

FINAL



WEARE BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING MINUTES
JANUARY 27, 2020

PRESENT: JON OSBORNE, SELECTMAN; JAN SNYDER, SELECTMAN; CHAIRMAN FREDRICK HIPPLER; VICE CHAIRMAN, JACK MEANEY; SHERRY BURDICK, SELECTMAN

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR: Naomi L Bolton

GUESTS: Police Chief, Chris Moore; Finance Administrator, Beth Rouse; Conservation Commission Chairman, Andy Fulton; Conservation Commission members, Bill Bolton, Mike Camacho; Finance Committee member, Lori Davis; Meadowsend Timberlands Limited Forester, Jeremy Turner; Frank Campana

Chairman Hippler called the meeting to order at 6:32 PM.

NONPUBLIC SESSION:

**Chairman Hippler moved, Vice Chairman, Meaney seconded to enter into nonpublic session @ 6:33 p.m. pursuant to the authority granted in RSA 91-A: 3II (a & c). A roll call vote was taken, Selectman Osborne - yes; Selectman Snyder – yes; Chairman Hippler - yes; Selectman Burdick – yes; Vice Chairman Meaney - yes
Passed 5-0-0**

Chairman Hippler moved, Vice Chairman, Meaney seconded to exit this nonpublic session @ 6:41 p.m. A roll call vote was taken, Selectman Osborne – yes; Selectman Snyder – yes; Chairman Hippler – yes; Selectman Burdick – yes; Vice Chairman Meaney – yes. Passed 5-0-0

Chairman Hippler moved, Vice Chairman Meaney seconded to seal and restrict these nonpublic session minutes. Passed 5-0-0

Chairman Hippler opened the meeting at 6:42pm., welcomed those present to the January 27, 2020 meeting of the Weare Board of Selectmen and proceeded with the pledge of allegiance.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Police Chief Moore spoke to Article 11 in reference to splitting the warrant. His concern is the costs involved with the two cruiser purchases, one is higher, and one is lower. He asked, “What happens if only the lower cost vehicle approves?” He explained how the vote controls the rotation of his fleet and how critically it effects operations moving forward. Chief Moore continued explaining the difference in *fully equipped* and *fully serviceable*. He outlined a rough estimate for the up fit cost in the warrant article for a police vehicle. It includes lights, siren, computer mount, radio, push bar, graphics, storage and the prisoner

partition seat. It does not include the rifle, less than lethal shotgun, computer, crashing kit, evidence collection kit, personal protective gear, body bunker, AED, first aid, traffic control kit and the prisoner restraint system. Therefore, he does not use the terminology *fully equipped*. Chief Moore expressed his concerns for the Deliberative Session and the confusion voters might have in distinguishing between the terminologies. He then addressed previous comments, possibly by Frank Campana, stating easily understanding last year's warrant article for a Fire vehicle as being a command vehicle and not understanding this year's warrant article for a patrol vehicle. Police Chief Moore is not sure where the confusion is as the true difference is only how they are listed, command vs. patrol.

Frank Campana started by stating he is going to embarrass, though not blame, the Finance Administrator in reference to receiving the latest reports. The miscommunication/holdup was the Finance Administrator was waiting for the end of the year reports. He then went on with a discussion on the budget season and default vs. proposed budgets. Mr. Campana drew comparisons using the heating cost for the town office, fuel for the police, the highway department fuel and roadside mowing. He then reiterated a previous point in the implications associated with salary increases not voted on by the public.

Lori Davis questioned pay structures. She revisited the 3% non-union raise on top of "fairly substantial raise increases." Ms. Davis stated in the private sector a person would get their raise based on performance and not an additional bonus. She cited it's not a very good message to the rest of the town employees when dept. heads/administrators get both increases simultaneously. Ms. Davis stated, "We have no control over you and these salaries."

Bill Bolton proposed to include the Conservation Commission in the same exemption as the Land Use department as far as their purchasing policy and contracts for legal and professional services with reference to MTL, Jeremy Turner, our forester for the past 12 years. Currently, Mr. Turner is working through a 10 year plan encompassing 3000 acres of town property with 30 miles of bounds. Mr. Bolton explained the forester's job has many layers of moves and decisions that would be difficult for a new vendor to step into. He believes Mr. Turner is carefully executing the "sins of the past" with regards to omitted markings and bounds. In place is a two year plan to keep bounds marked that should have been marked years ago. Mr. Bolton explained hiring a different forester would be going backwards and cost prohibitive. He believes our Commission has done a great job watching the line. He also believes Mr. Turner, who knows our timber stands, products and watches the market, has done a great job taking care of the Town of Weare. It is a long term commitment. Mr. Bolton feels Mr. Turner does not have a "rubber stamp," and is very conscientious providing a "very solid service." Especially, with regards to how and where we spend our money. Weare is only 4% of Mr. Turner's acreage capabilities. If the Board went with a different forester they could end up with a smaller foresting service, thereby making Weare a bigger part of their income for the year. Mr. Bolton explained this could lead to them looking harder to spend more money where we are not spending it right now. He reminded the Board that the Conservation Commission is a volunteer board that has no paid help. MTL, Mr. Turner, is charging only \$20.00/hour for labor and \$60.00/hour for professional services and this is very inexpensive. Mr. Bolton stated, "Expenses are very much at hand," a new board, combined with a new forester would lose history and be placing the town in trouble.

