



WEARE BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING MINUTES
March 11, 2024

PRESENT: FREDERICK W. HIPPLER CHAIRMAN; BENJAMIN D. KNAPP VICE CHAIRMAN; SALIM BLUME, SELECTMAN; SHERRY M. BURDICK, SELECTMAN; JANICE MATHEWS, SELECTMAN.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR: Naomi L. Bolton

GUESTS: Jason Fiske- DPW Director, Jim Higgins, Eileen Meaney, Mathew Bieler, Richard Butt, Frank Campana, Nate Corbran-Whyte's Logging

These minutes were transcribed from the following link:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ravx_WuPc3M

Chair Hippler opened the BOS meeting at 6:30 PM.

Chair Hippler motioned to enter into a nonpublic meeting at 6:31 p.m. to RSA 91: A-3 II (a &c). Selectman Burdick seconded. All in favor. 4-0-0

Vice Chair Knapp arrived at 6:38 PM.

Chair Hippler motioned to come out of a nonpublic meeting at 7:00 p.m. to RSA 91: A-3 II (a &c). Selectman Blume seconded. All in favor. 5-0-0

Chair Hippler motioned to seal and restrict the nonpublic minutes. Seconded by Selectman Blume. Motion passed 5-0-0.

Chair Hippler welcomed the public at 7:06 PM.

Vice Chair Knapp presented Chair Hippler and Selectman Burdick with plaques for the terms of service on the BOS. Chair Hippler served for nine years and Selectman Burdick for six years.

Public Comment: Elieen Meaney, 282 Quaker Street, thanked Chair Hippler and Selectman Burdick for their service and it is a tremendous commitment. Ms. Meaney said at the March 5th meeting Selectman Burdick read a letter into the record that was of concern to Ms. Meaney and wanted to know if those minutes had been unsealed. Chair Hippler said that the minutes had been sealed. Ms. Meaney said that was the reason she attended the meeting in person to make sure the BOS made a remedy on the issue.

Richard Butt, 90 Old Town Road, stated that he wanted to give his opinion regarding the job description that was done in 2013 when he was a Selectman there is a relationship for employees reporting to employees and he believes everyone in the Town whether part-time or full-time employees reports to a

department head or the Town Administrator. Mr. Butt said that it was his impression that the person should not report to the Town Administrator, and he thinks it should be. He would urge to keep the structure in place and that the personnel issues and the nitty gritty things should be tied directly to the Town Administrator. Mr. Butt said the other thing that he wants to touch base on is Article 26. There was some literature mailed out to people in town that created confusion. Mr. Butt read the following statement into the record that was mailed out: "Vote yes to Article 26 put forth by the taxpayers, would allow most usable part of the East Road property to be made available for community use." Mr. Butt asked if that was correct. Chair Hippler said it was not the board's statement. Mr. Butt said he knows but the board is responsible for the warrant to a great extent even if it is a petitioned warrant article. Vice Chair Knapp said the way it was portrayed to the BOS was that they wanted to get permission and then do a survey of what the most usable piece would be. Mr. Butt said it seems like an action statement that if you approve the article this will happen. Chair Hippler said if both articles 24 and 26 pass then a judge would have to decide.

Departments/ Committee Items: Chair Hippler asked Matthew Bieler to speak to as to why he would like to join the PARC. Mr. Bieler said that he is currently a cub master with Pack 24 in town and has two young daughters who have enjoyed the playground at Bolton Field, and the gazebo and have worked on the Patriotic Day parade and made use of that field. Mr. Bieler said this past fall they did a large cleanup at the playground at Bolton Field and some of the surrounding area. They have also used Chase Park for their Family Campout. Mr. Bieler said that he would like to be a benefit to the town and help get things cleaned up in the best way they can with the resources they have. Selectman Blume said the PARC agreed to do one-year terms to stagger the terms.

Selectman Blume made a motion to appoint Matt Bieler to the Parks and Recreation Committee with a term expiring in March of 2025. Seconded by Selectman Burdick. Motion passed 5-0-0.

Chair Hippler swore Mr. Bieler into the PARC. TA Bolton said the other interested party in joining the PARC is not here tonight. Selectman Mathews asked if the BOS could still appoint her. TA Bolton said she emailed her. Selectman Blume said that she was not at the PARC meeting, and they discussed if the committee wanted to move forward and the committee did want to move forward with appointing her. They would like to have her attend the March 18th meeting.

