

Minutes

SELECT BOARD

Monday, August 31, 2020, 6:00 p.m.

ZOOM MEETING

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87623186115> (Meeting ID: 876 2318 6115 #)

To call in via telephone: Dial 929-205-6099 (Enter Meeting ID: 876 2318 6115 #)

Present: Bob Armstrong (Chair); Phil Kantor; Erica Goleman; Jan Warner; Tom Hutcheson

Minutes

On a motion from Armstrong to approve the minutes of August 3, seconded by Goleman, the vote was unanimous in favor.

On a motion from Armstrong to approve the minutes of August 3, as amended by Kantor, seconded by Kantor, the vote was unanimous in favor.

Warrants

On a motion from Armstrong to approve the vendor warrant of \$69,925.76; the payroll warrant of \$90,164.80; and the payroll deduction warrant of \$23,161.50, seconded by Goleman, the vote was unanimous in favor.

Meetings Attended by Select Board Members

Goleman attended the Town of Deerfield SB meeting, discussing the incentives for the MWTP forestry plan (carbon credits).

Kantor attended school union meetings, both Frontier and Union 38, once again voting on the school re-opening plan. There were sufficient alterations that the union was okay—there are enough staff to accomplish the goals of the administration. Sep. 24 is the new date for re-opening; pods or cohorts are more numerous and smaller. The maximum number of students in Frontier will be 75-80 per day. It's similar at the Grammar School: one cohort of teachers will be doing on-line, and one will be doing in-person. Regarding the Deerfield Select Board joint meeting, he talked with them about participating in the feasibility study for the carbon credit marketplace. He contacted Deerfield because the program is looking for a 1,500-acre forest minimum, and the Deerfield Water District owns over 900 acres in Conway. This seemed a good opportunity to ask for their participation, and the DWD has Mary Wigmore doing their forest plan. Next step, he will contact Deerfield Water Authority with the SB's letter of approval. The Boards also discussed Deerfield River access issues. He also attended the Zoom meeting with the consultants for Conway's forest stewardship plan.

Armstrong also attended the Deerfield joint Select Board meeting and was glad they were supportive. They suggested we also talk with Whately, as they also have lots of land for their water district. At the Forest Stewardship plan meeting, there was voting by participants on the parts of the plan they would support, and the parts they wouldn't, and the consultants will include the results in their final draft. There is still time to send in comments; the draft will be on the web soon as well. Armstrong also attended a regular Conservation Commission meeting.

Public Comments

None.

Old Business

None.

New Business

Amendment to electricity aggregation agreement

Armstrong reported that not too long after we approved our agreement with Dynegy, the state made a small change to their clean energy policy, resulting in a small price raise, which will be starting January, raising the cost about 1/10 of a cent per kilowatt hour, or about 50-60 cents a month per average customer. We have to agree to this in writing for our pricing agreement.

Kantor asked about the price context; Armstrong gave the numbers. Kantor asked if we would still be going through this process if the price dropped; Armstrong was unsure, but believed we would. Kantor noted the agreement spelled out the mix of renewables, and also noticed we were notified regarding Eversource's malfeasance regarding maintenance, and wondered whether they were to be trusted regarding the proper mix of sources. He hopes they can't game the system by claiming non-renewable fuel is renewable. Armstrong assured him they could not. Armstrong also mentioned that Conway

had the highest rate of people staying with the aggregation. **On a motion from Armstrong to sign, seconded by Kantor, the vote was unanimous in favor.**

Sign contract with Zobrio for conversion of payroll software

Bob Armstrong presented the item. Kantor said that using the same program as other towns seemed advantageous. Goleman said the Treasurer's reasons for conversion were excellent.

On a motion from Armstrong to sign the contract, seconded by Goleman, the vote was unanimous in favor.

Items Not Anticipated 48 Hours in Advance of the Meeting

None.

Town Administrator update

Departments

Carl Vigeland, who is working on the MacLeish stone studio project, and spoke at Town Meeting regarding their Community Preservation proposal, is having a Zoom meeting Friday, September 4, at 1 p.m. I've posted the Zoom info to the web site.

We have received a draft petition from John Heffernan and 23 other residents asking the Select Board to "1) restrict management of Town Forest to reserves, trails, and invasive species control, and 2) rescind any permissions to locate logging landing(s) on town property on Cricket Hill Extension." The petition is still in circulation, and there is additional text. John also sent the petition as signed so far to Mary Wigmore as comments on the proposed plan. I plan to put the Forest Stewardship Plan on the agenda for the next two meetings, as the grant's deadline extension runs just to the end of the month.

I have received two applications for an assistant; Susan Fentin of the Personnel Committee will be assisting in the interviews, which I hope can happen next week.

Concerns of the Selectmen

Armstrong asked that Cows' be invited to the meeting regarding the landing site. Hutcheson will do that, and ascertain if they are the ones using the landing site.

Kantor noted that there were other problems related to the Town logging operation about 15 years ago. He noted on the Zoom meeting that if there are concerns, a by-law is the surest way to proceed.

Kantor said that at the Zoom Forest Stewardship meeting, there was concern about the path from the school to the forest. There needs to be a safe path for the students to the forest. The Highway Superintendent has spoken with the Principal and Custodian and have a plan, which he will implement.

Mail

Letter from Conway resident concerned about old trucks and plows and Highway equipment that has been left to rust. Hutcheson will ask Sweet for a report on the issue.

Announcements

Armstrong noted that the Massachusetts primary is tomorrow and encouraged people to turn out, from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. tomorrow. There does not seem to be any information from the Secretary of State regarding the primary.

New version of the Forest Stewardship Plan coming out soon.

Flu vaccinations coming October 4; there will be a drive-through flu clinic at the Deerfield Highway garage. Volunteers are needed! There will also be a senior flu clinic at the Conway Town Hall November 6.

Next Meeting: Scheduled for Monday, September 14, 2020, at 6 p.m., via Zoom

Kantor noted that all students will have to be vaccinated (with medical and religious exemptions). There may be closures due to similarities between the flu and COVID-19. Resident Hope Crolius expressed a desire for a conscientious objection option for mandatory vaccines.