

## SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES

**Monday, June 28, 2021**

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

**ALSO PRESENT:** Kathi Marshall: Assistant to the Select Board, Don Dawson and Andrew Dawson (remote): Owners of Netafy, Internet Provider Service, Jason Call: Trustees of the Trust Funds Chair, Joe Marshall and Julia Gilmore: Jefferson Representatives to Coös County Broadband Committee, and Carol and Shawn Davenport, Jefferson residents.

Cindy Silver called the meeting to order at 7:07 p.m.

### PUBLIC INPUT

**Don Dawson and Andrew Dawson/Netafy Internet Company:** Netafy is a fixed wireless internet company that has been in business since 2004. They began in Massachusetts, but when they traveled to New Hampshire they saw the need for service here and felt they could accommodate folks who have been underserved in this area. They currently have 150 customers in Jefferson with 2,700 customers throughout Coös County.

They have multiple network nodes and towers throughout Coös County and actually serve towns from within Massachusetts all the way to Pittsburg, NH. Mr. Dawson said they are fully prepared to keep up with demand and to offer 50Mbps/50Mbps coverage to everyone in Jefferson.

They offer a 30-day money-back guarantee. No matter what they need to do to set up your coverage, if you are not happy you can cancel your order. Don said all of the equipment will be removed at no cost and you will receive a refund or every penny you spent.

Norm mentioned he had recently acquired service from Netafy and he said it worked great. Cindy is also a customer and she is very pleased with the network's provisions. Norm told Don he thought it had been mentioned that Netafy would work out a plan for the town of Jefferson. He asked what Don would need from the town in order to set up the plan. Don said the issue is identifying each building and where it located. He said you can see some buildings from the road but you can't tell if they are a residence or a barn. He asked Norm if Netafy could be supplied with each address for the residences in town. He felt a 911 map would be perfect.

Don said they will submit information, as the board had requested. He said they do not have a great deal of experience with grant monies and so on, but with clear instructions as to what they need to submit they will do their very best to accommodate the town's needs to move forward, and hopefully to supply internet service for all of Jefferson.

### ACCOUNTS PAYABLE/PAYROLL

Norm made a motion to approve Accounts Payable and Payroll items for the week ending June 26, 2021 and to authorize Kathi to pay invoices and payroll. Kevin seconded the motion. The motion passed, and accounts payable and payroll were approved.

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR 6.21.2021

Norm made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from 6.21.2021 as recorded. Kevin seconded the motion. The motion passed, and the minutes were approved.

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

## REPORT OF DEPARTMENTS AND/OR BOARDS

Board members read and accepted the Highway and Business Office reports for the week.

### NEW BUSINESS

**Building Permit/Davenport:** This permit was presented to the board for the second time since the Planning and Zoning Boards had questions about the proposed new addition and its distance from the road. The applicants said the distance was 52-feet, however Kevin said after consulting their maps the other boards believed the distance was much less. The board instructed the applicants to go back to the Zoning Board to apply for a zoning variance. The board also stated that the planned septic system for the property should be installed prior to the addition being added to the home. Jason told the applicants they could apply for a special exception to have a home-based business on the property at the same time. He felt they would be good candidates.

**Fireworks Letter for Signatures:** Kathi presented a letter for board members to sign that granted permission to Sherri Anderson to do a fireworks show on town property on July 2, 2021.

**Abatement:** Board members signed an abatement presented by Mary Gross on behalf of the Nature Conservancy in the amount of \$60.00.

**Change of Use:** Board members discussed applications that come forward regarding Current Use or Change of Land Use. They each agreed that with every application, including Building Permits, Driveway Permits, Current Use Applications, and so on, they must each go through the process of being looked at by each board and the Fire Chief. This is to make sure all board members are aware of the changes taking place in town as well as make certain there are no questions or concerns regarding any application.

**Photocopier:** Kathi presented the photocopier rental agreement for a board member's signature. The contract specified the copier was also a color scanner. The board chair signed the agreement. Kathi will e-mail to Conway Office Solutions and they hope to have the copier here by early the following week.

