

## Selectmen's Meeting Minutes

### March 1, 2021

**7:00 PM** Meeting called to order by Selectboard Chairman, John Esposito. Also in attendance were Selectmen Kim Roberge and Tim Berry and minute taker, Laurie Brown.

Esposito led the meeting in a moment of silence.

Jill Weber came before the Board concerned that her neighbor is telling her that he is opening a gun shop and will be using the beginning of her driveway as access to this shop. He says that he will be cutting down all the trees on his property and has already made a cut in a stone wall for this purpose. Jim Whipple had told her that cutting into a stone wall was not legal. Weber's driveway follows an old town road that was discontinued in 2001. Her neighbor feels that, because it was a public way, he can use it. The Webers have been maintaining this as their driveway since 1974 and do not want the entrance to a gun shop off their driveway.

Berry said that the Planning Board had spoken of this at their last meeting and found that a title search of this road is needed to determine who owns the property now that the road has been discontinued. It is a civil, legal matter that is outside the purview of the Planning Board or Select Board.

Weber said that this property extends to the Francistown Turnpike and looks to be on our Map and Lot on the tax maps.

Berry said that there are often mistakes in the tax maps, and a title search would clear that up.

Roberge offered that a surveyor may be able to accomplish this also.

Esposito asked if the old road was a boundary between the two properties and was told yes. He then said that probably the road would be split down the middle and each property would own half. You need a good land attorney.

Berry said that there has been no application to the Planning Board for a gun shop.

Weber said that she wasn't sure he would go through the proper channels.

Heather Kennedy came to talk about Easter and Spring Gala. In order to begin planning for Gala, she needs to know if it will be a regular Gala, modified or cancelled all together. She said that neither the Police Department nor the Fire Department will agree to help with Easter even though they have been vaccinated. Chief Furlong said that it would put his family at risk. She is having trouble getting people to help.

Roberge said that a Gala must be modified or non-existent. We are having a Town Meeting in June with masks and distancing. In May we will not be ready for Spring Gala.

Kennedy said they listened to Furlong and are having a modified Easter. She doesn't feel like everyone is on board. The PD and FD have declined. Howard Brown has volunteered to help.

Esposito said that he agrees with a modified event is best; having a parade would be the biggest congregation of people and we should not do that.

Berry asked what the date is for Gala and was told May 15, 2021.

Bonnie Angulas figured that, if it is a modified event, and the FD can't have their breakfast and the Library can't have their book sale etc.

the departments may not want to participate because there is no benefit to them. She suggested looking at the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> week of August and having an "Old Home Day" or something similar. When you asked for us to contribute to stuffing the eggs, its not the same as sponsoring a basket from each department.

Esposito liked the idea of having something later in the summer.

Berry agreed. Cancel Spring Gala and have something later in the summer or in conjunction with Lamson Farm Day.

Angulas let the Board know that she has gotten a \$500 grant from Rural Libraries and Social Wellbeing to develop a program for our community that addresses concerns within our community. She would like to put together a Welcome Package for new residents that showcases our boards, commissions and committees. There is a survey that I have to conduct that I am asking the Board to fill out individually and anonymously and send in this week.

Board agreed to take the survey.

Esposito asked about the IT Service and Website.

Brown said that she has a Zoom meeting with CivicPlus this coming Wednesday morning.

Roberge said that we are a month into this, and I thought we would be further along.

Esposito asked about Roberge's email regarding appointing/unappointing board, commission and committee members. He feels that we have never had a problem with committee appointments. We do everything in March and send a letter to those we want to re-appoint. Roberge said that her policy has the Chairmen giving input as to changes in the make up of their committee in the first week of February. This gives the Selectmen a couple of weeks before the actual appointments in March.

Berry feels that it is a really good idea to have a procedure. He confirmed that the Board is still moving forward with reappointments this March.

Brown apprised the Board with the information she had gleaned from the NHMA regarding this issue. If a member quits or moves out of Town there needs to be no un-appointment. You can only un-appoint at the end of a term unless you are un-appointing for cause. In this case, non-attendance of meetings can be considered cause.

Esposito brought up the candidates Roberge has brought forward for appointment to the Town Hall Renovation Plan Committee. He said that one of them has been vocal, in the past, about wanting to tear down the Town Hall and build new. This committee is not here to discuss the merits of new vs. old; that has already been decided.

Roberge said that that is part of the tasking of the committee. It is called the THRPC to show that it is to review plans for the renovation. There is no going back to if we should renovate or build new. It should be no more than a one-year committee.

Esposito said that he doesn't want anyone on the committee that don't see the renovation as a priority.

