

Minutes  
Selectboard Meeting:  
Monday, August 30, 2021

**Present for the Selectboard:** Phil Kantor, Chair; Robert Armstrong, Erica Goleman

**Others Present:** Deb Donaldson, Marilyn Webster, Jared Campbell, Carol Baldwin, Peter Engelman, George Forcier, Beth Girshman, Joe Strzegowski, Michele Turre, Andy Levchuk, Véronique Blanchard, Town Administrator; Louise Beckett, Assistant to the Town Administrator

**Call to Order** Phil called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

**Minutes** **On a motion from Phil to approve the Minutes of 08/16/21, Erica seconded and the vote was unanimous in favor.**

**Warrants** **On a motion from Erica to approve the Accounts Payable Warrant W22-06 for \$130,367.04, the Payroll Warrant PW22-06 for \$96,220.44, and the Payroll Deductions Warrant PDW22-06 for \$23,480.38 Phil seconded and the vote was unanimous in favor.**

**Meetings Attended by Board Members** Erica had no meetings since the last Selectboard meeting. Bob had ongoing Conservation Commission meetings. Phil attended the joint school committee with the Board of Health/Five-town meeting regarding masking.

**Public Comments** None

**Old Business** Phil found some information regarding funds for disabled/needy schoolchildren similar to the Germain Fund and felt it may be discussed at the next Selectboard meeting.

**New Business Appointments** **On a motion from Erica to appoint Jared Campbell to the Conway Grammar School Committee to fill one year of a three-year term to end 6/30/22, Phil seconded and the vote was unanimous in favor.**

**On a motion from Bob to appoint Carol Baldwin as Conway Currents' 5th Committee member for a three-year term ending 6/30/2024, and to approve staggered terms for the rest of the committee members Erica seconded and the vote was unanimous in favor.**

**MacLeish Stone House** *Historical Society and Historical Commission to discuss the potential donation of the MacLeish property;* Peter Engelman and George Forcier. George is to be a non-voting alternate member of the Historical Commission for the MacLeish Property and Peter Engelman is President of the Conway Historical Society. The donation is to consist of the 'Stone House' which was MacLeish's writing studio, and some land where the house sits, along the owner's driveway. The Town would be the actual recipient. George asked if the Selectboard felt the idea had merit. About a year ago, Greenfield Community College and the Franklin Land Trust had had an interest in the property to set it up as a museum but their plan fell through, so the Society and Commission feel it's crucial to the new plan that the Selectboard feels the plan has merit. There was discussion as to whether town counsel had approved the plan for the Selectboard to accept the gift on its own authority without having to go to Town Meeting since it wouldn't affect taxes. The question was asked whether if the town should hold an event there and someone was injured, is the town on the hook? Originally, the agreement would be a 'lease to donate' to the town, with the Society and Commission taking responsibility for necessary repairs. A lease to donate agreement means that the owners don't want to 'give' the property to the town today. They would agree to lease the property to the town with no restrictions on what the town could do with it, for example making repairs. The lease would convert

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to ownership at some point, likely when the current owners die. There would also be a request for CPA funding to help with the repairs needed now. The Commission would be the town entity involved in making such repairs as painting, parking, and a foot path to the house and once these have been completed, the Society would then find ways to use the space. Asked if there is any use there now, the reply was that there has been almost none in the past thirty years, except Conway writer John Crowley, who has used it in the past. The hope is to make it a literary landmark, to bring visitors who knew MacLeish, to use it during the Festival of the Hills and for other local purposes, and to bring people in to town who knew MacLeish and his accomplishments. When asked if a revolving fund could be established, the answer is that these can only be established by Town Meeting. Initially private money and CPA money would go to repairing the roof and other major projects, but private money would also go to surveying to subdivide the lot, and legal fees involved in the town's acceptance of the gift. A 'Friends' committee is being formed to raise private funding. Would we then go to town meeting to see if the town will support it? It was recommended that if the board in principle decides to accept the gift, the group should develop a budget for the immediate repairs needed and an operational budget for the future. It was agreed that the attorney for the town and the attorney working for the donor to get the property transferred would work out an agreement to take to town meeting.

**Mohawk Trail Woodlands  
Partnership Update**

*Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership update and Forest Stewardship Management Plan update, Beth Girshman* Beth is the current Conway Representative to the Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership and chair of the education outreach and research sub-committee. As their website is out of date, they are planning to update it and the strategic plan and are hoping to find more state funding. Two seminars had been being planned, one in Berkshire and one in Franklin, but (because of COVID) they may need to be zoom seminars. Not enough public outreach is being done. Beth will be participant in a December seminar on oak trees, to share information with the public and landowners about the current threats to oak trees in our forests. There are 21 towns currently in the partnership out of a possible 28 that could join. Most of the opposition to the Forest Stewardship Plan is in Franklin County, possibly on a misconception as to what the partnership is all about. But with so little public presence, the seminars might help with this perception. Sustainable forestry practices won't do themselves, as they take time and cost money – can the Selectboard consider spending some money on the project to get the sustainable forestry management plan going? Some things that might be possible are invasive plant control, creating young forest patches, and native shrub planting around the wetlands areas. Are there funds maybe from logging on the Fournier Forest that might be available to spend on these initial projects? Accessibility to the Fournier lot is a problem, as there is only a small access by the new highway facility building.

**Host Community  
(Marijuana) Agreement Draft**

*Draft Host Community Agreement review and approval.* The old agreement is not perfect and has some weaknesses. Specifically, there is no ability to audit and no audit procedure. There is also not enough on winding down a business and making sure it's done properly, with a bond required at the beginning. Existing establishments are grandfathered, but only for five years. The new agreement would be used as the basis for continuing when the current agreement expires. For many reasons, we need to improve the agreement. **On a motion from Bob to approve the new Host Community Agreement as drafted, Phil seconded and the vote was unanimous in favor.**

**Repairs: Conway Mall**

**On a motion from Erica to approve the Board of Health to accept gifts and grants for repairs and maintenance of the Conway Mall, Bob seconded and the vote was unanimous in favor.**

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

**Town Administrator update**      None

**Select Board comments and concerns**      None

**Mail**      None

**Announcements**      Festival of the Hills October 3rd Road Race & Bakesale

**Next Meeting**

**Adjourn to go into Executive Session**      Reason #6: To consider the purchase, exchange, lease or value of real property if the chair declares that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the public body.