

**Board of Selectmen
October 26, 2016**

Present: Richard C. Edwards, Chairperson; Kenneth S. Paul; Connie Twombley; Teresa A. Williams, Town Administrator; and Toni Bodah, Secretary.

Mr. Edwards called the posted meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. **Ms. Twombley moved to enter Non Public Session under RSA 91-A:3, II (a). Mr. Paul seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Ms. Twombley – ‘aye’; Mr. Paul – ‘aye’; Mr. Edwards – ‘aye’. The motion passed 3-0, and the Board immediately entered Non Public Session.**

The Board returned to public session at 6:55p.m., and a recess was called. Mr. Edwards reconvened the session at 7 p.m. and led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance. Those present at this time included: Steve Whitman, Resilience Planning & Design; Kari Lygren, Educational Coordinator of Moose Mtn Regional Greenways; Tom Beeler, *The Granite State News*; Bruce Rich; Carroll Shea; Pam Wiggin; Ed Comeau (videographer); Donna Martin (videographer); Annette Perry; Phil Twombley; Nate Fogg; Chuck Robbins; and Robert McChesney. Joining the session in progress were Nancy Spencer Smith; Sgt Michael Fenton; and Fred Guldbrandsen.

1. Appointments

a) Kari Lygren & Steve Whitman – Ms. Lygren stated that MMRG is looking at areas on which they want to focus their attention. To that end they have decided to work with several strategic planners, one of which is present this evening. Mr. Whitman advised he is meeting with a number of surrounding towns in order to provide an overview of this effort to create a strategic conservation plan for the region, as well as to gather a little information. Mr. Whitman asked the following questions:

Are there any current conservation projects underway? Mr. Fogg stated there are no new projects. The priority is to make the existing conservation land accessible to the public.

Is there a public water supplier? Yes, with a well. No expansion plans.

Any surface water issues? None of which the Board is aware .

Are any local clubs planning trail development? 7 Lakes Snowmobile Club has existing trails; and TRAC continues work on a recreation trail.

Are there farms or farm stands? The Town has an Agricultural Commission, which could provide more information on farms. There is also a privately operated farmers’ market.

Has there been recent development? Not really

Does the Town have a Master Plan? Our Master Plan is always being revised and is available on the Town’s website. It was suggested that Mr. Whitman contact the Heritage Commission and Planning Board for additional information.

Mr. Edwards asked how this project is funded. Ms. Lygren advised that MMRG has received several State grants, as well as funding from private foundations and donors. Mr. Whitman noted that long-range plans would require additional funding.

Ms. Wiggin stated that the Scenic Byways Committee would also be a good resource. Mr. Whitman stressed the need to balance conservation with development. Ms. Lygren advised of several upcoming sessions.

Mr. Comeau referred to the MMRG mission statement referring to joining protected land to form greenways. Mr. Whitman confirmed that this project supports the mission statement. Mr. Comeau asked whether it supports the Trek East or Wild Land projects. Mr. Whitman advised the MMRG project is separate and on a smaller scale. Mr. Edwards stated that we should concentrate on the land already in conservation. Mr. Paul displayed a map of some of Wakefield's conservation land. He noted that vacant land produces clear profit; however we must find a balance.

b) Nate Fogg re: 2017 Building/Zoning Budget – As requested by the Board, Mr. Fogg has revised this budget request. Line 01-42401-110 (Clerk) includes clerical support for 24 hours per week. The hourly rate listed (\$16.21) should be reduced to \$16.07. Mr. Edwards questioned whether the 3 existing part-time inspectors could take on additional hours to provide the necessary coverage. Mr. Paul suggested the Shoreland Compliance Officer would be the likely candidate. Discussion followed regarding the needs of the department, enforcement and use of existing personnel. Mr. Fogg stated that the current personnel are not able to efficiently run the department. Mr. Edwards stated the existing personnel should be given more time to become comfortable with running the office. He also believes the time of the SCO would be better used right now to help the office run efficiently, rather than adding additional hours to the budget. Mr. Paul stressed that the SCO should have started in the spring, rather than this fall. If we don't include hours in the budget now, we will not have the funds available when necessary. We should get our act together while things are slow in order to be ready when things get busy.

