

## **MINUTES OF THE SELECT BOARD**

**Monday July 19, 2021, 7:00 PM**

### **Macomber Room**

**Present:** Tom Maher-Chair, Dave McGuckin-Selectman, William Stewart-Selectman, and Jennifer Smith-Administrative Assistant to the Select Board and Recording Secretary.

Chairman Maher opened the public session meeting at 7:00PM.

#### **1. Approve Select Board minutes of July 6, 2021**

Selectman McGuckin made a motion to table the Select Board minutes of July 6, 2021. Selectman Stewart seconded and the motion carried unanimously, 3-0.

#### **2. Public Questions and Answers.**

No comments were offered.

#### **3. New Business**

##### **a. Acceptance of Safe Path Committee Donations**

Chairman Maher read for the record 3 donations to the Safe Path Committee that require acceptance by the Select Board. The donors and amounts were David and Nancy Borden for \$2,000, Todd and Melanie Baker for \$1,000 and Maryann Driscoll for \$1,000.

Selectman McGuckin offered a motion to accept the 3 aforementioned donations to the Safe Path Committee. Selectman Stewart seconded and said motion carried unanimously 3-0.

##### **b. Town Clerk/Tax Collector Transition**

Chairman Maher stated that Priscilla Hodgkins retired as Town Clerk/Tax Collector on June 30<sup>th</sup> and Jennifer Rumph has replaced her in that position. Joann Ireland remains as the Deputy Town Clerk/Tax Collector. While the office is transitioning, veteran employee BJ Reardon has agreed to come back and share her experience in order to assist with the ongoing training.

Selectman McGuckin stated that Ms. Rumph is not yet trained in the Tax Collector duties associated with the position and the town has asked Pamela Cullen to assist with processing the current abatement recordings, as well as possibly assisting with tax collection this fall.

It was agreed that the Select Board would review the budget and decide in the near future what the tax season will look like with regards to additional staffing for the Tax Collector's Office.

**c. Removal of Timber/Shrubs/Objects from Public Roads - Notifications**

Chairman Maher stated that the town notified 3 property owners that the trees/shrubs on their properties need to be cut back from the public right of way. Two of these property owners did not accept deliverance of the certified notices they were sent by the Town and the mailings were returned by the Post Office to Town Hall.

Chairman Maher further stated that it does appear that the owner of the Atkinson Street property attempted to trim back some of the growth, but Steve Tabbutt, the Road Agent, will have to decide if it is a sufficient amount.

Mr. Tabbutt is aware that the notices were returned and it is anticipated that he will attempt to make contact with these individuals in person to discuss the matter.

**d. Town Projects Update**

Chairman Maher stated that the town is anticipating sending out an RFP for an audit of its current computer systems and general technology needs. Chairman Maher informed the board that he has spoken with a couple of computer technology consulting firms in the area, one which that provided the Town an estimate for such an audit, Portsmouth Computer. Chairman Maher stated that after his conversations with these companies, he felt assured that the town has allotted a sufficient amount of funds for this project.

Selectman McGuckin stated that a few months back, Brian Grattan, the Directory of Technology for SAU50, offered to help the Select Board with their research and that he would contact Mr. Grattan to see if he is still available to do so.

Chairman Maher stated that the Town Clerk's Office needs a state mandated firewall for their computer system as soon as possible. Chairman Maher further stated that both computer firms he spoke with estimated the cost of this firewall would be between \$400 and \$600.

The Select Board agreed to move forward with the issuance of the RFP once it is finalized.

**e. Neighborhood Water Improvement Program Update**

Selectman Stewart stated that the town is in receipt of two ESRs, which essentially are work orders, from Underwood Engineering. One is related to a town loop located at Mainmast Circle/Quarterdeck Road area and the other is for the Spring Hill Rd/Lavenger Lane water improvement project design work. Selectman Stewart further stated that while the town has not yet received the completed petition from the homeowners to create the Special Assessment District, he has been informed that 80% of the residents have signed off and the remaining residents will sign when they return from vacation in late July. Given this information and the pending deadlines to complete the project, Selectman Stewart requested that the Select Board authorize engaging Underwood Engineering to begin work now.

The Select Board agreed to sign both ESRs.

#### **4. Old Business**

##### **a. Grant Application for Pit Lane Culvert Alternatives Analysis Project- Support Letter**

Selectman Stewart stated that the New Castle Conservation Commission, in conjuncture with the Rockingham County Conservation District, is planning on submitting a grant application to NHDES for the Pit Lane Culvert Alternative Analysis Project. This study will be an attempt to better understand costal resiliency and sea level rise impacts. This grant would include a 25% in-kind match. Selectman Stewart further stated that if the grant were awarded and there were any shortfalls in the matching funds, the Conservation Commission would use its funds to cover any remaining costs. The deadline for the grant is July 30, 2021.

Selectman Stewart offered a motion that the Select Board draft a letter to Kristen Howard, Coastal Resiliency Coordinator at NHDES Coastal Program, in support of the New Castle Pit Lane Culvert Alternatives Analysis Project. Selectman McGuckin seconded and said motion carried unanimously 3-0.

##### **b. Fort Stark – Andrew Cushing**

Chairman Maher announced that the state will be making an investment of \$600,000 for changes at Fort Stark. Andrew Cushing, the State contact for Fort Stark, will be appearing before the Select Board on August 16<sup>th</sup> to present more details regarding the State's plans for these allotted funds.

#### **5. Adjourn**

Selectman McGuckin offered a motion to adjourn at 7:55pm. Selectman Stewart seconded and said motion passed unanimously 3-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Smith  
Recording Secretary