

## **Selectmen's Meeting Monday, March 16, 2020**

These minutes were recorded by Angela Rizzitano, Secretary. Matt Sawyer Jr., Town Administrator, was also in attendance. The meeting was held in the Bub Avery Memorial Gymnasium at Town Hall.

### **Call to Order:**

Selectman M. Eldridge called the meeting to order at 4:15 PM.  
M. Eldridge opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **Attendance by Roll Call:**

Present were Selectmen Martha Eldridge, Susan Simpson and Jonathan Smith.

### **Announcement:**

Selectman M. Eldridge advised there would be no department head reporting this week.

### **Public Input:**

Eric Moran appealed to the Board to increase the Welfare Departments hours to 20 hours per week. He expressed concerns over lack of assistance. He would like to advocate for change. Selectman Smith advised that the public can schedule an appointment with the Welfare Department for a time that fits their schedule. Moran advised that he is unsatisfied with the Welfare Department. Discussion ensued.

Joy Gagnon also discussed the Welfare Department hours and advised that the Welfare Director is difficult to work with. She mentioned that she feels the Town has not been helpful and has not given guidance to the fire victims. She suggests changing the Welfare Director. Discussion ensued.

Roland Millette spoke about the Welfare Office needing to be more flexible, especially in emergency situations. He advised that it should be clearly marked that more times are available for appointments for those people who need it.

Daymond Steer of the Conway Daily Sun asked if the budget amount for Welfare was increased at Town Meeting and if the budget is funded for more hours. M. Eldridge advised that the Board met with the Welfare Director and the hours will be increased to accommodate appointments while maintaining normal welfare hours as well. M. Eldridge also advised that the Welfare Department has only received 4 applications thus far so she encourages everyone who needs assistance to get those applications to the Welfare Office or they can drop them off at the Town Hall.

Melissa Seamans asked if there is a Deputy Welfare Director. M. Eldridge advised that Angela Rizzitano has been appointed last week for that position. Seamans asked how the Town will fix this situation. She explained the situation with the hotel that is currently housing 14 people from the fire. She believes the Town should make it right with that hotel owner and pay that bill. She also wants the Welfare Director to develop an emergency plan designed for welfare purposes. Discussion ensued.

Joy Gagnon reiterated the Welfare hours are inadequate and inconvenient. Also she mentioned that people are poorly treated when they go there.

Town Attorney, Rick Sager, advised that the Welfare Department has regulations under RSA Chapter 165. He advised that most other towns are using appointments only and are not offering office hours for their Welfare Departments and suggested maybe Ossipee should do the same. He also advised that the Town website could be made to be more user friendly. He advised that he will look into other towns to see if they have an emergency plan for Welfare and let the Town know what he finds out.

Sue Bolton of FCCO commented that this is a teachable moment and the Town was not prepared for situations like this. She agreed that we need a plan in place for emergency situations. She also commented that the Welfare Department has a responsibility to assist people. Bolton mentioned that the fire victims have already filled out applications for assistance to get into that apartment and believes they shouldn't have to refill out paperwork. M. Eldridge advised that section 8 paperwork is different from the Town's Welfare Application. Discussion ensued.

Eric Moran discussed that the welfare process is a difficult process but the Town should show these families that they are cared about. Discussion ensued.

Selectman M. Eldridge advised that the Welfare Office will be changing the way they do things, including providing more hours for people to seek assistance and she advised that people will be treated in a kind and respectful manner. She also advised that in order to assist people with shelter, the Town's Welfare Department needs an application on file per the welfare guidelines.

Seamans spoke about how M. Eldridge was the Welfare Director for a long time and that she was the kindest person and she treated people with respect through the process and suggested she be the one to train the Deputy Welfare Director. She also asked if a representative of the Town go to the hotel and speak with the owner directly. M. Eldridge advised that she would do that.

Joy Gagnon commented that she doesn't feel like the Town has been proactive enough during this crisis. She asked if an employee of the Town can legally be a Selectman. M. Eldridge advised that per the DRA it is legal. Smith explained the RSA regarding that process. Discussion ensued.

Seamans wanted to confirm that applications can also be dropped off at the Selectman's Office as well. M. Eldridge advised that they can be dropped off. Office hours are M-F 8AM-430PM. Welfare will be notified that an application has been dropped off as they have 72 hours to act on it.

Dallas Emery asked what the Town's responsibility is regarding these victims and the situation. M. Eldridge advised they need immediate assistance regarding shelter mainly. Dallas asked how long the Town is required to assist. She advised that as long as they are eligible, we have to assist them. M. Eldridge also advised that these victims need to call New Hampshire Housing Authority and let them know about the fire so they can get priority housing options. Dallas also reminded the Board of the Constitution and expects that the Town will stand up for the taxpayers during the Covid-19 situation.