Mr. Fogg has proposed (in 2017) for more SCO hours in the spring/summer than in the fall/winter. The SCO will also need time for training, inspections and follow-up. Ms. Twombly noted that the office was running smoothly with 40-hour per week clerical support. Now it is not running smoothly. We need someone at that desk for any people walking in. Mr. Edwards agrees with part-time clerical support; however, he does not believe we need to increase the SCO hours.

Ms. Williams reviewed the duties of the clerk. She noted that the SCO is a separate position, who will have his own clerical work to do. She does not believe the SCO is trained to provide clerical support for the other inspectors. We need to keep the SCO separate and to determine how many hours are needed for that position. This is difficult as there is insufficient data since the individual was not hired until late in the season. She anticipates that office will be busier next year.

Mr. Edwards asked Mr. Fogg whether he thought several months ago that the SCO would require additional hours. Mr. Fogg stated that we need to look to the future. Mr. Edwards understands but does not want to see this get out of hand. He does not care to see more government, although the needs of the public should be met. Mr. Paul stressed the need to look for those not pulling permits.

Ms. Twombly moved to approve 24 hours per week for clerical support. Mr. Edwards seconded the motion. Both the motion and the second were withdrawn.

Ms. Twombly moved line 01-42401-110 at \$20,000. Mr. Paul seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.

Mr. Paul moved to approve line 01-42401-120 at \$45,544, to include up to 20 hours per week for the SCO. Ms. Twombly seconded the motion, which passed 2-1.

With respect to the Mileage line (04-42401-637), Mr. Fogg spoke to the greater efficiency of the Building Inspector using his own vehicle under certain circumstances and suggested increasing this line to \$1500. Mr. Paul stressed the liability incurred when an employee utilizes his own vehicle. The employee should come to Town Hall, pick up the appropriate file and the Town vehicle. We are not in a good habit. Mr. Fogg stated they have tried to schedule inspections for first thing in the morning. However, there are times when all 3 staff members require transportation. Ms. Williams noted that the Town's insurance will not pay for damage to a private vehicle. Mr. Paul cited convenience for the individual vs. the best situation for the Town. He suggested we look at acquiring a vehicle being retired from another department. **Mr. Edwards moved the line at \$1000 (less than half of the 2016 appropriation). Mr. Paul seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.**

Mr. Fogg referred to the new line for Document Scan and Upload, for which he recommends appropriating \$2800. This would allow us to have CAI scan and upload existing subdivision and boundary plans. In future years we could reduce that figure to scan older septic plans. Current plans will not require scanning. Mr. Paul suggested we check that the revenues generated justify the cost to operate this department. Ms. Williams believes the \$2800 recommended could be covered in the 2016 budget, since the department has been operating without a clerk. (The Board could transfer funds from one line to the other at their next meeting.) We could instead appropriate \$500 (in the Printing/Supplies line 01-42401-610) in order to scan the septic plans in 2017. This would result in a new section total of \$119,416. **Mr. Paul moved the section total at \$119,416. Ms. Twombly seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.** Mr. Paul explained to the public that the Board has already held a number of meetings to review the proposed 2017 budget. This department's budget was an unresolved matter from one of those sessions.

c) Robert McChesney – Mr. McChesney had previously provided the Board with much material relating to his relationship with the Wakefield Heritage Commission. He read aloud a letter to the Board in which he attempts to summarize the issue, ending with the hope that the Board will direct the Heritage Commission to pay Mr. McChesney an amount he believes to represent a small portion of the time he invested on their behalf. Mr. Edwards pointed out that Mr. McChesney originally was acting as a volunteer as a member of the Heritage Commission. Mr. McChesney stated that files were removed from his computer without his permission. He advised Mr. Paul that he had no contract with the Heritage Commission. Mr. Paul suggested Mr. McChesney file a police report. Mr. McChesney stated that he offered a gift to the Commission which was turned down; thereafter, files were copied and deleted anyway. Mr. Edwards believes this issue has come to the Board out of anger rather than time or money involved on Mr. McChesney's part.

