

MINUTES OF THE SELECT BOARD

Monday August 16, 2021, 7:00 PM

Recreation Building

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

Absent: William Stewart-Selectman

Public Participants: Andrew Cushing, Chief, Bureau of Historic Sites, NH State Parks, Department of Natural and Cultural Resources, Police Chief Don White, Ken McDonald-Admin Project Coordinator, Jennifer Rumph-Town Clerk/Tax Collector, Pamela Cullen-Asst. to Town Clerk/Tax Collector, Spence Lockhart, Scott Dylla, Christine Baharozian, Carol White, Peter Rice, Derrick Hill, Stuart Levenson, Beth Barnhorst, and Julia Thomas.

Chairman Maher opened the public session meeting at 7:01PM.

1. Approve Select Board minutes of August 2, 2021

Selectman McGuckin made a motion to approve the Select Board minutes of August 2, 2021. Chairman Maher seconded and the motion carried unanimously, 2-0.

2. Public Questions and Answers.

No public comments were offered.

3. Public Hearing – Acceptance of Safe Path Donations

Chairman Maher opened the Public Hearing at 7:04pm and stated the purpose of the public hearing was to gather testimony, information and public input concerning the acceptance of donations in excess of \$10,000.00. The amount before the Select Board was \$28,800 in donations to the Safe Path Committee.

No one from the public offered comment.

Selectman McGuckin offered a motion to accept the \$28,800 in donations to the Safe Path Committee. Chairman Maher seconded and said motion carried unanimously, 2-0.

4. New Business

a. Town Clerk/Tax Collector Update – Jennifer Rumph

Jennifer Rumph, Town Clerk/Tax Collector gave a brief update on the status of the Town Clerk/Tax Collector's office. Currently, she has Joann Ireland as her Deputy Town Clerk/ Tax Collector, BJ Reardon is performing the duties of an assistant and Pam Cullen is helping her with tax collecting.

Ms. Rumph stated that she wanted to recognize and thank "angels" Marge Morgan of the Town Clerk's office in Greenfield and Sue McKinnon of the Town Clerk's Office in New Fields, for their coming to her aide and assisting her during this transition. Ms. Rumph also thanked, Kathy Dymment, the Supervisor of

New Hampshire DMV, who also came into the office to help with record retention. Ms. Rumph informed the Select Board that the Town Clerk's Office is in desperate need of a suitable printer and that NH DMV highly recommends the town get a second computer for the office. While the office is open 8am to noon, 90% of the work is done after the window closes to the public and the staff needs the proper equipment to efficiently get their tasks completed.

Ms. Rumph asked that the public please not get discouraged if they are sent to Portsmouth to register their boats while her certification to perform that duty is pending and closed by also thanking the employees of town hall for their support during her transition period.

Pamela Cullen, Asst to the Town Clerk/Tax Collector, stated that she had been working in the Tax Collector's Office the previous Friday to confirm that the tax abatements were completed and will be available to help with the re-evaluations.

b. Andrew Cushing, Chief-Bureau of Historic Sites, NH Dept. of State Parks - Fort Stark Presentation

Andrew Cushing, Chief of the Bureau of Historic Sites, NH Dept. of State Parks, gave a brief presentation outlining the New Hampshire Department of State Parks' draft proposal for the investment of \$615,000 in upgrades for Fort Stark. Chief Cushing said these funds were initiated by the Governor who wished to see the site become a better representation of how the state handles its properties. The Federal Government granted the state department system about 22.5 million dollars, and of that \$615,000 was dedicated to Fort Stark. Fort Stark is the only historical site in the system to receive funds. In this first draft plan, they were charged with addressing a few items in particular, but this plan is at the mercy of those who monitor the funds. Secretary of Interior standards must be met. This process will include multiple public sessions. The time line is 2 years to encumber the funds and 4 years to complete the project, 6 years in total.

Chief Cushing listed some of the key things hoping to be addressed.

The construction of some sort of bathroom facility, probably flush toilets with a septic system, extending the water system from Wildrose Lane to the facility.

Safety of the concrete is a concern and the deteriorating overhang.

Vandalism.

Improving access to the museum.

Parking lot improvements. Not increasing the number of parking spaces, but formalizing the spaces.

Chief Cushing stated that they are looking at the demolition of the large white concrete structure, but it probably won't happen as it would probably not meet the standards. Discussions of creative solutions to reduce vandalism have included the possibility of staff housing on the property.

Chairman Maher invited the public to speak.

Spence Lockhart, 174 Wildrose Lane, expressed his concerns with speeding on Wildrose Lane and the amount of trespassing on his property due to missing fencing on Fort Stark. He requested the fencing be replaced indicating where the Fort ends and private property begins.

Scott Dylla, 149 Wildrose Lane, agreed with Mr. Lockhart regarding speeding being an issue and stated that he recently had a confrontation with someone trespassing on his property.

Christine Baharozian, 136 Wildrose Lane, expressed concerns about a possible increase in traffic and questioned how patrons would turn around in the parking lot if it is full.

Chief Cushing responded that the plan will include a big enough turn around for when the parking lot is full.

Carol White, 40 Vennard's Court, questioned whether the plan is to have the gate remain open.

