

MINUTES OF THE SELECT BOARD
Monday May 16, 2022 7:00 PM

Present: Dave McGuckin, Chair, Selectman, Jane Finn, Selectwoman, and Pam Cullen, Secretary.

Absent: William Stewart, Selectman

Also present: Don White, Police Chief, Lisa English, Town Clerk, Tom Smith, Treasurer, Curt Springer, Darcy Horgan, Carol White.

The Select Board welcomed its new member Jane Finn and proceeded to the agenda.

1. Approve Select Board Minutes of May 4, 2022.

Approval of these minutes was deferred as Selectman Finn had not yet been elected, and Selectman Stewart was absent.

2. Public Questions and Answers.

Tom Smith commented on the recent Town Meeting noting there were several challenges to being able to hear the proceedings. It was very different this year. The quality of the sound was different, and this has been going on for 32 years, there have been prior complaints, which were met with the reason that improving the sound would be too expensive. He reiterated that something needed to be done and asked the BOS what their plan is to improve the sound quality. Chair McGuckin noted that he also had difficulty hearing and acknowledged the problem and stated his intention is to get the issue of the CIP list. Mr. Smith stated that the CIP committee does not meet for another 7 months, and that the Town has a capable Building Inspector. Chair McGuckin stated he would speak with the Building Inspector to get pricing for acoustical and sound systems improvements.

Carol White commented that the meetings should go back to being on Zoom for the benefit of the public and for the Select Board. Chair McGuckin stated he had received other comments such as getting back to face-to-face meetings in the summer months, and reevaluate after Labor Day to possibly include Zoom for the Select Board meetings. He noted that a possible resurgence of Covid may play a part in reconsideration. He suggested a "wait and see" approach.

3a. Election of Chair.

Selectman Finn made a Motion to elect Dave McGuckin as Chair, which was seconded by Mr. McGuckin because Selectman Stewart was absent. Motion carried unanimously (2-0).

b. Peter Rice-Fort Stark.

Mr. Rice of 11 Atkinson Street addressed the Board, noting he has been the coordinator of the Fort Stark Brigade of Volunteers for the last 14 years. This group has been responsible for substantial upgrades and improvements and spoke of the NC Fire Department trainings held there as well as his efforts and that of Mike McAndrew to cut up scrap lumber for burning. The NCFD committed to burn the pile during a time when there was snow on the

ground in order to minimize any spreading of the fire. They learned that treated wood cannot be burned so they stacked the wood separately and brought the matter to the Chief's attention, and the Select Board has not acted on this request. The State of NH is anxious to have the furniture and wood removed. The wood needs to be removed, and it is the Select Board's responsibility for removing the debris. This effort will require both a lot of manpower as well as a large dumpster. Chair McGuckin stated he walked Fort Stark with Fire Chief Ted Hartmann today (Monday, May 16). He stated the State is attempting to identify and allocate funds for costs of removing hazardous materials, and has spoken about the State of NH's role with State Senator Tom Sherman's office. Chair McGuckin also stated that the Select Board has never agreed to remove any material from Ft. Stark due to the material's hazardous condition.

Mr. Rice gave a history of working with the State on issues involving the parking lot. Suggested actions include installing permanent bathroom facilities. He noted that safety has to be the primary concern. Chair McGuckin stressed that the State has to take the lead, and the Town should have a hands-off approach, with respect to hazardous waste. The Select Board will continue to push the State to establish the necessary fund to address these matters.

c. Library Trustee alternate and d. Select Board responsibilities

This matter was postponed until the June 6th meeting of the Select Board. The Board needs to decide which of its members will handle various Boards and Commissions. It has been recommended that the Board use the same process as previous years.

e. Curt Springer – public meetings

Curt Springer of 98 Cranfield Street stated he had moved back to town 3 years ago and feels the BOS has been fairly efficient but expressed the belief that they need to work on compliance with NHRSA 91-A Right to Know. He gave some examples of prior budget discussions which did not include public meetings and expressed concern that decisions were made without complying with the Right to Know Law. He cited the recent article at Town Meeting about the separation of the Town Clerk/Tax Collector position where no public discussion took place. He suggested that the BOS switch to bi-weekly meetings from the current meeting schedule of every first and third Monday evenings. He also stated there should not be gatherings of two Select Board members and the need for posting meetings when hiring new employees. Chair McGuckin clarified Mr. Springer's concerns noting that any discussions between 2 or more members were operational concerns and informal, rather than final decisions setting policies. Chair McGuckin stated he would work on a better direction in this matter.

Chair McGuckin introduced Lisa English, recently elected Town Clerk. Lisa indicated that she is receiving assistance in her office from the Newfields, NH Town Clerk in order to help her ramp up as quickly as possible.

f. Town Moderator.

John Poisson decided after he had signed up to run, realized he would not be able to do this position. Several people were written in on the ballot (20, and the person with the most votes was elected. The BOS then appointed that person. However, the BOS learned that the

Supervisors of the Checklist have that statutory authority. The Supervisors meet on May 23rd and will decide this matter.

g. Town Administrator.

Chair McGuckin opened discussion about having a Town Administrator; the plan is keeping this topic in play so residents have opportunities to weigh in and comment on this position. Decisions will have to be made about funding either a full or part time position.

Ms. English asked about Mr. McDonald's empty position. Chair McGuckin stated the Board has advertised the position of Administrative Assistant to the Select Board, (Jen Smith's former position) and has done several phone interviews, and will be conducting in-person interviews during the upcoming weeks.

4. Old Business.

Selectman Finn brought up the matter of the blinking lights at the school, and will explore costs associated with remedying this matter. There are two flashing lights which go on for 30 minutes in the morning and another thirty in the afternoon. She had questions about which entity (State, School or Town) is responsible for payment. Chief Don White noted that he set up the crossing guard program, and explained why the police can't always be there and spoke about other problems with the lights. These issues will be on a future agenda for public discussion.

The Board expressed their gratitude to the following for their public service: Ken McDonald, Priscilla Hodgkins, and Pam Cullen.

5. Committee Reports.

These reports will be attached to the minutes for next meeting.

Carol White, in her position as Cemetery Trustee, expressed interest on seeing the report regarding the digging project at Pit Lane and Wentworth Rd as she has concerns if any human remains were found, being so close to a town cemetery. Obviously there would be no sidewalk installed if that were the case, and Safepath must keep the Town informed. There is a Safepath meeting this coming Thursday (May 25th).

There being no further business to come before the Board, the Chair called for a Motion to Adjourn, which was seconded by Selectman Finn. Motion carried and the meeting was adjourned at 8:02 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

BJ Riordan, Acting Secretary, from Pam Cullen's notes and recordings.