Ms. Wiggin, Chair of the Wakefield Heritage Commission, then gave a detailed synopsis of her version of events.

Mr. Edwards stated that the Town should not be expected to pay an individual when that individual had been acting as a volunteer. If Mr. McChesney believes something was stolen from him, then the Board of Selectmen is not the appropriate venue. Mr. McChesney left the session. Mr. Twombly noted that most of the files to which Mr. McChesney referred originally came from the Wakefield Heritage Commission.

2. Unscheduled Matters/Public Comment #1

--A watcher via Facebook wishes Connie Twombly a Happy Birthday!!

--Ms. Wiggin announced that the "Seven to Save" were unveiled by the NH Preservation Alliance this week. The Heritage Commission had nominated the Sanborn House, which was approved from a field of over 30 nominations. This designation from NHPA supports that the building is worth preserving. NHPA has been in conversation with the property owner. A portion of the display is set up in the Town Hall hallway.

--Mr. Comeau referred to the grant approved by the Board at the last meeting. It appears that the Board did not have all information when the grant was approved. He stressed it is important to have a grant review committee so that the Board knows all the details. Mr. Comeau is not suggesting this grant is not good; rather he is stating the Board should be aware of every detail of any grant being considered. Mr. Edwards understands Mr. Comeau's suggestion. He personally does not understand the grant language; but he is willing to rely on those around him with greater understanding. Ms. Twombly noted that she had read the grant and was familiar with it. Mr. Comeau stressed it would be good to have an unbiased review, adding that we must be aware of any long-term effect. Ms. Williams will attempt to seek volunteers for such a committee.

3. Unfinished Business – None scheduled.

4. New Business

a) Potential Deeding List – Mr. Edwards noted that there are 24 properties currently eligible to be deeded to the Town for non-payment of property taxes. Two of these properties involve IRS liens. **Mr. Edwards moved to not accept deeds for Map 154, Lot 31 and Map 34, Lot 26, due to the related IRS liens. Ms. Twombly seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.**

Ms. Twombly moved to accept deeds for the remaining 22 properties, if eligible. Mr. Paul seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.

The Board reviewed a letter from the owner of Map 126, Lot 10, which property is on the list of potential properties to be deeded. The owner is requesting additional time to pay the outstanding tax lien. The Board members agreed to stand by the immediately preceding vote.

5. Proposed Capital Reserve Fund Expenditures

a) PSB Phase II \$2,525.48 – This represents the cost of materials for the subflooring project. **Ms. Twombly moved to approve this expenditure, as presented. Mr. Paul seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.**

b) Ambulance \$5,415.74 – This represents the cost of twin dual infusion pumps. **Mr. Paul moved to approve this expenditure, as presented. Ms. Twombly seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.**

6. Correspondence

a) NH DES to J Finocchiaro – This letter is for the Board’s information and relates to a possible illegal dock off Bonnyman Road.

7. Unscheduled Matters/Public Comment #2

--Mr. Comeau referred to his suggestion that a committee be formed to consist of volunteers from Trustees of the Trust Funds and Budget Committees from all Carroll County towns in order to review the County’s finances to determine whether a forensic audit is necessary. All towns pay taxes to the County. These volunteers would review past information. Mr. Paul noted that if the Town of Wakefield had a similar issue, he would want a private company to review the financial information, rather than volunteers. Mr. Comeau referred to the high cost of a forensic audit, noting a volunteer committee review might be a reasonable first step prior to expending funds for a forensic audit. A forensic audit would identify fraudulent activity. Mr. Comeau is not looking for that, rather he wonders whether a qualified group of individuals could make a recommendation to the delegation as to whether a forensic audit is necessary. Mr. Guldbrandsen suggested asking our Trustees how they feel about this possibility. He also believes the estimate for a forensic audit is over \$100,000.

