

## SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES

May 3, 2021

**PRESENT:** Cindy Silver: Select Board Chair, Kevin Meehan and Norman Brown: Select Board members, all comprising a quorum of the board.

**ALSO PRESENT:** Kathi Marshall: Assistant to the Select Board, Julia Gilmore and Joe Marshall: Jefferson Broadband Committee Representatives, Chris Milligan: Fire Chief, Jason Call: Trustee of the Trust Funds Chair, Terri Larcomb: Deputy Town Treasurer, Lynne Holland: Town Moderator, Paul Hayes: Reporter for the Caledonian Record, and Cheryl Marshall: Trustee of the Trust Funds, Member

Cindy Silver called the meeting to order at 7:07 p.m. and those in attendance stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

### ACCOUNTS PAYABLE/PAYROLL

Norm made a motion to approve Accounts Payable and Payroll items for the week ending May 1, 2021 and to authorize Kathi to pay invoices and payroll. Kevin seconded the motion. The motion passed, and accounts payable and payroll were approved.

### PUBLIC INPUT

**Broadband Update/Julia Gilmore and Joe Marshall:** Julia and Joe attended the monthly Coös County Broadband Committee meeting and came before the board to deliver an update. At the meeting they discussed the idea that small towns can work with broadband companies to bring internet service to the underserved or unserved in the community. In effect the town would take out a bond to pay for setting up this service. (This bond for service will not increase taxes.) It is generally a 20-year contract with the provider. To pay the bond individual customers pay \$10 monthly for the life of the bond. At the end of the twenty years, the town has three options: it can take over ownership and operate the network itself, it can open to bids from other providers, or it can renegotiate the contract with the original provider.

Norm asked about upgrades in technology over this 20-year period, and Joe said upgrades and maintenance were a part of the contract. He also stressed that not everyone has to sign on for the service. Norm expressed concern about the town taking out a bond and at some point having the supplying company walk away. It would mean the town would be stuck with the bond. He felt that prospect should be explored in more detail.

Joe said he could check to see which towns have signed on, and perhaps find what the positive aspects of the contract are. Cindy said to be sure to seek out any negative issues as well. Once we have answers to some of these initial questions it would be a good idea to have the company come and speak to the board.

Julia mentioned we had also received a response from Spectrum, and they seemed anxious to offer their services to expand coverage in the area. Until that point Spectrum had always been hesitant to get involved in Jefferson due to the distancing of homes and other issues. Now there are funds available through grants and so on, and it makes the prospect more appealing.

The next meeting of the Broadband Committee will be May 26, so Julia and Joe will give another update to the Select Board at their meeting on Monday, June 7. (There will be no Select Board Meeting on Memorial Day, May 31.)

**Fire Department Proposals/Chris Milligan:** Chris explained that the dispatch issue has been settled. For years dispatch services for Jefferson FD and EMS have been handled by the Department of Transportation. Recently they

opted out of providing that service. Beginning in June or July dispatch will be handled through the Grafton County Sheriff's Office. The anticipated cost for this service will be about \$2,500 annually. Previously, through NHDOT there was no cost for dispatch service.

Chris has a contract for board members to sign once the proposed expense has been approved at Town Meeting.

Engine #2 needs new springs on the back. Chris would like to proceed with that work. The only place that can accommodate the truck is in Barre, VT. They were given a quote of \$1,665.23. Tentative date for repair, if the board approves the expense, is May 17. If they get the truck there early it will be done the same day.

Norm asked if the money was in the Fire Department's budget, and Chris said it was, specifically for maintenance. Norm then made a motion to approve the expense to have new springs put on Engine #2. Kevin seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

Chris sent out air cylinders to be hydro tested. He said in order to upgrade and organize it was important to acquire the wall-mounted holders for the air cylinders, and to update the connectors between the air cylinders themselves (there are six of them). The price will be \$1,140.20. He would like to go ahead and place the order. Norm made a motion to approve the purchase, and Kevin seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Chris went on to speak about the alarm system for the Fire Station that had been approved at the previous Town Meeting. He received a bid from Capitol Alarm, but Royal Electric came in with a lower quote. They can begin work on June 1, 2021. Chris said at some point before the project is completed he will need to have two dedicated phone lines added to the one the station already has. Kevin said that was the same set-up that was at the JCC.