**Trailer/Septic Issue:** A complaint came in regarding the noise level on Route 2 where there is apparent work being done at all hours of the night, disturbing neighbors. Kathi instructed the property owners who were concerned about the issue to file a complaint with the State Police.

Kevin insisted there was no permit for a septic on the property as he had checked the DES website. Kathi said apparently they have been using a portable toilet there. Norm said a portable toilet is not an approved system for waste disposal and is only meant to be temporary while construction work is going on. Kevin said the land owner needs a letter from the board reminding her she must be in compliance with land use ordinances and that she should "cease and desist." Kathi said she would write a letter and present to board members for approval.

**Memorial Donations:** Cheri Marshall was not present at the meeting, but had given the board a brief update as to the amount collected to date. That total is \$6,374 as of June 24.

**New Phone:** Linda asked if she could reactivate the cell phone so the town clerk could have its own special number. Currently the town clerk and the town office are on the same line and often interrupt each other when someone is trying make a phone call. Norm suggested getting a phone line specifically for the town clerk. Kevin said the phones

should work so that each office can patch a call through to the other. Kathi said she had to order two dedicated lines for the Fire Department and she would add another phone line at the offices for the town clerk.

## PUBLIC INPUT

### ANY OTHER BUSINESS

**Employee Compensation:** Norm did a three-year spreadsheet on annual increases for employees for the years 2018-2020. Years prior the town usually followed the Consumer Price Urban Index, and that usually worked well. It kept current dollars equal to what last year's dollars used to buy. In recent years, the town has used the COLA (Cost of Living Allowance) increase that is issued by Social Security. In 2018 the increase was 2.4%, in 2019 it was 1.8% and in 2020 it was 1.2%. Norm said he has always been of the belief that your employees should be compensated to the best of your ability, because happy employees usually stay in their jobs and don't look elsewhere for better pay. He felt the town should do some research into salaries paid in other towns so Jefferson can make certain its rates of pay are comparable. Norm said he doesn't mind doing that down the road, and showing those results to the board.

Norm then made a motion to make those increases, as he had mentioned, beginning July 1, 2021, to get us into the remainder of the year, and from there to use the Consumer Price Index each year moving forward. Kevin pointed out that the percentage recommendation from COLA for the three previous years had already been given to employees. Therefore the difference (between COLA and Consumer Price Index) was the figure that should be added to the new wage. Norm said he would adjust the current wage and salary schedule to reflect the appropriate wage effective July 1, 2021. Kevin seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Norm also wanted to mention the salary of the Tax Collector. He said his opinion was that board members, including his earlier tenure with the board, had been remiss in keeping up with wage increases. Norm said even though it is an appointed position, the tax collector deserved equal rights to wage increases as other town employees. After calculating how Consumer Price Index pricing would have impacted the tax collector's salary, Norm made a motion to increase the tax collector's wage to \$14,000 annually as opposed to \$12,500, effective July 1, 2021. Kevin seconded the motion, and the motion passed.

Kevin mentioned that the stipends paid annually to certain employees, such as the Supervisors of the Check List, have not changed in years. He asked that those positions also be considered for wage review in order to be fair. Norm fully agreed and said he would do that once he got the information on those employees.

**Town Clerk:** Norm suggested that the position of Town Clerk be looked at carefully when the time for warrant articles came up. He said that electing a town clerk annually makes absolutely no sense. With the time needed to learn and become certified plus the time it takes to master the job could easily take up the year itself. Norm said he wasn't even sure that someone could fully learn and understand the position in three years. He thought it might be a good idea to bring the issue before the town and see if perhaps the job should be an appointed position, like the town clerk.

Kevin said it is important to discuss with Linda who might become the new Deputy Tax Collector now that Linda no longer holds that position. Kevin said we need to make sure that happens.

**Maintenance Position:** Norm made a motion to hire the applicant who applied for the Maintenance Position at the JCC. The job is 15-20 hours weekly, salary is \$15.00 per hour without insurance benefits. Kevin seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

**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 10:03 p.m.

The next meeting of the Select Board will be Monday, July 12, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. in person at the Jefferson Community Center.

Respectfully submitted,