Seamans wanted to advise that the fire victims are not looking for a handout. They are lawfully entitled to basic needs and the Town is responsible for that if they are unable to do it themselves.

Dallas Emery responded that the Town hasn't done anything financially yet and he just wanted to know how far that will go and when the Federal Government will step in and take over.

Ed Comeau asked if the victims are receiving Federal money, why can't those funds be diverted to where they are now? Smith advised that section 8 vouchers can only go to approved section 8 buildings. Discussion ensued.

Comeau also commented on HB 1217, which is a bill requiring Police Officers to report misconduct by other Police Officers. Comeau advised that it was amended. Discussion ensued.

Brian Slowski thanked the Board for hearing the concerns of the citizens. He asked if the recreation job has been posted yet. M. Eldridge advised that it has not but T.J. Eldridge with the help of the assistant recreation director is overseeing that department. Matt Sawyer Jr. advised that all recreation activities are cancelled until further notice.

Selectman M. Eldridge read a letter from the Welfare Director to the State of New Hampshire asking for quicker responses and assistance for the fire victims from New Hampshire Housing Authority.

#### **Meeting Minutes:**

M. Eldridge made a motion to seal the minutes from the Non-Public Session held pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II (a) for a personnel matter. Simpson seconded. A unanimous vote was taken.

M. Eldridge made a motion to approve the minutes from the Work Session and Non-Public session held on 3/9/2020. Simpson seconded. Selectman Jonathan Smith abstained.

M. Eldridge made a motion to approve the minutes from the Selectmen's Meeting held on 3/9/2020. Simpson seconded. Selectman Jonathan Smith abstained.

M. Eldridge made a motion to approve the minutes from the Public Hearing held on 3/3/2020. Simpson seconded. Selectman Jonathan Smith abstained.

#### **Accounts Payable & Payroll Manifests:**

The Payroll Check Voucher total was submitted for the week ending 3/14/2020 with a pay date of 3/17/2020 in the amount of \$42,860.72. Accounts Payable for the week ending 3/9/2020 is \$151,680.90. Water & Sewer Accounts Payable is \$4,305.14. M. Eldridge made a motion to approve. Smith seconded. A unanimous vote was taken.

A Payroll Reimbursement Request issued to the Water & Sewer Department for the payroll week ending 3/14/2020 with a pay date of 3/17/2020 was submitted in the amount of \$3,432.85. M. Eldridge made a motion to sign the request. Simpson seconded. A unanimous vote was taken.

#### **Water & Sewer Red Folder:**

A Water & Sewer Warrant was presented for signatures for \$38.67 with penalties after April 20, 2020 for all sums not paid by this date. Smith made a motion to sign. Simpson seconded. A unanimous vote was taken.

#### **Review of Red Folder:**

The Board received a letter from the Planning Board requesting consideration in seeking alternate legal counsel regarding a commercial property in a residential zone. Selectman Smith made a motion to approve. Simpson seconded. A unanimous vote was taken.

The Board received a letter from the Zoning Board of Adjustment regarding ZBA member Shawn Marcotte and his lack of attendance. The ZBA requests that the Board of Selectmen request a letter of resignation from Shawn Marcotte. Smith made a motion to send a letter of resignation request to Mr. Marcotte. M. Eldridge seconded. A unanimous vote was taken.

The Board received a letter from the ZBA dated April 18<sup>th</sup> asking the Board to appoint Ralph Wurster as an alternate to the ZBA. Smith made a motion to appoint. M. Eldridge seconded. A unanimous vote was taken.

The Board received a letter from the Planning Board asking them to appoint Tim Otterbach as an alternate on the Planning Board. Smith made a motion to appoint. M. Eldridge seconded. A unanimous vote was taken.

The Board received a letter from the Conservation Commission regarding their meeting on March 18<sup>th</sup>. The Conservation Commission is asking to appoint Marie McConarty to the Conservation Commission for a 3 year term. Smith made a motion to appoint. Simpson seconded. A unanimous vote was taken.

The Board received a letter from the Conservation Commission regarding their meeting on March 18<sup>th</sup>. The Conservation Commission is asking to appoint Ralph Buchanon to the Conservation Commission. Smith made a motion to appoint. Simpson seconded. A unanimous vote was taken.

Kellie Skehan asked to confirm the dates on the letters of appointments previously mentioned. It was discovered the dates for the appointment of Ralph Wurster on the Planning Board and the appointment for Marie McConarty and Ralph Buchanon on the Conservation Commission were incorrect. Smith made a motion to retract those appointments. Simpson seconded. A unanimous vote was taken.

