

*Minutes*  
CONWAY SELECT BOARD  
Town Office, 32 Main Street  
Monday, September 19, 2016 7:00 p.m.

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Select Board present: John O'Rourke (Chair), Robert Baker, Bob Armstrong

Others present: Tom Hutcheson, Town Administrator; Rebecca Stone, Assistant to the Town Administrator; Lee Whitcomb, Administrative Assessor; Kristen Gordon, Principal of the Conway Grammar School; Janet Chayes, Open Space Committee; Janice Warner, Treasurer/Tax Collector; Russell French, Board of Assessors; Sheila Harrington, Festival of the Hills, Dan Thompson, FCAT; Don Walker; Heidi Flanders, Conway Firemen's Auxiliary (arrived at 8:20 p.m.)

John O'Rourke called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

*Minutes*

**On a motion from Robert baker to approve the minutes of September 6, 2016, seconded by Robert Armstrong, the motion carried. John O'Rourke abstained.**

*Warrants*

**On a motion from John O'Rourke to approve the vendor warrant of \$111,235.37, the payroll warrant of \$93,978.51, and the payroll deduction warrant of \$ 23,693.20, seconded by Robert Baker, the vote was unanimous in favor.**

*Meetings Attended by Select Board Members*

Robert Baker attended the Franklin Regional Transit Authority quarterly meeting that included discussions of bus facility sites. Bob Armstrong attended the Community Compact meeting for long-term financial planning, the FRCOG's Selectboard 101 training, Conway's Solarize meeting, and a meeting of the Massachusetts Coalition Against the Pipeline (MCAP).

*Citizens' concerns* None

*Old Business* None

*New Business*

**Tax Classification Hearing**

Lee Whitcomb, Administrative Assessor, reported that the data is not back from the State, therefore the annual classification hearing will have to be postponed. Lee explained that the hearing is the annual required hearing to decide whether to have just one tax rate for both commercial and residential taxes.

**Presentation: Town Geographic Information System; Lee Whitcomb, Administrative Assessor**

Lee gave an overview of the GIS system, its capabilities, and how to access it on the internet. See [www.axisgis.com/ConwayMA](http://www.axisgis.com/ConwayMA) and for instructions, go to, <http://www.townofconway.com/admin/wp-content/uploads/2009/10/Instructions-for-Conway-MA-GIS-Website.pdf>. Specific features of the GIS system, includes properties and abutters in the event towns/committees need access to property information. Owner names are not available through this system; those must be accessed by contacting the Assessors' office. Other tools using GIS include mapping overlays for DEP, wetlands, flood control districts, endangered species, and historic data, agriculture, depicting commercial and residential, and exempt lands, and deed/use restrictions. Septic data pass/fail can be input into the GIS. Other towns utilize the same system and the FRCOG has support staff for the GIS.

**Meet Kristen Gordon, new principal of the Conway Grammar School**

The Select Board met Kristen Gordon, Principal of the Conway Grammar School, who began July 1<sup>st</sup>. Kristen reported that the collaboration with Town officials, inclusive of Fire and Police Departments, has been remarkable. Principal

Gordon stated that she will be working on ideas in with the 250<sup>th</sup> Celebration Committee in preparation for the 250<sup>th</sup> Celebration.

Sign contract with the Festival of the Hills

Sheila Harrington, with the Festival of the Hills, met with the Select Board about the upcoming event. Bob Baker inquired to insurance coverage. Sheila explained that it has been done and she will provide a copy to the Town.

**On a motion by John O'Rourke to sign the Contract with the Festival of the Hills organization, seconded by Robert Baker, the vote was unanimous in favor.**

Letter of appreciation to Erica Goleman for hosting Town website

Erica would be pleased to be relieved of the responsibility for managing the Town's website. With our new IT function, we are doing that, and Erica is owed a letter of appreciation for her volunteer work for many years.

**On a motion by John O'Rourke to sign a letter of appreciation to Erica Goleman for previously hosting the Town website, seconded by Robert Baker, the vote was unanimous in favor.**

Request from Open Space Committee for an amended contract with Laurie Sanders

Janet Chayes of the Open Space Committee (OSC) met with the Select Board. The Open Space Committee has been working with Ms. Sanders on invasive species on the Rose property and would like a broader contract to allow for assessment and reporting on other properties on an as-needed basis. The expanded Scope of Work may include biological management, both long and short-term. Maximum is a \$5,000 contract. She anticipates having a final contract for the next Select Board meeting. Bob Baker inquired to the grant fund balance and the use of the funds on various parcels. Janet explained the recently held workshop on invasive species was successful and had approximately 25 attendees. Discussed smothering of the knotweed and the Select Board gave preliminary approval for same. It was explained that additional mowing may be done on the Rose property. Janet stated that the OSC is very concerned with the agricultural impact. Floodplain project update: there is money for native grass, but no monies available for shrubbery to maintain the banks.

Request from Treasurer for authority for short-term borrowing from the General Stabilization Fund

Janet Warner, Treasurer, met with the Select Board and requested authority for short-term borrowing. Due to temporary cash flow issues, the Treasurer requested permission to transfer money from the General Stabilization account.

**On a motion by John O'Rourke to authorize the Treasurer to transfer money (\$200,000) from the General Stabilization Fund to cover a short-term cash flow issue, seconded by Robert Baker, the vote was unanimous in favor.**

Request to close covered bridge for 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary music and dance performance, plus two rehearsals

The 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee has approved an artistic performance celebrating the South River, which would involve closing the bridge for the weekend, and also for two rehearsals prior to that. Tom Hutcheson explained that closing the bridge has been done in the past.

