

MINUTES OF THE SELECT BOARD
Monday, August 19, 2019 – 7PM

Present: Damon Frampton, Chair, Tom Maher, Selectman, Bill Stewart, Selectman, and Pam Cullen, Secretary.

Also present: Fire Chief Ted Hartnett, Pam Cullen, Administrative Assistant to Select Board, Christiane McAllister, Accountant, Andy Schulte, Dave McGuckin, Normand Houle, Jim Cerny, Steve Tabbutt, Ashleigh Tucker, Cari McGrath, and Keith Pratt.

1. Approve Select Board Minutes of July 15, 2019, and August 5, 2019.

Selectman Maher made a Motion to Approve the Select Board Minutes of July 15 and August 5, 2019 as amended. Selectman Stewart seconded, and the Motion carried.

2. Public Questions and Answers:

Pam Cullen notified the Board that she has the building permit from the New Castle Historical Society for their proposed new sign, and requested the Select Board to sign the document. She indicated NCHS had spoken with the Chair of the HDC who had approved the sign. Selectman Maher stated he assumed NCHS did not have to go through a formal land use process. Selectman Stewart recalled that the Town and its various boards and committees are required to go before all applicable land use boards and seek permission. Former Selectman McGuckin concurred that the change was made a few years ago. Only the fees are waived. If applicable in this instance, then NCHS would have to go before the land use boards for approval of the sign. There was discussion and disagreement about this, so the matter was tabled until the next meeting in order to clarify the matter. Chair Frampton indicated that after reviewing the paperwork the Board would have an answer for NCHS at or before the next Select Board Meeting.

3. New Business:

a. Project Update- Underwood Enterprises: Keith Pratt.

Keith Pratt of Underwood Engineering reported on the status of the Water Transmission Main Improvements Project. Our liaison, Ransom has left the company to travel and Keith will replace him until another person is hired into the position. Keith distributed packets to the Select Board concerning the Bid Tabulations from August 16, and provided explanation. Each specification is listed along with the bidder's unit prices and Underwood's estimations. He stated there were 4 bidders, and indicated the low bid was N. Granese & Sons, Inc., 59 Jefferson Avenue, Salem MA. Keith noted that all four bids came in a bit high for the paving, bridge crossing, and temporary water system, as compared to Underwood's estimations. Keith also distributed a background document (reference checks) for Granese. In the event Granese is recommended and approved, references will be checked by Underwood. They have already made some reference calls.

In response to questions from the Board, Keith indicated that once the project starts on the main line, approximately 120 feet of pipe per day could be installed. Granese indicated his company would be able to start in October. He is willing to go over the numbers to achieve cost savings. This meeting will take place prior to Underwood's formal recommendation of a contractor.

From a budget point of view, the bid taps the budget out. They have authorized 4.05 million (Actually 5.5), so there needs to be further discussions on the funding aspect, such as reprogramming. The project as presented is running \$530.00 per square foot.

Regarding the SRF (State Revolving Loan Fund) we have the 4.5 loan from 2 warrant articles. There were two additional pre-applications which were submitted by Underwood on our behalf. One was for additional drinking water (a half million), which was denied. The other was for \$650,000.00 which was submitted in June for sewer issues.(Force main work on bridge). Unfortunately the State “lost” the pre-application. We will however be put back on the list and will be given 10 ranking points, which puts New Castle in the middle of the pack of applicants. Keith believes we would get this but won’t know until winter. There may be enough time to put in another warrant article for next May.

Keith reported that they are waiting for the final Wetlands permit, which has to go to Governor and Council. (September meeting) The Army Corps of Engineers has a few items which need to be addressed by Underwood.

Keith addressed “Next steps”. He will meet with Granese and would like a Town rep present for that meeting. Cost reductions will be a main topic of this meeting.

Regarding the schedule: Keith wants to know the sense of the Board on when to start the project: This fall or next spring? Keith would prefer spring to avoid having to start and shut down and start again. Selectman Maher asked if there are some elements which could be done this fall to cross them off the list. Selectman Stewart suggested the Shapleigh crossing to Pierce Island. He feels it would be least disruptive. Keith thinks this may make sense and will discuss this. There was further discussion on the temporary water costs and how to reduce cost by finding better ways to phase it.

The Board and Keith discussed the schedule for the Sawtelle Bridge repair and discussed the possibility of piggybacking on Evroc’s work on the bridge. The equipment is there. Steve Tabbutt spoke about the problem of that work still going on. Keith will check with the State about this possibility. In response to a question from Dave McGuckin regarding cost effects on waiting until spring to begin versus starting in the fall, Keith stated that bids are good for 60 days but can be extended. Keith doesn’t expect the delay until spring to affect the cost. Dave McGuckin asked what the current overrun is for all three phases of the project. According to Selectman Stewart its about \$660,000.

Selectman Maher asked if we can incentivize the low bidder to start in the fall. The goal is to incentivize and rescope. Rebidding is not really an option, as you run the risk of higher amounts. Keith will schedule the meeting with the low bidder.

Normand Houle, Chair of the Water Sewer Commission spoke about ESR 13 and inspection work on the bridge. He suggested that Underwood be involved when the inspection takes place under the Sawtelle Bridge, in order to look at the sewer line. Keith agreed too add this topic to the conversation.

b.Revised estimated revenues.

Christiane reported on the proposed changes, which all agreed should be left as is. She will bring a MS 434 to the next meeting for Select Board signatures.

c.Audit.

Christiane reported that the team of auditors will be at Town Hall September 23 for three - four days.

d.Health Officer:

After brief discussion Selectman Maher made a Motion to Reappoint Dr. James Zuckerman as Health Officer. Selectman Stewart seconded, and the Motion carried.

e.Music Hall Kitchen Tour.

Representatives from the Music Hall, Ashleigh Tucker and Cari McGrath requested permission from the Board to hold its 29th annual kitchen tour on the Island. The Town has hosted this two previous times. Parking is planned to be off island, and trolleys will bring attendees to New Castle. They will need police details and hopefully can use the Common area for some parking and the school area for dropping off visitors. The event is planned for May 9, 2020 from 10-4. Concern was expressed about possible construction and the Board encouraged them to check back closer to the date before finalizing how they will access the island in May. The Select Board agreed to allow the event.

f.BOS Meeting

As Labor Day falls on the next scheduled meeting, the Select Board agreed to change the meeting to **TUESDAY September 3.**

g.Water Sewer Update: SRF is in process. See a. Project Update.

Selectman Stewart reported that all revisions and edits to the Wholesale Water Agreement with Portsmouth have been put together and legal counsel and himself will review and then send on to Portsmouth. Chair Frampton would like to have a conversation about the wholesale sewer rates with Portsmouth. While Selectman Stewart is in favor, he would like some other issues buttoned up prior to initiating this conversation.

h.Other:

Chief White submitted a report regarding Speed Sig Results from 8/08/2019 to 8/12/2019. The highest amount of daily traffic was 1255 vehicles. The average speed is between 22.4 mph and 23.1. The highest speed recorded was 46 mph.

There being no further business to come before the Board, Selectman Maher made a Motion to Adjourn, which was seconded by Selectman Stewart. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:35 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Bette Jane Riordan, Recording Secretary.