

MINUTES OF THE SELECT BOARD
Monday, December 16, 2019 – 7PM

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

Also present: Chief Ted Hartmann, Dave McGuckin, Tom Smith, Ken McDonald, Jim Cerny, John Ireland, Ann Miller Jim Rini, Richard Marcks, Dick and Emilie Spaulding, Jane Lannon, Daphne Schwab, Ken McCord, Darcy Horgan, Alan and Sally Gayer.

Chair Frampton opened the meeting at 7:00 PM.

1. Approve Select Board minutes of December 2, 2019. Tabled until next meeting January 6, 2019.

2. Public Questions and Answers.

a. Maude H. Trefthen Scholarship Fund.

Daphne Schwab, Chair of the School Board, addressed the Select Board regarding changes to the requirements of the scholarship fund. The fund was originally established in 1988, and the Town contributes \$1500 annually to the fund which is managed by the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation. Currently, students from New Castle, Rye and the Greater Portsmouth area are eligible. Former resident Wayne Semprini has led an initiative in conjunction with the School Board to update the language, which would limit eligibility to New Castle and MHT students, but Ms. Schwab pointed out that the pool of applicants needs to be broadened, and provided the Select Board with a handout describing the proposed changes.

The current fund purpose language is to provide annual scholarship assistance to students from the greater Portsmouth area who best demonstrate characteristics of academic performance, community service and economic needs. Preference shall be given to students who attended the Maude H. Trefthen School or attended Rye Middle School or are residents of New Castle, NH.

The “New Fund Purpose” : The purpose of the Fund is to provide annual scholarship assistance to students from the greater Portsmouth area including Rye who best demonstrate characteristics of academic performance, community services and economic needs. Preference shall be given to students who attended the Maude H. Trefethen School or are residents of New Castle.

Ms. Schwab provided the Select Board with the “Donor Acknowledgment To Revise an Existing Fund” for their review and signature. She noted that the Foundation will begin accepting applications for the 2020-2021 academic year on February 1 and the deadline to submit an application is Friday, April 17, 2020 at 5:00 PM. She referred the public to the following website: www.nhcf.org for further information.

3. **New Business.**

- a. **TOTF – new alternate: David Fitts. Tabled until next meeting: January 6 2019.**
- b. **Town Telephone Book – Board information – Pam Cullen.**

Pam Cullen noted that in the publication of the 2020 Resident Telephone Book, several errors were made in the listing of Town Boards and committees, particularly the listing of the Wildlife Management Committee which is not yet an official Town sanctioned committee. She also noted the omission of Safepath and Underground utilities committees.

c. **Wildlife Management Committee.**

Tom Smith spoke first on this matter, and urged the Select Board designate the group a citizen’s advisory group only and not a sanctioned Select Board committee. He provided the following statement which he read for the record:

December 16, 2019 to the Selectboard

I am Tom Smith and live at 254 Wentworth Road. I am requesting the following comments be entered into the final approved minutes and I shall provide written copy to the recording secretary.

At the December 5, 2019 Wildlife Management Meeting we were told by Mr. Henson and Mr. Frampton that if we did not want the town to sanction this Committee that we should come here today to speak with you.

I am here today to ask the Select Board to recognize this group of individuals as a **Citizen Advisory Group** and not an appointed Committee reporting to and advising the Select Board.

I feel strongly that some members, not all, have personal agendas that have proven in the recent past to be confrontational, misleading and non-productive in the eyes of the public. I would not want this behavior to be carried over into a committee sanctioned by and advising the Select Board.

Mr. Henson stated at the December 5th meeting that if the Committee was not going to be appointed, sanctioned and advising the Select Board, that he would not waste his time. Those were his exact words.

If the overall objective of the Committee is to research, educate and help the residents of New Castle, why would the committee only be formed if it is an advisory Committee to the select board? Wouldn’t the knowledge and information collected by a Citizen Action Group still be of value? Why is it so important for this committee to be a

Committee advising the Selectboard? Again, I refer back to some individuals within this proposed Committee as having potential hidden agendas.

I have been a resident of New Castle for nearly 40 years. I own approximately 7 acres of land which is primarily wooded along with a 1.5-acre fresh water pond that I personally had dredged. I jokingly refer to my property as ground zero for the vast amount of wild life in our community.

