

Wallingford Selectboard Meeting
Minutes
December 7, 2020

Selectboard Members Present: Bruce Duchesne, John McClallen, Patricia Pranger, Rose Regula, and Nelson Tift. The meeting was held via Zoom audio conference call.

Others present: Sandi Switzer, Trisha Nash, Phil Baker, Gary Fredette, Julie Sharon, Michael Luzader and Lt. Johnathon Bixby.

Selectboard Chair Nelson Tift called the regular Selectboard meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

Agenda Amendments. None.

Minutes. P. Pranger made a motion that was seconded by B. Duchesne to approve the 11/16/20 Minutes. Motion carried (4-0). R. Regula had not arrived for the meeting.

Pay Orders. P. Pranger made a motion that was seconded by J. McClallen to approve the 12/08/20 pay order total of \$51,448.96. Motion carried (4-0). R. Regula had not arrived for the meeting.

Road Commissioner Report. Road Commissioner Phil Baker said the Town of Mt. Holly wants to takeover grading a couple of abutting roads twice a year at a cost of \$200 to \$300. By consensus, the Board agreed at a rate of \$250.

Mr. Baker indicated the road crew had completed repairs to the grader and he instructed them to store the excavator in the garage for the winter. Mr. Baker asked about using remaining paving funds to purchase a brush hog unit for the excavator. Town Administrator Sandi Switzer said at the August 17 meeting the Board had agreed the remaining \$5,000 should not be spent given the economic implications of the pandemic. There was a subsequent discussion to use up to \$2,000 of the remaining paving funds as a local match for a grant to purchase a roller attachment after the road commissioner researched the equipment available. She indicated it was later decided the equipment was too expensive and the local match would be well above the \$2,000. J. McClallen suggested purchasing a lightweight brush hog for the excavator would be a waste of money.

N. Tift advised Mr. Baker to research the matter further and provide estimates at the 12/21 meeting. R. Regula joined the meeting and asked that potholes near the entrance and exit of the transfer station be filled.

Basketball Court. Mr. Baker said Town Administrator Sandi Switzer had provided him with estimates from Pike Industries (\$22,800), Bendig Paving (\$21,000) and Atlantic Paving (\$10,000) to repair the basketball court. He said Pike wanted to seal the cracks and add a layer of asphalt, while Bendig wanted to remove the old asphalt and install a new layer. Atlantic Paving, he said, was an out of state business that did not visit the court before offering an estimate and provided few details.

Mr. Baker said he did not see any advantage to removing the base as the court needed to be raised above ground level to prevent saturation. B. Duchesne asked if Mr. Baker had spoken to the contractors. Mr. Baker said he had talked to Mike Mullin from Pike and Chris Bendig from Bendig Paving.

Recreation Committee Chair Trisha Nash agreed the court needed to be higher than ground level so standing water does not cause damage. There was a discussion about going out to bid on sealing the cracks and adding asphalt. It was noted the Town went out to bid on that project and Pike was the only bidder. The Town then took the extra step of seeking out additional bids for comparison. Bendig would only provide an estimate to remove the old asphalt and apply new. Atlantic Paving provided an estimate, but did not visit the site or offer any details.

Mr. Baker reminded the Board line paving and resetting the hoops would be additional costs. Gary Fredette commented the Town had approved a \$35,000 article at Town Meeting last March for this project. After further discussion, B. Duchesne made a motion that was seconded by P. Pranger to accept Pike's bid of \$22,800 to seal the cracks and add a layer of asphalt to the basketball court next spring. Motion carried (5-0).

Public Comments. None.

FY'22 Public Safety. Rutland County Sheriff Department's Lt. Johnathon Bixby said 40 hours of weekly coverage starting July 1 would increase 1 percent due largely to administrative related costs resulting in an annual cost of \$86,254. N. Tift said the Board had received Sheriff David Fox's report regarding yearly activities for 2020 as compared to 2019.

There was a discussion regarding the reduced revenue from Ordinance Fines as a result of few stops because of COVID-19. Lt. Bixby said the number of stops has increased in recent weeks. N. Tift said he hoped in the new fiscal year they would be back to normal levels. He added RCSD also conducted welfare checks, responded to citizens calls and benefitted from Governor Highway Safety Patrols at no cost. Lt. Bixby said a DUI checkpoint was conducted in Town through that program.

