

Minutes
SELECT BOARD
Monday, February 25, 2019 6:00 p.m.
Town Office, 32 Main Street

Select Board present: John O'Rourke, chair; Phil Kantor; Bob Armstrong

Others present: Dan Fentin, FCAT; Phil Bowden, Resident; Bill Sheehan and Katherine Robertson, Residents; Tom Hutcheson, Town Administrator; Lisa Turowsky, Assistant to Town Administrator

John O'Rourke called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Minutes

- **On a motion from O'Rourke to approve the minutes of February 19, 2019, seconded by Kantor, the vote was unanimous in favor (Armstrong abstained)**

Meetings Attended by Select Board Members

Kantor attended Conway Grammar School and Frontier Regional School District budget meetings and had a call with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education about the foundation budget.

Armstrong attended: an Energy Committee meeting with Solar Access where solar panels, mini-splits and State subsidies/zero interest loans for low-moderate income families were discussed (documentation available from Brice Hereford of the Energy Committee); a FRCOG meeting with our broker for aggregation, Colonial, where greener options and the option of town-by-town pricing were discussed; it may be 8 months before Colonial goes out to bid, as DPU has to process paperwork; and a ConComm site visit in Northampton near Roaring Brook Rd to view a culvert replacement site.

Public Comments *None*

Old Business

Amendment to Sheehan-Robertson conservation restriction

Update documents: new survey map and references thereto, including updated acreage

Surveyed description is being included; acreage is not changed in any substantial degree. Amended documents were signed by Select Board, Mr. Sheehan, and Ms. Robertson.

- **On a motion from O'Rourke to sign the amended conservation restriction documents, seconded by Kantor, the vote was unanimous in favor**

Draft Host Community Agreement for Philip and Leah Bowden

There was a discussion of taxes versus community impact payments. Tax only applies to retail operations per statute. In the host community agreement submitted by the Bowdens, 1(b) relates to tax and 1(e) relates to community impact statement. Some questions under 2 in the host agreement (Town obligations); Hutcheson stated that the Town needs 7 business days if a meeting needs to be called to respond to needs of the business. There are suggestions as to what Bowdens can provide to ameliorate any impacts on the Town. O'Rourke says three things seem relevant to him: reimbursement for legal expenses not covered by the escrow amount; and programs focused on public health and education. Bowdens will be providing their own security so not a lot of police activity is expected. The host agreement can be shorter than five years if the business requires adjustments to the tax payments. Bowden related that they're comfortable with a 3% levy with one caveat: they think it should be progressive taxation depending on amount of sales. He pointed out that there are a lot of expenses to starting up this business. No agreement on community impact fee was reached; Hutcheson asked for more information about the difference between 1(b) and 1(e). There is still no estimate of Town costs at this point. Bowden asked the Select Board to ask what is going to be good for businesses in Conway. He'd like a lower percentage for sales up to some amount (first million?); there is some instructive language from Montague which he will get for the Select Board. Bowden still objects to having to place \$2500 in escrow. His attorney is available for the meeting on 3/11 if it's necessary.

New Business

Planning Board: appointment of David Barten as Associate Member

- **On a motion from O'Rourke to appoint David Barten as Associate Member of the Planning Board for a term ending May 17, 2019, seconded by Kantor, the vote was unanimous in favor.**

Letter supporting SD.2292, drafted by Sen. Hinds, regarding revisions to school funding for rural schools

- **On a motion from O'Rourke to sign the letter in support to be sent to Hinds, Spilka, Deleo, Mark, Blais, Lewis, Peisch, seconded by Armstrong, the vote was unanimous in favor.**

Items not anticipated in 48 hours

None

Town Administrator update

Committees

The Open Space Committee notes that volunteers have been mowing the walking path on the meadow and would like to include it in the Town's mowing contract. The Highway Superintendent is acutely aware of the scrutiny of his budget and went to great lengths to keep it level funded. He is going out to bid and I have asked him to include the mowing as a "add alternate" so we can see what it would cost.

We are advertising on the Town website for new Housing Committee members, who are appointed by the Moderator. We need a Committee partly because the Community Preservation Committee may have some work to do soon, and one member of that committee comes from the Housing Committee. Lisa and I are also working on shoring up the rest of the membership.

In looking at the written piece from the Capital Improvements Planning Committee, my preference would be to have a brief mission statement focused on capital planning, with the piece offered by the committee serving as a communication by the present Committee to the town.

The triennial audit of the Conway Grammar School is due again this year. I have asked the Finance Committee for a reserve fund transfer of \$2,500 to cover this. After the warrant article slated for this year's annual Town Meeting, we should not have to worry about funding this in the future.

I have also asked the Finance Committee for the remaining funds necessary (\$2,601.05) to bring the M.B. Germain trust fund up to its mandatory amount of principal (\$25,000). This had been set up as part of the regular mowing contract payment, but interest did not keep up with expenses, and the account was inadvertently overdrawn.

I am convening a Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan update committee. Kimberly MacPhee of the FRCOG will guide the committee through the process.

The Energy Committee is looking at possible items for a competitive Green Communities grant application; I'll keep you up to date as the deadline approaches.

Departments

Nexamp has hired an environmental company to respond to DEP's concerns about the Main Poland Road solar project; they will be reporting to the Conservation Commission at their next meeting. I have a copy of DEP's concerns and their responses if anyone would like to see it.

I have put two pole hearings on next week's agenda, at 7:00 p.m. These are usually pro forma, taking just a few minutes. One is on Maple Street, with heavier wire replacing lighter wire and three poles proposed to shorten the span between existing poles; the other is a new pole and stepdown transformer for Old Cricket Hill Road, to match voltage for a customer.

Select Board Comments

None

Kantor reminded all that there will be budget hearings at CGS on Feb. 26 at 5:15 and 6:00 p.m. Also, there is a Highway Facility Committee meeting at 6 p.m. on Feb. 26.

Mail

Frontier Regional and Union 38 inviting SB to public hearing on 3/5 at 6 p.m. CGS on 3/21 at 6 p.m.

Announcements

There are new hours at Field Memorial Library which will be posted on the Town website.

Next Meeting Monday, March 4th, 2019, at the Town Hall, 5 Academy Hill Road, at 6:00 p.m. Joint meeting with Finance Committee at 6:30 p.m.

- **At 7:00 p.m., on a motion from O'Rourke to adjourn, seconded by Kantor, the vote was unanimous in favor.**