead decided to take care of the upgrades this year. The \$3,500 can be removed from next years' budget.

**iv. Fire Station Bond: -**

Mr. Brown commented that he made an Administrative Adjustment since the last time the Select Board met on September 27. The adjustment that he made was to the payment of the Fire Station bond. Mr. Brown learned that the Fire Station Impact Fees could only be used as payment to the bond. The Town has about \$67,000 in Impact Fees, and he reduced the budget by \$65,000.

Mr. Brown noted that the reduction in the budget helped the bottom line of the proposed budget, but the Budget Committee members pointed out that the reduction only helped this year. The Budget Committee wanted to know what would happen next year. He suggested that the Select Board uses \$25,000 of Impact Fees in 2022, thus preserving the Impact Fees. The usage of only \$25,000 in Impact Fees would help to save the Impact Fees for three more years.

The Board discussed how the town would see less Impact Fee money because sub-divisions are being built. Mr. Brown stated that even though fewer sub-divisions would be made, but individual houses would still be built.

**v. Still Waiting for Electric and Other Insurance**

Mr. Brown mentioned that he is still waiting on Electricity, Property Liability, and Workers Compensation Insurance rates.

**g. Other Business**

Selectman Lascelles asked if the Board wanted to discuss the proposed water settlement, and Mr. Brown stated that they would discuss the subject during Non-Public.

**h. Administrator Report:**

Town Administrator Troy Brown reviewed the following subjects:

**i. CIP Meeting update**

Mr. Brown commented that the CIP Committee met last Monday, and they are very interested in learning about the ARPA funds and what the funds can be used for. The CIP Committee will plan to use the funds and present the Select Board with their plan. The Committee decided to meet on the first Monday of every month until March 2022.

The Committee will reach out to the Department Heads, Boards, and Committees for ideas. They will also review the CIP Plan that was adopted last year.

Mr. Brown mentioned that CIP Chairman Michael Croteau informed the Committee that the Impact Fee methodology was created with the help of the Planning Board and Bruce Mayberry. The methodology for Impact Fees took two and a half years to develop and was paid by a grant from the State.

Mr. Mayberry will be retiring at the end of the year, and Jay Minkarah, Executive Director of the NRPC, has offered to put together a proposal from the NRPC to update Litchfield's Impact Fee program.

**ii. Library Impact Fees Update**

Mr. Brown stated that legal counsel, as of right now, is supporting the determination by Bruce Mayberry regarding the library not being eligible for Impact Fees. Legal counsel added that if there was additional information available regarding growth, then the decision might change.

**iii. Christmas in Litchfield**

Mr. Brown commented that Christmas in Litchfield has requested to use the Municipal Complex for their tree lighting. He noted that the group had previously used Roy Memorial Park for their tree lighting. They will use the handicapped parking at Town Hall, and the rest of the parking will be at Sawmill Park.

Selectman Lynch stated that Christmas in Litchfield was at the Municipal Complex last year. Mr. Brown will reach out to the members of Christmas in Litchfield and ask why they want to have the tree lighting at Town Hall instead of Roy Memorial Park.

**i. Selectmen Reports:**

**i. Selectman R. Leary - Budget Committee:**

Selectman R. Leary commented that the Budget Committee met last week and will meet on October 14 at 7 pm.

ii. **Selectman R. Lascelles – Heritage Commission:**

Selectman R. Lascelles commented that the Heritage Commission has not met. Mr. Lascelles mentioned that he, Ms. Queenan, and Mr. Brown participated in an event in the Town of Merrimac. He stated that the event was a photo-op but believed they made their point.

iii. **Selectman K. Lynch – Conservation Commission:**

Selectman K. Lynch stated that the Conservation Commission meeting occurred last week in the Community Room at the Fire Station. The Conservation Commission did a survey, and the results are on the Town's website.

iv. **Selectman K. Queenan – Planning Board & NRPC:**

1. **Planning Board-**

Selectman K. Queenan mentioned that the Planning Board would continue to work on their Land-Use Laws and permitted uses in the current regions.

She noted that workshops are being planned during the next Planning Board meeting on October 19 at 7 pm.

2. **NRPC-**

Ms. Queenan stated that the next Commissioner meeting would be on Wednesday, December 15, at 7 pm.

j. **Public Input #2 @ 7:41 pm**

i. None

Public Input ended at 7:42 pm.

6. **Items Removed From Consent:**

a. None

7. **Non-Public:**

**Discussion:** None

**Motion:** (Selectman R. Lascelles / Selectman K. Lynch) motioned to enter Non-Public under RSA 91-A:3 II(c) - Reputation and RSA 91-A:3 II(i) - Legal Matters at 7:43 pm.

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

8. **Reconvene:**

**Discussion:** None

**Motion:** (Selectman K. Lynch / Selectman K. Queenan) motioned to adjourn the Non-Public Session at 9:05 pm.

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

9. **Adjournment:**

**Discussion:** None

**Motion:** (Selectman K. Lynch / Selectman K. Queenan) motioned to adjourn the Public Session and seal the Non-Public minutes indefinitely because it was determined that divulgence of the information likely would adversely affect the reputation of any person other than a member of the Board at 9:05 pm.

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

Respectfully Submitted,  
Matthew Sullivan  
BOS Recording Secretary

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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Kimberly M. Queenan