J. McClallen suggested reducing patrols to 30 hours a week. He then made a motion that was seconded by B. Duchesne to budget for RCSD patrols of 30 hours a week (line #5406). Motion was rejected (2-3). J. McClallen and B. Duchesne voted in the minority.

R. Regula made a motion that was seconded by P. Pranger to budget RCSD patrols for 40 hours a week (\$86,254). Motion carried (3-2). J. McClallen and B. Duchesne voted in the minority.

By consensus, the Board set line #5402 at \$250, line #5408 at \$1,200; and line #5410 at \$50. Board members agreed the animal control officer could purchase a catch pole at a cost of \$95 plus shipping.

FY'22 Recreation. Ms. Nash provided an overview of the draft Recreation budget. There was a discussion regarding a \$10,000 request for a Recreation Director. R. Regula said she was not in favor of increasing the Recreation budget for that amount while the Town was struggling with pandemic related fiscal matters. J. McClallen said there was no need for a director as

volunteers had successfully implemented many local programs and events. Recreation Committee member Michael Luzader said volunteers were running out of steam and it was possible some programs such as Little League would not take place if volunteers were unavailable. B. Duchesne said every year someone steps up to fill the shoes for programs of interest to the community. P. Pranger expressed concern the overall Recreation budget proposal was up \$20,000 at time the Town should be tightening its belt. J. McClallen said plenty of recreational opportunities already existed throughout the community for children and adults. J. McClallen made a motion that was seconded by B. Duchesne to remove the Recreation Director line item from the budget. Motion carried (4-1). N. Tift voted in the minority.

There was a discussion about the requested \$5,000 for Capital line #5811. It was noted repairs to the retaining wall, replacement of concession stand gutters and interior painting of the concession stand were among the upcoming projects. The town administrator said there was \$14,575 in a recreation CD.

Mr. Luzader expressed concern with some of the decisions the Board was making related to Recreation line items. He added he raised the issue of field maintenance recently and no action was taken. The town administrator responded those concerns were shared with baseball/softball coordinator Brian Ferguson who favored waiting until spring to make repairs. Regarding the field maintenance line #5813, there was a discussion about the \$2,500 in a Berkshire Bank account for Little League expenses. The town administrator said Steve Pytlik, a signatory on the account, had recently exchanged emails with Brian Ferguson about using those funds for field maintenance in the spring. The town administrator clarified the Town had no authority over those funds.

Board members set the following Recreation lines: #5801 \$9,000; #5901 \$9,700; #5906 \$0; #5803 \$250; #5804 \$400; #5805 \$1,000; #5806 \$1,300; #5807 \$2,000; #5808 \$525; #5809 \$650; #5810 \$1,000; #5811 \$0; #5812 \$2,600; #5813 \$0; #5814 \$500; #5817 \$1,000; #5815 \$0; #5818 \$0.

Conservation Commission Seats. By consensus, the Board agreed to a Conservation Commission request to reduce the number of seats to five to make it easier to reach a quorum.

WES Stormwater Manhole. By consensus, the Board denied a request for the Town to assume ownership and cover maintenance and cleaning costs of a manhole at Wallingford Elementary that would be part of a stormwater management plan that is currently in the design phase. The project is part of a grant with no local match secured by the Town and administered by Rutland Natural Resources Conservation District.

Website/Privacy Policy. Board members reviewed the Website Policy. B. Duchesne recommended removing the word “obscene” under the Link paragraph. P. Pranger made a motion that was seconded by R. Regula to approve the policy with the recommended edit. Motion carried (5-0).

Selectboard Concerns. None.

Other Business. R. Regula thanked the road crew for transporting tires from the transfer station to RCSWD's transfer station on Gleason Road in Rutland.

Board members by consensus approved Dean Mooney's bid to purchase the Town Hall copier for \$500.

P. Pranger thanked the town administrator for a well written Dedication to be included in the annual Town Report.

Holiday gift certificates in the amount of \$25 each were approved for municipal employees.

Town Clerk and Treasurer Julie Sharon suggested utilizing the cell tower revenue to replace the Town Hall boiler within the next five years as the municipality's insurance company indicated would be necessary.

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The meeting adjourned at 8:39 p.m.

Date Approved: 12/21/20

Sandi Switzer/Town Administrator