Chris said Norm gave him the price the insurance company has allowed toward repair of the fire station following the fire. Chris has a quote from Simoneau Painting for \$3,500 to put two coats of stain on the building, to power wash, scrape, and dispose of all stained debris. Norm said he would contact the insurance company to see if they could send something to the board members so they could sign off on it—something to indicate the insurance company was covering the cost.

Chris also mentioned that he had received permission from the board to further look into the possibility of having a fire pond on property across from the Water Wheel Restaurant. He has met with Cathy Conway so she could see the layout of the property and pull together some figures based on engineering costs, etc. He has also consulted with the DOT Utility Coordinator. Norm asked if it would be stream-fed or spring-fed, and Chris said it would be stream-fed. Chris is also investigating costs for an underground water system for fire protection.

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR 4.26.2021**

Kevin made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from 4.26.2021 as recorded. Norm seconded the motion. The motion passed, and the minutes were approved.

#### **NON-PUBLIC RSA 91-A: 3 (If needed)**

#### **REPORT OF DEPARTMENTS AND/OR BOARDS**

Cindy asked when one member of the Highway Department is on vacation, such as Mark was the previous week, doesn't the town need another member of the department to be on hand to cover. Norm said when the second person was hired years ago the discussion included the instruction that both should not take off at the same time.

Norm said we have to make sure Mark knows that someone should remain at work if the other is gone. Cindy said she would have thought the grounds around the Community Center would have been cleaned up prior to town meeting, but John came and did it. Board members accepted the Highway-Business Office Report for the week ending May 1, 2021.

### NEW BUSINESS

**Veteran's Tax Credit Application:** Kathi amended the tax credit application from the previous week and presented it with updated information for board members' signatures.

Board members also approved and signed a Building Permit for Russ Stockton for a garage at 90 Israels River Road and a Current Use application from Jeremy and Sandy Dean on Presidential Highway.

### UNFINISHED BUSINESS

**Lancaster Ambulance:** The Lancaster Ambulance Contract was presented for signatures. Norm had several questions about the agreement since he was not a member of the board when the new contract was first presented by Lancaster Ambulance. He thought the price increase was substantial, and he wondered why the town didn't receive an answer to the question of having the increase in price spread out over a three-year period. Norm was also concerned about how much the price per person had increased. Board members felt it would be a good idea to speak with Lancaster to go over some of these concerns before the contract was signed. Norm also suggested we check with Gorham to see if they might offer service to Jefferson. Cindy asked if that should be checked out prior to having Lancaster come to answer questions, and Norm said he would do more research before they would speak to Lancaster.

**Dan Hebert/Renovations Proposal:** Norm and Joe gave Dan Hebert a tour of the JCC building and a look at the schematic of the building as well. They explained they wanted to cost out upcoming projects in phases based on what the town can afford to pay. Norm explained the library has its own funds to move forward with, and they will contribute to shared expenses. Dan explained he has an architect who will design the complete changes to the building in phases so they can be accomplished in a particular order. It will be \$15,000 to do the design of the changes. If the town uses him to do the work, the \$15,000 will go toward the cost of the job. Norm contacted two other companies, but they did not respond. ADG said they were so busy they could not even look at it for a year or more. Norm felt the \$15,000 would be a good investment. He made a motion to approve Dan Hebert's proposal to design a plan for upcoming renovations at the Community Center for \$15,000. Kevin seconded the motion. All members agreed, and the motion was approved.

Cindy asked Kathi if she had seen a building permit from 115A, from Aaron Davis. She said there is a large deck going up there and she wondered if there was a building permit. Kathi said she has not seen one.