8. Administrative Matters

a) Town Administrator’s Update

--Ms. Williams has received a firm number of Unemployment costs for 2017. In 2016 the cost was \$3700; for 2017 the cost will be \$2609. **Ms. Twombly moved to amend line 01-41961-250 from \$3700 to \$2609, in the proposed 2017 budget. Mr. Paul seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.**

--Ms. Williams has also received the cost for health insurance for 2017, which reflects a 5.3% increase. Keeping the “split” at 89%/11% (Town/employees), the increased cost to the Town’s budget would be around \$8000. If we revise the “split” to 88%/12%, the Town’s increase would be \$3500. **Mr. Edwards moved to revise the split for the cost of health insurance to 88% for the Town, 12% for employees, for 2017. Mr. Paul seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.**

--The cost of dental insurance remained the same.

--Ms. Williams referred to previous correspondence from the Town of Middleton seeking an agreement for their residents to utilize Stonehedge Cemetery. Our Cemetery Trustees have met with the Town of Middleton and have developed an agreement. They recommend charging the Town of Middleton \$1200 per year to cover the cost of maintenance, etc. If the Board concurs, Town Counsel will be asked to review the proposed agreement. **Mr. Paul moved to accept the recommendation of the Wakefield Cemetery Trustees to charge the Town of Middleton \$1200 per year for the ability to utilize Stonehedge Cemetery, plus additional fees incurred by the Town via the Cemetery Trustees. Ms. Twombly seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.**

--The Chamber of Commerce is refurbishing their sign at the corner of Meadow Street and Route 16. The Chamber no longer has a telephone number to list. They would like to post the Town’s telephone number. The caller would then be directed to the current Chamber president’s phone number (which would be updated by Ms. Williams) via our recorded greeting. OK!

--Ms. Williams hopes to have a tax rate soon. DRA is waiting for revised information from the Water Precinct. Discussion followed as to possible use of the unassigned fund balance and a target rate. The Board agreed by consensus to utilize up to \$200,000 from the unassigned fund balance in order to keep the tax rate level, or at least close to level.

--The second meeting in November happens to fall on the evening prior to Thanksgiving. It was agreed to cancel the meeting of November 23, with the understanding a meeting could be held on November 30 if necessary. A similar situation will occur in December. It was agreed to meet on December 14, as usual, and it is hoped there will be no need for a meeting on December 28.

b) Treasurer's Monthly Reports – Provided for the Board's information.

c) Selectmen's Deeds – Two tax acquired properties have been redeemed. The Board executed deeds transferring these properties back to their original owners.

d) Selectmen's Letter of Appreciation – The Board agreed to send this month's letter to the members of the Transfer Station Ordinance Review Committee.

e) Building Permit Releases – None received. The Board took this opportunity to execute to Petition and Pole Licenses.

f) Payment Manifests – Ms. Twombly moved to approve PR #28 in the amount of \$69,131.68. Mr. Edwards seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.

Ms. Twombly moved to approve AP #32 in the amount of \$54,427.91. Mr. Paul seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.

g) Minutes – Ms. Twombly moved to approve the minutes of October 3, 2016, as presented. Mr. Edwards seconded the motion, which passed 2-0-1.

Mr. Paul moved to approve the minutes of October 5, 2016, as presented. Ms. Twombly seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.

Ms. Twombly moved to approve the minutes of October 12, 2016, as presented. Mr. Edwards seconded the motion, which passed 2-0-1.

Mr. Paul noted that the Board should consider a warrant article for use of clear bags or the pay-as-you-throw option in order to proceed with an appropriate design of the Transfer Station in a manner acceptable to the voters.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:18 p.m.

Board of Selectmen
October 26, 2016
Page 7

Respectfully submitted,
Toni Bodah, Secretary

Approval of Minutes:

Richard C. Edwards, Chairperson

Kenneth S. Paul

Connie Twombly