

Minutes  
CONWAY SELECTBOARD  
Conway Grammar School, 24 Fournier Road  
February 8, 2016, 6:30 p.m.

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Select Board members present: John O'Rourke, Chair; Jim Moore, Clerk; Robert Baker

Others present: Tom Hutcheson, Town Administrator; Liz Jacobson-Carroll, Assistant to the TA; Jim Bosman, Zachary Howard

*Minutes*

- **On a motion from John O'Rourke to accept the minutes of January 25, 2016, seconded by Jim Moore, the vote was unanimous in favor.**

*Warrants*

- **On a motion from John O'Rourke to sign the vendor warrant for \$50,941.68, the payroll warrant for \$98,796.29, and the payroll deduction warrant for \$25,839.99, seconded by Jim Moore, the vote was unanimous in favor.**

*Meetings Attended by Selectboard Members*

None.

*Citizens' Concerns*

- Zachary Howard indicated that he continues to believe that a road sign meant to slow traffic is needed on Whately Road at the corner of Route 116. Tom Hutcheson noted that the Department of Transportation responded to an earlier request for a sign at the same intersection by clearing sight lines, but that they are unable to put a sign on Route 116. Jim Moore explained that 4-way stop signs are needed at the Corner of Baptist Hill, Shelburne Falls Road, and Route 116. Tom Hutcheson offered to follow up with the Highway Superintendent regarding both signs.

*Old Business*

- *FY 2017 Town Budget*  
Tom Hutcheson reported that he has received additional submissions from departments, and that he expects to present a draft budget at the 2/16/16 meeting. At that time, he will have preliminary figures from the Council of Governments, and Article 2 on the warrant will need amending. He anticipates needing \$2500 for a Town "end-of-year" audit, he said, and the Parks, Recreation & Trails Committee is requesting \$7750, some of which is to hire a coordinator. Conway's contribution to the COG may go down, in part because he has reduced the hours needed by the Accountant from 10 to 8, he noted. Tom Hutcheson reported that the school budgets have gone up by a total of \$158,674; this reflects significant increases in teacher salaries (due to back payments of vacation time to retirees), transportation costs, and transportation for an additional technical school student. The total rise in Article 2 will be approximately \$283,450; this year's increase is almost 5.4%, last year's was 1.4%, he said. He noted, however, that the Town is doing well, that its own expenses are rising modestly. Discussion included reference to the markedly lower budget of the Conway Parks, Recreation & Trails Committee relative to those of neighboring towns Whately and Deerfield. In response to questions from Jim Bosman, Tom Hutcheson noted that properly bringing the private Conway Youth Sports under the P,R&T Committee umbrella will preclude an increase in Town liability, that while the performance of CORI checks is not accounted for in the budget, that task can be done internally.  
Tom Hutcheson reviewed the cost of the changes he has proposed regarding the building maintenance function, the Highway Department, and the Assistant to the Town Administrator, as indicated in his February 1 written brief. Robert Baker suggested hiring a townsperson to perform the building maintenance work, suggesting that a retiree with a carpentry background would be particularly well qualified. Tom Hutcheson noted that the bulk of the work, currently performed by himself, is clerical. John O'Rourke suggested that the Select Board consider the proposed departmental changes at a future meeting. Tom Hutcheson noted that in order to account for them in the

FY17 budget, decisions would need to be made in the next few weeks. Also, Tom Hutcheson drew attention to his proposal to move forward in the design of the renovation of the Town Hall gymnasium into office space.

- *Human Resources Budget Implications*

Tom Hutcheson reviewed Proposed Salary Ranges to FY 2016 Survey Data (General Government) as well as his February 1, 2016 Human Resources Policies written brief, noting a breakdown of decisions he would like the Select Board to consider. He proposed bringing all staff up to the lowest salary in the market range indicated, at a cost of \$12,000. Consultant Don Jacobs will attend the February 22, 2016 Select Board Meeting to review his broader human resources recommendations.