**On a motion by John O'Rourke to close the covered bridge for the 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary for the music and dance performance plus two rehearsals, seconded by Robert Baker, the vote was unanimous in favor.**

Approve and sign grant application to MIIA for back-up cameras

Ron Sweet has prepared a proposal to MIIA for back-up cameras for Highway and Fire Department vehicles.

**On a motion by John O'Rourke to approve and sign the MIIA grant application for back-up cameras for Highway and Fire vehicles, seconded by Robert Baker, the vote was unanimous in favor.**

Sign contract with DEP for the state recycling grant

Tom Hutcheson explained this is the annual state recycling grant. The Board of Health plans to buy 20 more recycling containers and that they intend to distribute them in a more focused way.

**On a motion by John O'Rourke to approve and sign the contract with DEP for the State Recycling Grant, seconded by Robert Baker, the vote was unanimous in favor.**

Sunderland Select Board request for meeting with four Frontier towns

The Sunderland Select Board has requested a four-town meeting to discuss matters of interest to all towns, which may include FY17 and FY18 budgets as well as potential impacts of reduced state aid in FY17. Tom Hutcheson explained that this item can be tabled at this time.

#### *Town Administrator Update*

##### **Committees**

The Conway “Moves and Grooves Committee” at the Conway Grammar School met last week to plan their running activities for this school year (’16-’17). They will be having weekly running programs at school, but were also thinking ahead and planning a spring 5K, like they did last May, and are hoping to do it Sunday, May 21, 2017, from 9-10 a.m. Chief Ouimette is aware and approves.

Conway resident and visual artist Phyllis Labanowsky has been given to go-ahead by the 250<sup>th</sup> Committee to develop her idea for an artistic celebration of the South River. “Sounds Over the South River” will be an art|sound|movement performance the weekend of Conway’s 250<sup>th</sup> celebration, if the Select Board approved closing the Covered Bridge. The performance would be viewed from each end of the bridge: on Poland Rd. and off 116. Phyllis will collaborate with a local choreographer (TBA), percussionist/Brazilian sound artist, Ricardo Frota, and a hearty group of local volunteers. The request to use the bridge would involve two 3-hour rehearsals leading up to the weekend of June 16, 17, and 18, and two 1 ½ hour performances the weekend of June 16, 17, and 18.

John Heffernan of Parks and Rec is asking for volunteers with equipment to help incorporate some native sand with the ballfield base paths to soften them up. He’s also asking for volunteers to help design a second shed to store a lawn tractor, drag, pitching machines and other sports equipment. Interested people can contact either John or me about those projects.

[Robert Baker expressed concern about the removal of a pile of sand at the ball field area prior to the Festival of the Hills celebration. Tom Hutcheson will follow up. John O’Rourke noted that John Heffernan was recently recognized for a National award for Excellence in Teaching. Tom Hutcheson will provide more information to the Select Board.]

##### **Departments**

I have submitted a newspaper ad for the Community Development Strategy public hearing on Wednesday, October 5, to be published twice, once this Wednesday, once next Wednesday. We’ll also send out an e-mail Wednesday to all our contacts. Once we have the hearing, the CDS can go to the FCRHRA for submission to the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for their Community Development Block Grant program.

We finally have a resolution on using the Rose field for agriculture, with no objections from the Conservation Commission. I have contacted Gary Totman, who is interested in a three-year contract with the Town, so he can generate some profit from the effort he’s planning to put in this year and next.

##### **Regional**

We still have an opening for a representative to the FRCOG’s Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Advisory Committee. The committee reviews and approves the annual report to the US Economic Development Administration, and also keeps in touch with regional economic trends. Please let me know if you have any interest, or know of anyone who might.

##### **Projects**

After a couple of snags with bonding documents and licenses, the Town Hall insulation project has all the details ironed out and is ready to proceed. This project will begin after the Festival of the Hills event.

The South River project is proceeding as planned and field work (except for final cleaning) should be done on schedule by the end of the month.

*Concerns of the Selectmen*

None

*Mail*

An Economic Development Summit with the Governor, Lt. Governor, and Secretary Ash at the DCU Center in Worcester, MA will be held on October 19. John O'Rourke will attend. The Hampshire Council of Governments meeting will be held on September 29<sup>th</sup> at the Blue Bonnet Diner. Tom Hutcheson will email details to the Select Board. A letter was received from Mike Haley to use the Town Hall for his plays for the 250<sup>th</sup> Celebration. Tom Hutcheson will plan to meet with him. The Select Board is in receipt of an informational-purposes letter from the Town of Heath regarding cable services as sent to Governor Charles Baker.

FRCOG Municipal Modernization Act on September 9<sup>th</sup> meeting

Request received from the Franklin County Technical School for their 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary regarding fundraising activities asking for Town support for an advertisement in The Recorder.

**On a motion John O'Rourke for a ¼ page ad for \$199, contingent on identifying an appropriate source of funds, seconded by Robert Baker, vote was unanimous in favor.**

*Announcements*

None

*Next Meeting*

Scheduled for **Monday, October 3, 2016** at 7:00 p.m. at the Town Office, 32 Main Street

*Items Not Anticipated 48 Hours In Advance of the Meeting*

Heidi Flanders with the Conway Fireman's Auxiliary came before the Select Board requesting use of the upstairs of the Town Hall for upcoming Rag Shag events. Tom said lots of materials are stored at the building but he will make sure the items are secure. Select Board in support of the event and the use of the Town Hall.

*Adjournment*

**On a motion at 8:27 p.m. from John O'Rourke to adjourn, seconded by Robert Baker, the vote was unanimous.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Robert Baker, Clerk