Roberge read from her email, the task of the committee as she sees it: Review both plans for Town Hall renovation that taxpayers have already paid for. The one from Mike Petrovik and DEW Plan presented at Town Meeting March 2020 as well as previous plan from Town Building Facilities Use Committee and C.P. Williams Architects. Discuss with Town Employees plus and minuses of plans. Gain input from committee members, town employees who will be housed in the remodeled Town Hall and community members if necessary. Consider possible phasing of town hall remodel with cost differential, tax impact as well as plus and minuses. Advise what revisions or new plans are necessary to Selectmen by August 2021. Have recommended plans in place by October 2021, including new cost estimates. Present to Selectmen for approval and support. Aide Selectmen in informing community members of plans.

Esposito offered that the cost of building materials has skyrocketed.

Roberge agreed and said that the Board can put it out to bid again if necessary.

Berry said that he is ok with DEW; he likes the effort they have put forth. He asked Roberge to confirm that this new committee will be working in conjunction with the Board looking for funding for design and planning work.

Roberge said that she has been having conversations with DEW about that. When we approve of the tasking for the committee, we may need more engineering. I have heard from Townspeople that we have thrown a lot of money at this project and we don't want to waste any more.

Angulas asked when the Board would seat this committee.

Roberge said she would like to seat it in two weeks.

Angulas said that the Library hired an architect in July and, even with the money, couldn't get anyone to the table.

Roberge said that the committee would finish in August, leaving September and October to work with the architect. This committee will have to dive a little deeper for input from the taxpayers and employees. The most difficult thing will be the discussion about phasing.

Berry said that the task of the committee is to gather input from all parties involved and the community and get it to the architects.

Roberge added; through the Selectmen.

Berry said that they will come up with a plan and design. We need to offer input to the Town. Also, to get grants, we need to have a current plan. What we got from CP Williams was a concept – not a plan.

Esposito said that if this is going to require seed money, we need to know now.

Roberge asked Brown to put it on the Website and MV Chatter. She hopes that the Selectmen decide to stay with DEW; I don't want to be wasting their time.

Berry reminded everyone that DEW worked with Francetown for 7 years on their project. We did our comparison already: we chose DEW.

Angulas asked if the committee would meet weekly, monthly or what.

Roberge said that she sees the committee meeting bi-weekly. It depends on what the committee wants to do.

Esposito addressed Roberge's email regarding a policy for pay on days where the Office is closed due to weather. He said that when the Selectmen close the office, the full-time employees get paid. It has always been that way.

Roberge asked how the decision is made to close the office – do all three Selectmen weigh in, does it go by whether school is closed... what? And I have a problem with the disparity. Not all employees are treated the same. No other job pays hourly people when they don't work. I don't know what we do because there is nothing in writing.

Esposito remarked that it has always been done this way; last Friday I closed the office and Joan got paid.

Roberge said that it isn't fair across the board. We could have a 2-hour delay, or an early dismissal. Only a salaried person gets paid when the company is closed. We need to outline something.

We do this for the full-time office employees – we always have. We have never done it for the part-time people.

Angulas offered that the Library has implemented a telework policy so that all but one employee can work from home and get paid for the day. Last Friday the Trustees approved the closing, but all but one of us worked from home. A policy would be great. It might impact different departments differently. Before Covid-19, if the Library was closed, we still got paid.

Berry asked Roberge to come up with a policy for snow days and pay. We will go over it next week and maybe put it into our procedures. Fairness is important.

Esposito agreed that it should be written down. He also believes that if the transfer station has to be closed because of weather, the operators should get paid.

Board reviewed the minutes of 2/8/21. Berry motioned, seconded by Roberge to accept the minutes of February 8, 2021 as amended.

Berry; yes, Roberge; yes, Esposito; yes.

Board reviewed the minutes of 2/22/21. Berry motioned, seconded by Roberge to accept the minutes of February 22, 2021 as amended.

Berry; yes, Roberge; yes, Esposito; yes.

Board reviewed an application by the Purgatory Falls Fish and Game Club to hold a raffle. They will sell tickets from March 1, 2021 to June 26, 2021. Berry motioned, seconded by Roberge to approve the raffle application of the Fish and Game Club. Berry; yes, Roberge; yes, Esposito; yes.

Roberge said that she again tried to contact Fieldstone regarding the Culvert on Brook Road and their billing and have again gotten no response. She also put a call in to the State relative to this same culvert. No answer yet.

Roberge talked about the snow/rain event we got on Saturday and said that she had an inquiry from a resident as to why the dirt roads weren't sanded until Monday morning.

Esposito will call the DPW Director.

Berry mentioned that Trow Rd. was also icy and unsanded on Sunday.

**8:35 PM** As there was no further business before the Board, Berry motioned seconded by Roberge to adjourn.

Berry; yes, Roberge; yes, Esposito; yes.

Respectfully submitted,

Laurie Brown