- *Town Meeting Warrant: items so far*

Tom Hutcheson, handing out his Town Meeting Tickler FY 17 list, noted that the Warrant may include articles pertaining to:

- Requests for funding of capital stabilization accounts, the paving of the Town Office parking lot, and the purchases of a fire pumper, and a highway pad and lifts
- Requests for funding the building of dugouts for the ball field (using Community Preservation Funds), Town Hall renovation plans, the new Agricultural Commission's budget, the Open Space Committee budget, revaluation expenses beyond the overlay, \$3,000 for Visual Gov (which will give a presentation at Town Meeting); and \$200 for flags.
- Changes in protective by-laws
- Dissolution of the Festival of the Hills Committee and the Scholarship Board
- Giving the Select Board the authority to close roads in emergency situations
- Accepting a MA General Law to establish a special revenue fund known as the PEG Access and Cable Related Fund
- Senior Housing
- The Right to Farm by-law

Further, he indicated that there may also be articles pertaining to requests for additional mowing (especially for the ballfield and the school bio-diversity area), and a snow guard for the Town Office roof

### *New Business*

*Items Not Anticipated 48 Hours in Advance of the Meeting*      None.

### *Town Administrator Update*

- *Committees*

- The Parks, Recreation, and trails Committee has agreed to pay for the costs of the porta-potties at the Cal Ripken event Mike Kurkulonis is organizing for Saturday, April 30.
- I'd like to host a financial policies and planning meeting, inviting the Finance Committee, the Capital Improvement Planning Committee, and the Select Board, to discuss various policies for financial planning, including how best to look at capital investment, borrowing, free cash, and our excess levy capacity. I think Joe Markarian, formerly of DOR-DLS, would be an excellent resource person for that. I'm reaching out to the chairs

- *Departments*

- Following up on an earlier question, plans for the Highway Department for the coming season include: 1) resurfacing Delabarre Avenue and Upper Baptist Hill, including necessary drainage work and milling and/or reclaiming the existing surface; 2) resurfacing the paved section on East Guinea Road including necessary drainage and reclaiming the existing surface; 3) widening sections of East Guinea Road on the gravel end, removing trees and removing rock and ledge to widen the road; 4) applying a shim coat of asphalt to Saban Road; 5) add gravel to Graves Road, Reed's Bridge Road, and Main Poland Road; and 6) repair and/or replace catch basins and culverts (as necessary) on Hoosac Road, Orchard Street, and Manning Road. Of course, all this is in addition to the routine work of grading, cleaning culverts and ditches, patching potholes, etc.
- We've had an adjustment to our worker's compensation costs, which have been surcharged \$1,205. Although we are also receiving various credits, I expect to ask for a transfer between accounts (or a reserve fund transfer) at the end of the year.

- We received one application for the position of Ambulance Director, from Gemma Vanderheld, and will be interviewing tomorrow at 2 p.m. The interview team will be Bob Baker, Jodey Benson, and myself.
- *Other*
  - There will be a site visit to the South River flood mitigation project on Friday, Feb. 19 at 10:30, if any of you would like to attend. So long as there's no deliberation, it doesn't have to be posted.
  - The Veterans' District has reviewed the amount of traffic over the last several months at the town hall, which has been unfortunately minimal, so they have decided to pull the outreach hours at this time. They hope to continue having outreach at the town's events such as the festival of the hills. The closest outreach hours for Conway residents now are in Shelburne, Tuesdays from 9-11, and third Wednesdays in Deerfield, from 12:30 to 2. Brian is available and willing to meet any Conway resident in town should they need services at any point.

*Concerns of the Selectmen*

- Robert Baker indicated that estimates for the Fire Department pumper purchase have come through, and the Town pickup truck put up for auction yielded approximately \$7000, significantly more than expected.

*Mail* None.

*Announcements* None.

*Documents and Other Exhibits Used at the Meeting*

*Next Meeting*

- *Scheduled for Tuesday, February 16, 2016 at 7:00 p.m. at the Town Office, 32 Main Street*
- **At 7:05 p.m., on a motion from John O'Rourke to go into Executive Session, to be held under Reason #3, to discuss strategy with respect to litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the litigating position of the public body, Jim Moore voted in favor, Robert Baker voted in favor, John O'Rourke voted in favor.**
- **At 7:15 p.m., on a motion from John O'Rourke to adjourn Executive Session and regular session, Jim Moore voted in favor, Robert Baker voted in favor, and John O'Rourke voted in favor.**

Respectfully submitted,

Jim Moore