Chief Cushing stated that the plan calls for the gate to remain closed after hours, but vehicles will still have access to the turn around.

Selectman McGuckin asked if it is anticipated that the open hours will increase.

Chief Cushing responded that the infrastructure dollars in his budget do not provide for an increase in staff.

Mr. Dylla asked if there are current plans to address Fort Constitution.

Chief Cushing stated that while these funds are for Fort Stark, the legislature has assigned his department to address repairs at Fort Constitution.

Ms. Baharozian asked if there would be an entry fee for the park in the future.

Chief Cushing responded that a fee is not currently in the plans.

Chairman Maher questioned whether the town advocating for a fee would help facilitate that and opined that charging a fee would bring some order to the site, help afford staffing and generally help problem solve.

Chief Cushing stated that he would look at the deed language as there may be restrictions to keep the site "free and open" to the general public.

Don White, Police Chief, stated that the biggest concerns for his department are the lack of lighting, the amount of illegally parked cars, and the damaged fencing allows for trespassers after hours. The police department is continually removing people from the white concrete building. Chief White stated that having a person on staff at the site would definitely help.

Selectman McGuckin asked Chief Cushing if he could provide a way for the public to contact him after this evenings meeting with ideas.

Chief Cushing provided his email address, andrew.h.cushing@dncr.nh.gov

Peter Rice, 11 Atkinson St., stated that he is one of the original 12 volunteers who established "Brigade of Fort Stark and Friends" 12 years ago. Over the past 12 years, it has been a cooperative effort between the volunteers, the state and the BOS to keep Fort Stark clean. Mr. Rice stated that it is his hope to share with Chief Cushing the wealth of knowledge and experience his group has acquired through the years. Vandalism is constant and ongoing and every Wednesday night volunteers do nothing but paint

over graffiti. Mr. Rice further stated that he finds the idea of taking 1/3 of the center for a residency a bit overwhelming given the museum itself is extraordinary.

Derrick Hill, 300 Wentworth Rd, thanked Chief Cushing for providing the town with the draft plan and asked if he had considered using removable speed bumps to reduce the amount of speeding. These could be removed to not adversely impact snow removal.

Chief Cushing stated that hopefully by late fall, early winter he will have some preliminary designs to share with the town.

Stuart Levenson, 56 Wildrose Lane, also spoke about traffic and parking being problematic issues and asked what the review process will be moving forward.

Chief Cushing responded that he wants to be transparent and a good neighbor. There will be a few more public meetings on how the money will be spent.

Beth Barnhorst, 14 Pit Lane, expressed her concerns about the graffiti, the invasive plants and the cost of the proposed bathhouse and suggested the possibility of a year-round port-a-potty. Ms. Barnhorst also suggested making trash cans and plastic bags available if the site is going to continue to allow dogs on the grounds.

Chief Cushing responded that the park will remain carry in/carry out and that year-round port-a potties would come out of his budget and he was not certain he could afford that.

Chairman Maher thanked Chief Cushing for coming to speak with the residents and Select Board.

c. Covid Update

Chairman Maher stated that one of the reasons the meeting is being held in the Recreation Building vs. the Macomber Room is because CDC mandates advised wearing masks inside, but the Governor has not gone backwards on his previous Emergency Orders and the BOS is therefore required to meet in person.

d. Historic District Commission Appointment – Alternate – Julia Thomas

Julia Thomas, 15 Atkinson St., introduced herself to the Select Board and stated that she was happy to accept this appointment and hopes to bring balance and perspective to the district.

Chairman Maher thanked Ms. Thomas for her willingness to serve on the Historic District Commission.

e. Town Projects Update

Chairman Maher stated that the town owes a balance to Eversource on the private light areas (PALS) and they are the old sodium lights which are inefficient. It was thought that the town had 13, but Ken McDonald has discovered that we only have 11 operating lights and was able to get us some funds back as a result of this discovery. It will cost the town \$7,773 to swap out these old lights for LED lights and the return on investment for this is 2.79 years.

Ken McDonald, Admin Project Coordinator, stated that these 11 lights are on a separate designation, they weren't on the town roster for street lights. They depreciated very little every year, so that is the

reason for the cost of them. In the future, if a light is knocked down or removed, we need to report that to Eversource as soon as possible so as to not be paying for nonfunctional lighting. In order to move forward with the new equipment, a 50% deposit will need to be approved.

Chairman Maher made a motion to approve the quote from Infinity and the payoff with Eversource for the remaining balance on the PALS and approve the project and bringing the PALS into the roster of street lights. Selectman McGuckin seconded and the motion carried unanimously, 2-0.

Chairman Maher stated that the town is currently reviewing RFPs that were submitted for the assessment of our computer systems and software.

f. Reschedule 9/6/21 BOS Meeting – Holiday

Chairman Maher offered a motion to schedule the next Select Board meeting for September 7, 2021 at 7pm due to the holiday on September 6th. Selectman McGuckin seconded and the motion carried unanimously, 2-0.

5. Old Business

No matters were discussed.

6. Adjourn

Selectman McGuckin offered a motion to adjourn at 8:25pm. Chairman Maher seconded and said motion passed unanimously, 2-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Smith
Recording Secretary