

Selectmen's Work Session Monday, January 9, 2023

The following meeting was held in the upstairs conference room at Town Hall. Present were Selectmen Jonathan Smith, Susan Simpson and Martha Eldridge. Matt Sawyer Jr., Town Administrator was also present, and recorded the minutes. Public Works Director TJ Eldridge was present.

Chairman Smith called the meeting to order at 3:00 PM

Discussion:

Smith motioned to enter three nonpublic sessions; sessions 1 and 2 per RSA 91-A:3, II(a) for personnel and session 3 under 91-A:3, II(c) for reputational issues. Simpson seconded and a roll call vote was taken:

Smith – YES

Eldridge - YES

Simpson – YES

Smith motioned to reenter the public session at 3:30 PM. Simpson seconded, and the vote passed 3-0. Smith motioned to seal the minutes to nonpublic sessions 1, 2 and 3. Simpson seconded, and the vote passed 3-0.

TJ Eldridge discussed a failed culvert on Granite Road which has collapsed and needs to be dealt with immediately. He explained that this road is the access point to an entire section of town and the replacement of it will need to happen as quickly and effectively as possible since the detour will be extreme. TJ explained that in the past it was given a “band-aid” fix only a few years ago, but by doing it correctly this time with concrete, it should last many generations. He presented a quote from GW Brooks for \$174,716 which is net of some savings the Town will attempt to get by hauling the gravel ourselves, pending the availability of truck drivers relative to any winter weather. Sawyer explained that the Town has funding available via SB401 passed in 2022 which sent around \$150,000 to the Town for projects like this, and that they can get the remainder from the existing ARPA funds on hand. Smith motioned to approve the project and quote from GW Brooks. Selectman Eldridge seconded and the vote passed 3-0.

Smith moved the subject onto the 2023 budget and referring everyone to the new budget sheets in front of them. Sawyer and Smith explained that the warrant article for the “Whittier Covered Bridge Approach and Area Improvements” has been deleted on the current version, because it can be funded out of the Bridge Aid portion of SB401. Smith explained that in its place, there is a new \$100,000 warrant article to fund a new ETF for the cleanup of properties that pose a public health risk and or significant zoning infraction due to being a junkyard etc. After receiving no questions or comments, Smith motioned to approve the “Property Cleanup Expendable Trust Fund” Warrant Article for \$100,000 on the 2023 budget. Selectman Eldridge seconded and the vote passed 3-0. Smith read the new total of \$1,095,000 for 2023 warrant articles.

Sawyer updated the group on a conversation he had with the bank regarding a new product called Insured Cash Sweep which could offer a much higher interest rate by spreading out the FDIC covered at partnering banks. This could result in more than \$50,000 in additional interest income to the town per year at the current rates (expected \$85,000 - \$90,000 vs the \$30,000 currently). Sawyer advised that

he understands the RSA to mean that the Treasurer has the ultimate say in the banking relationship/product, but that the Board of Selectmen should recommend it. Smith made a motion to recommend the changes as presented by Sawyer. Eldridge seconded and the vote passed 3-0.

Sawyer presented a draft of a Police Residence Policy which was created after reviewing the contract with a newly hired officer which referenced a limit. It was further identified that there was no known written policy to support the portion of the contract. Smith read the newly drafted policy which limits newly hired officers after 1/1/2023 to reside not further than 15 miles from the town border, without approval by the Board of Selectmen. Smith motioned to approve it. Eldridge seconded it and the vote passed 3-0.

Smith presented a document from the red folder regarding Tracy Cronin of Cronin Construction's request to be set up with monthly billing at the Transfer Station. Smith motioned to approve the request. Eldridge seconded and the vote passed 3-0.

Smith presented a set of documents relative to the State of NH Invasive Species grants. Smith motioned to approve the agreement and to name Matt Sawyer, Jr. as the agent to administer the grant, as usual. Eldridge seconded and the vote passed 3-0.

Ed Comeau of www.governmentoversite.com asked for clarity on the newly proposed warrant article to establish the Property Cleanup ETC, regarding who would be the agents to expend. Smith answered that the Selectmen would be, and Sawyer confirmed that the formal wording on the warrant would include that.

Being no further input, Smith motioned to recess until 4:15 PM in the gym. Simpson seconded and the vote passed 3-0.

Jonathan H. Smith, Chairman

Susan J. Simpson, Selectman

Martha B. Eldridge, Selectman