Throughout the years I have learned to live with the increasing population of wildlife to include but not limited to:

- A moose
- Deer
- Ducks
- Turkeys
- Canadian Geese
- Fox (Both Red and Silver)
- Mink
- 4-foot sea otter that found its way into my pond
- Muskrats
- Ground Hogs/Woodchucks
- Squirrels
- Chipmunks
- Rabbits
- Mice
- Beaver
- And most recently, confirmation by a licensed NH fish and game guide that I have a Coyote living under my back deck

You can imagine my surprise when I opened up the 2020 New Castle Telephone Book that was distributed Saturday, December 7th at the New Castle Christmas fair and discover the WMC listing.

I ask you, why is the list of potential (not yet approved) Committee names for the Wildlife Management Committee already printed and out for public distribution? We only heard the names two days prior at the December 5th meeting at 3pm. We all know the Telephone Directory has a significant deadline for submissions as well as requiring additional lead time for printing. This is an example of how members of a potential Committee should not be acting.

I do not believe that all member of this committee are or can act in the capacity of being neutral and without agenda, even if it is just collecting information. History, as well as recent events, provide a strong factual foundation supporting my request to **not** make this a town sanctioned Committee.

We cannot undo the damage caused to our town's reputation with recent negative emotional media coverage, but we can prevent additional damage in the future.

I respectfully request that this group of individuals not become a town sanctioned advisory Committee to the Select Board.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,
Tom F Smith

The next speaker was Alan Gayer of 12 Mill Pond Road, President of the Wentworth Master Association.

Mr. Gayer had previously submitted a four page document to the board, agreeing with many of the sentiments expressed by Mr. Smith. He proceeded to give a history of the problems surrounding the deer issues. He noted that Mr. Henson's role as Chair of the Duck's Head Association was to exert pressure on the WMA to cancel the planned deer kill. His personal views were given priority, making the group particularly agenda driven. Mr. Gayer believes the group should not be a town sanctioned group but should exist like the Garden Club does with volunteers.

Ken McCord of 70 Abigale Lane explained his interest in the issues, stemming from Mr. Henson's personal agenda. He recalled how the committee was formed, which was disturbing to him. He pointed out the credibility problem, and went on to criticize the articles published, which had incorrect information. He pointed out the faulty data that was relied on. He praised the Fish and Game Department and offered to volunteer to help with research. He stated he believes that if the group continues to operate then at the very least, the leadership needs to stand down. Ann Miller also does not believe anything productive will come out their meetings. Darcy Horgan also spoke in opposition, and submitted a letter to the Select Board, which is attached to these minutes. She objected to how the membership was done and stated that the WMA was basically a good idea which got off track and out of control.

Selectman Maher asked about the distinction between an ad hoc committee versus a citizen's advisory group. The Select Board clarified what their direction and explanation to the committee was originally, with Selectman Stewart citing the requirements of the Right to now Law. Pam Cullen pointed out that the WMA is just like the Safepath and Underground Utilities committees. They are only advisory. Chair Frampton noted that the WMA did provide a charter as they were asked to do. Selectman Maher noted a problem with the membership, and does not believe there has been a good faith effort.

Further discussion ensued regarding whether or not the Select Board should ratify the WMA. The Board decided to take the matter under advisement and report back.

d. Abatement Updates: Pam Cullen

Pam reported there is a total of 6 abatements. Four of them will be recommended for approval due to errors made by Avitar.

e. Water update:

Selectman Stewart reported that work is going forward on the bridge with the new hangars, check valves and new expansion joints. The sewer pipe will be looked at as well. A pre-construction meeting is scheduled for Thursday, December 19 at 9:00 AM with NH DOT and DPW. Work on securing a cost share agreement with Portsmouth is ongoing.

The main project will begin in March or April 2020. The second phase will be the loops. Funding may be limited for the loops. However, there may be a way to increase the SRF funding to get the loops done. In response to questions, Selectman Stewart stated he would share what the criteria for the loops will be, once that is decided.

4. Committee Reports:

a. Water & Sewer:

Chair Frampton reported the Commission has a new meeting date, which will be the third Thursday of each month. The Commission has begun work on the budget and has updated the backflow policy. It is also reviewing and updating billing procedures.

There being no other business to come before the Board, Selectman Maher made a Motion to Adjourn, which was seconded by Selectman Stewart. Motion carried, Meeting Adjourned at 8:20 PM.

Attachments:

Correspondence from Darcy Horgan
Packet from Alan Gayer.