The Board received a letter from Treasurer, Harry Merrow requesting to appoint Brian Keyes as the Deputy Treasurer for the Town of Ossipee. Smith made a motion to appoint. Simpson seconded. A unanimous vote was taken.

The Board received a quote from Thomas Maguire of Maguire Equipment Inc. regarding the purchase of a baler for \$74,031.00. Smith made a motion to approve. Simpson seconded. A unanimous vote was taken.

The Board received a letter from Fire Chief, Dana Cullen regarding COVID-19. Smith read the letter. The letter advised that they will be closed to non-essential personnel and the inspection program is on hold for 3 months.

We received a Notice of Intent to Excavate from Edward Evans for Map 231, Lot 022. Access road is Dorrs Corner Road. Simpson made a motion to approve. M. Eldridge seconded. A unanimous vote was taken.

The Board received a Yield Tax Levy Warrant for \$2,229.77 for tax map 236 lot 9. Simpson made a motion to approve. Smith seconded. A unanimous vote was taken.

The Board received a Yield Tax Levy Warrant for \$3,150.06 for tax map 240 lot 4. Simpson made a motion to approve. M. Eldridge seconded. A unanimous vote was taken.

A Contract for Use of Facilities was received for NHDOT for March 25, 2020 at the Bub Avery gymnasium from 10:00 AM -11:00 AM. Simpson made a motion to approve. M. Eldridge seconded. A unanimous vote was taken.

A Notice of Intent to Cut Wood or Timber for Map 132, Lot 006 was presented for Tim Eliopoulos. The logger is Cole Boggs. There is no cemetery on the property and the taxes are paid. Simpson made a motion to approve this Intent to Cut. M. Eldridge seconded. A unanimous vote was taken.

The Highway Department Work Log was received for March 9, 2020 through March 13, 2020. It will be on file in the Selectmen's Office.

The Transfer Station Work Log was received for March 8, 2020 through March 14, 2020. It will be on file in the Selectmen's Office.

We received a Notice of Intent to Excavate from Rob Ambrose for Map 231, Lot 001. Access road is Archers Pond Road. Simpson made a motion to approve. Smith seconded. A unanimous vote was taken.

A Notice of Intent to Cut Wood or Timber for Map 9, Lot 017 was presented for Patricia McCarthy. The logger is Stuart Bevin Stillwater Forestry LLC. There is no cemetery on the property and the taxes are paid. Simpson made a motion to approve this Intent to Cut. Smith seconded. A unanimous vote was taken.

Selectman Susan Simpson made a motion to appoint Martha Eldridge as Chairman of the Board. Smith seconded.

Chairman M. Eldridge made a motion to appoint Selectman Smith as the Selectmen's representative for the Planning Board. Smith noted that the ZBA does not require a representative to be present but if a member of the public would like to be a representative, he encourages them to let the Board know.

Simpson made a motion to appoint Chairman M. Eldridge as the Selectmen's Representative for the Budget Committee. Smith seconded.

Town Administrator, Matt Sawyer Jr., advised that all recreation activities are suspended. He also advised that most departments are closed to the public per the advice of the CDC. He advised that the Selectmen Meetings going forward. Ed Comeau advised that they can't close the meeting to the public.

**Old Business:**

None Presented

**New Business:**

None Presented

**Second Public Input:**

Ash Fischbein asked if the Planning Board Meetings will be suspended until further notice. Smith advised that if we need to send notices again the Town will have to pay for it. Connie Billings advised that the Selectmen do not have the authority to suspend the Planning Board and he wants it to go on as scheduled.

Fischbein mentioned restaurant closures and asked the public to support local businesses during this trying time.

Ed Comeau mentioned the work sessions held upstairs and asked why it's held up there with no handicap access. M. Eldridge advised that due to the frequent non-public session, it is more practical to remain upstairs for work sessions. Sawyer Jr. advised we can make accommodations on a week by week basis.

The Board advised that amid the COVID-19 situation, they are being cautious at this time and will advise on future Selectmen's Meetings. Katy Meserve advised that the State have prohibited groups of 50 plus people from congregating.

**Non-Public Session:**

None

The next meeting will take place on Monday, March 23, 2020.

**Adjournment:**

Being no further input, Simpson made a motion to adjourn. M. Eldridge seconded.

Adjourned at 5:50 PM.

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Martha B. Eldridge, Chairman

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Susan J. Simpson

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Jonathan H. Smith

To be approved 3/23/2020