Chairman Hippler asked if the copy he provided was the "up and coming contract?"

Mr. Bolton replied, "...Yes..."

Andy Fulton stated Mr. Turner gives updates every three months to the Conservation Commission where all information is evaluated. He suggested the Board of Selectmen meet with him as well on a semiannual or annual basis so they, too, could have the comfort level they have with him.

Lori Davis said in her opinion other town's Conservation Commissions do not have the same level of scrutiny. She believes Mr. Bolton's proposal "...makes perfect sense." She went on to express "...we have always tried to ensure the trust that you have put in us (Conservation Commission) to operate, to do our duties." Ms. Davis would like the Board to take that into account when making their decision.

Chairman Hippler asked the Board if they had any questions or comments.

Vice Chairman Meaney stated he sees the need for the way they (CC) want to do the contract, however, his issue is with past communication. He believes, previously, when the Board would ask questions they were met with "who are we, as the Board of Selectmen, to impede or inquire about what you (CC) are doing." Vice Chairman Meaney stated it's a town function that falls under the responsibility of the Board of Selectmen. He also stated, the CC is not independent and the Board needs to be able to answer to the public. He understands the proposal, keeping a consistent forester, but he would like to have stronger, more open line of communication. Vice Chairman Meaney feels having the forester coming in a few times a year providing information at a regular selectmen's meeting "would be very advantageous." He did question why this was brought forward after twelve years, he feels transparency, information and communication are key. He mentioned he was in favor of adding a five year extension, as their (MTL) pricing is more than reasonable.

Chairman Hippler concurred he felt the pricing is also more than reasonable. He stated communication is a two way street. He also feels the CC has been willing to meet and explain things. Chairman Hippler is also in accordance with Mr. Turner coming before the Board of Selectmen to give his mid-year report, mid-cuts and then at the end of the cuts. This type of communication he feels would be "phenomenal." He believes Mr. Bolton explained it very well and understands having a forester long term is "worth its weight in gold." Chairman Hippler suggested, however, that a MOU, memorandum of understanding, between the town and MTL, Mr. Turner, is important. For example, important information such as the expiration of the forester's certification or maintaining his manager's license would be pertinent inclusions. Going forward based on the long term goals, Chairman Hippler would be in favor of the proposal.

Selectman Burdick talked about the importance of staying with the same forester/company for as long as possible as most plans should be 50 to 100 years. She stated switching back and forth would be like starting over from scratch again. She also concurred with what Mr. Bolton said.

Selectman Snyder asked Mr. Turner, "at the beginning of the year, you know when you're going to have a timber cut on certain properties?" She also asked if an estimate is given at that time.

Mr. Turner responded, "Typically." He explained he gives a projection of activities/updates each quarter when he meets with the CC. His full time accountant keeps track of everything.

Selectman Snyder stated this information would be important when he comes before the Board.

Selectman Osborne went next stating he "got the ball rolling on this" because in his opinion, and the opinion of other towns people, the CC was not open with the Board of Selectman or Weare residents. He also stated

the last couple of year's communication has gotten better with information. He, too, has "no qualms about continuing" with MTL.

Chairman Hippler is 100% in agreement, but would like to add a clause with some kind of end date and suggested it be looked at further with the Town Attorney to make baseline responsibilities between the parties.

Town Administrator Bolton added she will get in touch with our Town Attorney on forestry contracts. She also addressed a separate issue where automatic, unfortunate, negative assumptions are made before having all the facts. During budget season in particular, the word transparency was often used. If someone doesn't have all the information or they don't know everything, it is instantly projected that something is "going wrong or something is fishy, underhanded, or buried." Town Administrator Bolton stated, "I just think if they go to the right place versus ... automatically jump to... they are under handed, somethings wrong... they're hiding something, ...and it's just not true!"

Chairman Hippler asked Town Administrator Bolton to get some MOU's from our Town Attorney.

FINALIZE 2020 WARRANT:

Town Administrator Bolton addressed the changes to Article 4. After the public hearing on January 20, 2020, the Town Clerk stated that the default budget for elections was wrong. Due to the nature of the question, as well as previously being sued by Mr. Kurk in 2018 regarding the default budget, a legal opinion was requested. Stephen Buckley, Legal Counsel Services for NH Municipal Association stated that in his opinion the 2020 default budget for elections should equal \$8,600. **Chairman Hippler moved to accept the legal opinion from NHMA regarding the elections category in our budget lines and the default number should equal \$8600.00; Vice Chairman Meaney seconded, passed 4-1, Selectman Snyder abstained.**

Town Administrator Bolton explained that at the public hearing the board moved, seconded and passed a motion to have the DPW Director's salary adjustment be a standalone article. After doing some further research, and looking into "no means no" rule, if this article fails then Director Knapp gets zero and can't be given anything. Discussion continued as to put the salary adjustment for the director into the proposed budget and not in the default. **Chairman Hippler made a motion to rescind the motion to pull the DPW Director's \$8,000.00 increase from the warrant article making it a separate standalone article; Selectman Snyder seconded. Passed 5-0-0**

Town Administrator Bolton informed the Board that at the end of the last meeting the Board agreed to split the two cruisers into separate articles. Police Chief Moore stated it's a "conundrum" because no vehicle was purchased last year. Article 11 & 12 serviceable vs. equipped change, leave at two vehicles separate use the wording serviceable.

