

## SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES

January 25, 2021

There was a meeting of the Select Board Monday, January 25, at 6:00 p.m. The meeting was held by remote teleconference.

PRESENT: Tom Brady, Chair, Cindy Silver and Kevin Meehan, all members comprising a quorum of the board.

ALSO PRESENT: Kathi Marshall, Assistant to the Select Board and Chris Milligan, Fire Chief.

Tom Brady called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m. He then read the following:

*As Chair of the Jefferson, New Hampshire Select Board I find that due to the state of emergency declared by the governor as the result of the COVID-19 pandemic and in accordance with the governor's emergency order #12 pursuant to executive order 2020-04 this public body is authorized to meet electronically which was authorized pursuant to the governor's emergency order. However, in accordance with the emergency order I am confirming that we are:*

- A. Providing public access to the meeting by telephone, and we are utilizing a telephone service so all members of the Town of Jefferson Select Board have the ability to communicate contemporaneously during this meeting through this platform. And the public has access to listen and, if necessary, to participate in this meeting by dialing the following phone number: 1-866-678-6823 and needing ID number 8959399 followed by the pound (#) sign.
- B. Providing public notice of necessary information for accessing the meeting. We previously gave notice to the public of the necessary information for accessing the meeting including how to access the meeting telephonically. Instructions have also been provided through the Town of Jefferson's website [www.jeffersonnh.org](http://www.jeffersonnh.org)
- C. Providing a mechanism for the public to alert the public body during the meeting if there is a problem with access. If anybody has a problem please call 586-4553 or e-mail [townofjefferson@myfairpoint.net](mailto:townofjefferson@myfairpoint.net).
- D. During the meeting if the public is unable to access the meeting. In the event the public is unable to access the meeting they will be adjourned and rescheduled.

*Please note that all votes taken during this meeting will be done by a roll call vote, and please remember the meeting is being recorded.*

Tom took roll call attendance: Tom Brady, Chair, "present." Cindy Silver, Select Board Member, "present." Kevin Meehan, Select Board Member, "present." Kathi Marshall "present." All were alone at their locations.

Board members reviewed the proposed budget and Warrant Articles for the upcoming town meeting. A discussion ensued regarding a possible cost-of-living increase in 2021 for hourly employees that would include members of the Fire Department. A roll call vote was taken with Cindy voting "aye" and Tom voting "aye." The motion passed. As an active member of the Fire Department, Kevin abstained from the vote.



## **ACCOUNTS PAYABLE AND PAYROLL**

Cindy made a motion to approve the accounts payable and payroll items for the week ending 1-23-21, and to authorize Kathi to pay them and sign related reports on behalf of the board members. Kevin seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken with Cindy voting "aye," Kevin voting "aye," and Tom voting "aye." The motion passed.

## **PUBLIC INPUT**

**Chris Milligan:** Chris joined the meeting to discuss Warrant Articles, particularly one he was submitting to prepare for changes that may be coming in 2021 concerning emergency dispatching and radio communications. His warrant asks for the establishment of a radio/dispatch CRF to prepare for new expenses the town may be incurring this summer when the current dispatch service changes.

Chris also inquired about gathering information for a possible fire pond to be established on Route 2 across from the Water Wheel Restaurant. The property owner has offered his pond for that use, and it would be a constant H2O source for the fire department. Chris asked the board members if they would authorize his speaking with an engineer to estimate a cost. Board members agreed.

## **APPROVAL OF BOARD MINUTES FOR 1.18.2021**

Cindy made a motion to approve the meeting minutes dated 1.18.2021 as presented. Kevin seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken with Cindy voting "aye," Kevin voting "aye," and Tom voting "aye." The motion passed.

## **REPORT OF DEPARTMENTS AND BOARDS**

Board members approved the Highway and Business Reports for the week ending 1.23.2021.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

**Town Meeting/Absentee Voting:** The Governor's Emergency Order #83 has allowed towns to postpone Town Meeting until the second Tuesday of April, May, June or July due to Covid-19. Town meeting cannot be held remotely if people are expected to vote since a voter must be present at the town meeting in order to cast a ballot. With limited space in the town hall there is no possible way to hold town meeting and have everyone maintain proper social distance in that space. Members agreed the town meeting should be postponed.

It was noted that postponement of the town meeting did not mean voting details would change. The voting would still take place on Tuesday, March 9, 2021 with the same safety protocols that were in place for the November Presidential Election. It also meant that preparations for public access to the proposed budget would need to be done prior to the Budget Hearing on February 1.

Tom suggested they set up a meeting with legal counsel to go over the guidelines for a postponement and the preliminary preparations prior to a newly scheduled meeting. Kathi said she would check with legal counsel.

Board members said they would also need information on when absentee ballots were available, and when they were to be returned. Kathi was asked to check with Polly and Lynne for that information.



**Letter of Engagement:** The law office of McDonald-Hopkins has been retained by Primex Insurance to investigate the computer breach the town had in December. Kathi met with them remotely and they have presented a Letter of Engagement to the board to be signed and returned so they can begin work. The letter includes information on pricing, but the legal team informed Kathi that the town will only have to pay the deductible of \$1,000 since the town is covered for cyber-security risks. Primex will pay all other expenses for the investigation. Kathi confirmed with Primex that they had called in this legal team to assess any lingering threats due to the cyber breach.

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**Transfer Station Container:** Kathi received two quotes for the new container for the Transfer Station. After checking with Linda, she was informed that the funds were available in the Transfer Station CRF since we had deposited more funds in 2020. The price quote from Presby Steel was much lower than the other and the board approved the quote from Presby. Kevin mentioned the price should be reflected in the proposed budget for 2021.

**Lancaster Ambulance:** Kathi noted the proposed price for the new Lancaster Ambulance contract was more than \$27,000. That was up from \$16,051. Tom suggested she let Lancaster know that was a difficult amount to work into the town budget. Kathi informed the board she sent a note to Lancaster letting them know that. Lancaster responded they would have to stop ambulance service to Jefferson if the town could not pay, so Kathi left the amount of \$27,000 in the budget. The board agreed.

**Assessing Possibilities:** Since the town assessor retired in December of 2020, the town has been seeking a new assessor to carry on the work. Kathi said she called all the surrounding towns to see who does their assessing. She has also received some leads from Berlin as well as the Municipal & Property Division of the NH Department of Revenue in Concord. She will share the information with Linda and will inform the board of information gathered from these leads.

**.Gov E-mail:** Kathi has inquired about setting up a .gov e-mail address for the town. She received some information from the .gov contact. He is going to follow up with a template for a letter that board members will need to sign in order to obtain the .gov address.

### **Adjournment**

Cindy made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Kevin seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken with Cindy voting "aye," Kevin voting "aye," and Tom voting "aye." The motion carried and the meeting was adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

The next meeting of the Select Board will be Monday, February 1, at 6:00 p.m. for the public hearing on the budget for 2021. The regular Select Board meeting will follow immediately after at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,