Kathi asked about hosting clubs in the future, and what the protocol would be to allow groups into the building. Norm said it was tough due to the alarm system. In the past everyone had a key, but that is not possible now. Cindy felt we shouldn't let other groups use the building until we have a maintenance person to open and close the building. The Rock and Gem Club has one meeting scheduled, and it is on the same night as the Boy Scouts meeting. Kathi said she will call the president of the club and make sure they wrap up their meeting by 8:00 p.m. so the Scout Master can lock the building.

**Trustee for the Library:** Norm made a motion to approve Brenda Roy as the new Trustee for the Library who would take Norm's place since Norm vacated that position when he became a board member. Norm asked if she was to serve out a new 3-year term or only until the elections in March 2022. Kathi said that Liz said at the last meeting she would serve to fulfill that seat until the elections in March of 22. Norm told Kathi to double check the term limit.

**Update on Audit:** Kathi said she has spoken with Roberts & Green and with Linda about the upcoming annual audit. Tamar from Roberts and Green asked if they could submit a list of needed items for Kathi to scan and e-mail back to her like she did last year. Tamar gave the town a couple options—the end of May or the beginning of June. Kathi spoke with Linda, and they decided since Linda is trying to scan the documents left from the fire, she could really use the next few weeks to get that done. Then we would have invoices to send. If she can't get them done Kathi will have to call each company and ask them for the invoice she needs. So they decided the first two weeks of June would be best. That way each of them would have time to pull together needed items for the requests to come. Norm said he believed the audit was supposed to be "on site." Kevin explained this was a different company than the one that worked for us when Norm served on the board. They said we should look at the contract from Roberts and Green just to check and be certain.

**Quickbooks Online:** Kathi explained that immediately following the fire she needed access to the accounting program in order to do payroll and to pay invoices. She said since she had come to work she had been saving the accounting program on alternating thumb drives, always keeping the most recent off-site in order to protect the data. After discussion with the board it was decided that Quickbooks Online might be the safest way to set up the accounting program because it would always be saved online as opposed to an external drive on the desk. Kathi had Quickbooks upload the information from the thumb drive and set up an account online. After speaking with several technicians from Quickbooks she was told that based on the size and amount of the town's activities, the program online had much more information than the town needed. It was recommended that we maintain the updated desktop version which could be rented for approximately \$35 monthly. Quickbooks said if and when the town was ready they would be happy to expand the program to the online version, but for now they felt this was the best fit for the town.

**Railroad Crossings:** Norm mentioned he received a call from Bob McCreedy regarding the town's railroad crossings and the fact they have not been maintained. Mr. McCreedy said he called a gentleman named Jeffers who owns the steel on the tracks. Apparently he made a deal with the state and he owns the actual steel and says that maintaining the crossing is the town's responsibility. Norm suggested the town contact Representative Merner and Executive Councilor Kenney to see what options the town has going forward.

#### **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Kevin brought up the property on Presidential Highway that has multiple campers and a lot of activity on it. Norm suggested sending Paul Ingersoll to the site to check out the activity. Once we have an accurate idea of what is going on and whether or not there is a septic system that has been approved, the board can make a better decision regarding these concerns.

#### **PUBLIC INPUT**

Paul Hayes from the Caledonian Record asked about the status of the old town hall and town offices. Norm

explained they were no longer there, that the site had been razed and all the debris removed.

Cheryl Marshall wanted the board to know she appreciated the fact she could attend board meetings via Zoom when she was not able to attend in person. She also thanked the board for the great job they are doing.

Jason said he spoke with the fireworks rep once again, and she cannot confirm a 4th of July weekend date until she hears from Errol. Jason also spoke with Waumbek representatives, and they are fine with fireworks. Cindy said the parade is definitely on for the 4th of July. It will begin at 10:00 a.m.

**NON-PUBLIC RSA 91-A:3 II (None)**

**ADJOURNMENT**

Norm made a motion to adjourn the weekly Select Board meeting. Kevin seconded the motion. The motion passed, and the meeting was adjourned at 9:03 p.m.

The next meeting of the Select Board will be Monday, May 10, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. in person at the Jefferson Community Center.

Respectfully submitted,