Chairman Hippler mentioned the mailer is what everyone has in their hands and using a Facebook post would be ok to explain the difference in the articles. We are not allowed to urge or persuade people on how to vote. Town Administrator mentioned the chief could also have a coffee hour/forum prior to the vote in an attempt to get people better informed.

Selectman Burdick mentioned you'd end up spending more money in repair costs to keep an older vehicle running vs. the money spent to buy a new vehicle.

Article 24 has a slight change. It is a petition to change the money that goes into the Fire Department Special Revenue fund. The Department of Revenue has stated in their comments that this article requires a 2/3rd's majority to pass, pursuant to RSA 31:95-d, V.

Article 25 is a petition article for Ineson Field. Because it is asking to spend taxpayer's money for the balance not put in by the Weare Athletic Club a recommendation must be added. The article will be recommended by the Board of Selectmen.

Article 19 regarding the \$34,000 for repairs at the Town Hall. Chairman Hippler stated that the Finance Committee is not recommending this article as they feel that the money that is in the Mildred Hall Fund for the Town Hall should be used first. The Board discussed the quote that was given was a per hour quote for labor and materials and the Board tried to best guess the amount of time, but without knowing the extent of the rot it could cost a lot more. The Board would like to leave the article as written and use the Mildred Hall Fund in case the rot is worse than expected. There is approximately \$14,000 currently in the Mildred Hall Fund for the Town Hall.

Article 18 regarding the government building maintenance article for new AC units here at the Town Office as well as putting some money into the fund to get it back to the \$60,000 that the Board agreed is a fair number to keep on hand during the course of the year in case something goes wrong in any of the Town Buildings. The Board talked about the maintenance for the Town Hall and Bell Tower being important. Selectman Burdick mentioned the Town Hall being on the National Registry. Chairman Hippler mentioned grant writing for expediting the financial commitment. Vice Chairman Meaney stated leaving the article as written.

The Board of Selectmen signed the back page of the Town Warrant so that it can be officially posted tonight. The Board then selected speaking assignments for each article for the Deliberative Session.

MINUTES:

The minutes were tabled.

MANIFEST:

Chairman Hippler and Vice Chairman Meaney, moved to accept the manifest as follows, which passed 5-0-0.

To order the Treasurer to sign the payroll and accounts payables checks dated January 30, 2020, as included in the following manifests:

<i>Payroll Manifest</i>	\$	61,103.46 (Weekly payroll)
<i>Accounts Payable Manifest</i>	\$	26,888.65
<i>Fire Department Accounts Payable Manifest</i>	\$	25,257.61
<i>John Stark Accounts Payable Manifest</i>	\$	250,000.00
<i>Weare School Accounts Payable Manifest</i>	\$	300,000.00

<i>Total</i>	\$	663,249.72
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DEPARTMENT HEAD/COMMITTEE ITEMS:

Conservation Committee discussed Forester, Jeremy Turner see Public Comment

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT: Administrative Topics:

Public Hearing for the Town Hall Fees is scheduled for next Monday, February 3, 2020 @ 6:45 PM.

Gordon Brown building site walk slated for March 1, 2020 at 11 AM on East Road.

Government Building-

- Tim Maskiell has the quote on painting upstairs and re-glazing windows. It will still go out to bid.
- Town Hall Sign wait for warmer weather.
- Sign at Gazebo to be looked at further.
- East Road letter in reference to the gate went out.

Chairman Hippler mentioned a Public Service pole #1 with a light on it is broke at its base at the Town Hall.

Selectwoman Snyder questioned if the No Parking sign at the Town Hall was still there. Cars are parked in the fire lane.

CORRESPONDENCE & OTHER BUSINESS:

Chairman Hippler mentioned a conversation he had with a Bogue Road resident with regards to the town mowing trees and the Coronavirus, specifically, how the Board would handle an outbreak in our town. Vice Chairman Meaney stated it would be mandated by NH. Dept. of Health & Human Services and we would have to follow their guidelines.

Being there was no further business to come before the Board, Chairman Hippler moved, Vice Chairman Meaney seconded to adjourn at 8:48 pm, seconded. Passed 5-0-0.

ADJOURNMENT

A True Record.

Karen Nelson

Karen Nelson transcribed from
TA Bolton notes & YouTube recording