FELCH FOREST LOGGING – WHYTE'S LOGGING: DPW Director Fiske said that the Conservation Commission, Town Forester, and Whyte's logging have reached out to the Public Works department with concerns about the Timber Harvest on Merrill Road (Felch Farm). DPW Director Fiske said they asked to use the pit road out back which would take away the \$5,000 cost to the taxpayer as far as building the landing right at the top of the hill of Merrill Road. DPW Director Fiske said he does not see an issue with them using it as far as traffic in and out, on page three in the package is kind of an agreement that Whyte's Logging has come up with. DPW Director Fiske said that the Town Forester asked him to bring the agreement to the BOS to look over and sign off on. Vice Chair Knapp asked about the dates and times that he was not there. DPW Director Fiske said there is an agreement for a gate key and Whyte's logging has agreed to lock the gate no more than an hour later than the normal transfer station hours and when the days that they are not open if the trucks go in and out the gate will be locked behind everyone. The foreman will have a copy of the key and the agreement stated that they will return it no more than two days after the last piece of equipment is out of there. TA Bolton asked how it would be \$5,000. DPW Director Fiske said he believes that part of the bid was \$5,000 for the landing. Nate Corbran Timber Buyer for Whyte's Logging said that the original agreement with the Conservation Commission was that they would pay them \$5,000 to create the access road and the landing at the top of the hill on Merrill Road. It is a pretty big cost and using the pit would be no cost and it would get rid of the \$5,000 fee. There would be no costs associated with the Harvest and would be strictly revenue from the stumpage. TA Bolton said that if there is a deviation from the original plan does that change the other numbers that were put into the bid? Vice Chair Knapp said they were still the highest bidder even with the Commission paying the \$5,000. Mr. Corbran said the lowest bidder had the access road and landing fee at \$4,500. Vice Chair Knapp said he feels comfortable

with this because Whyte's was still the highest bidder. Mr. Corbran said that he would assume that if any of the other bidders received the bid, they would try to change the access because it makes more sense to have everything pulled downhill instead of uphill. Selectman Blume asked if there was anything that they needed to worry about since they would be crossing through an area of public traffic such as liability. Mr. Corbran said that he would feel more comfortable with signs going up the trucking route and he would have the trucks go five MPH. Vice Chair Knapp asked how long the timber harvest is expected to take. Mr. Corbran said about three to four weeks. Mr. Corbran said there will be an excavator and a bulldozer on site 90% of the time because there are a couple of things with the water that they would like to take care of better. TA Bolton asked if that makes any deviations from the wetlands permit that is already set in place. Mr. Corbran said no.

Motion made by Vice Chair Knapp to allow Whyte's Logging to use the gravel area at the Highway Garage on Merrill Road for the logging operation of the Felch Forest through the year 2024 and the one key that is given to the Foreman is returned no later than two days after the operation is complete. Seconded by Selectman Burdick. Motion passed 4-1-0. Chair Hippler voted no to the motion.

RIVER ROAD BRIDGE UPDATE: DPW Director Fiske gave an update on the River Road Bridge. The committee came to the table with the three same engineering companies and TA Bolton will get copies to the three new selectmen and they will move forward with scheduling interviews. Discussion ensued regarding the interview process for the engineering companies and the new board.

Chair Hippler moved to hire James Higgins at the rate of \$21.85 per hour and to start March 12, 2024, for a position as a truck driver for the DPW. Seconded by Vice Chair Knapp. Motion passed 5-0-0.

TA Bolton said that on the December 27th the BOS interviewed or talked about reclassifying Austin Maguire, and they searched the minutes TA Bolton said she knows the whole board was privy of the non-public and when they came out of the nonpublic, they said they interviewed a potential candidate for the Police Department. TA Bolton said on January 8th Chief Moore came in and they did not make a motion the board mentioned it as a reclassification. TA Bolton said Finance Administrator Rouse does not know anything about annual accrual and there was nothing on his check. Finance Administrator Rouse and TA Bolton think it would be best to read the details into the minutes.

Chair Hippler approved at the time of the effective date Officer Austin Maguire would have completed ten years of continuous law enforcement service with a hire date of December 30, 2023 he would recommend that Officer Maguire accrue up to 200 hours of annual vacation in accordance with the CBA. Seconded by Selectman Blume. Motion passed 5-0-0.

MANIFEST:

Chair Hippler moved; Selectman Mathews seconded:

To order the Treasurer to sign the payroll and accounts payables checks dated March 14, 2024, as included in the following manifests:

Checks Dated March 14, 2024

Payroll Manifest	\$ 72,549.36 <i>(Weekly payroll checks)</i>
Accounts Payable Manifest	\$ 50,524.32
Supplemental Accounts Payable Manifest	\$ 841.86

TOTAL:	<u>\$123,915.54</u>
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Minutes: Motion made by Chair Hippler to approve the February 26, 2024 minutes as amended. Seconded by Selectman Blume. Motion passed 5-0-0.

Motion made by Chair Hippler to approve the March 1, 2024 minutes as amended. Seconded by Selectman Blume. Motion passed 4-0-1. Abstention from Vice Chair Knapp.

Motion made by Chair Hippler to approve the March 4, 2024 minutes as amended. Seconded by Selectman Mathews. Motion passed 5-0-0.

Administrators Report: Selectman Blume asked if anyone had responded to the position. TA Bolton said she did get questioned at a basketball game but had not heard any more from them. Selectman Blume asked that since the board has condensed the amount of detail that goes into the minutes and the BOFW has disbanded they ask the current minute taker if she would be willing to take them on for an additional \$60 a month. TA Bolton said that she could ask Kearsten again if she would be willing to take it on. Selectman Blume said that during the PARC meeting, the question came up if they were paying for the dumpsters and Selectman Blume said it turns out they are not paying for them. Selectman Blume asked who is paying for the dumpster at the library and if PARC would be willing to help pay for them could users of the tennis courts use the library dumpster? Selectman Blume said it was not an official PARC request, it was a thought he had.

TA Bolton said that she is still working on the public guardianship and has not had the chance to catch up with what they sent her. TA Bolton said that she did attend the March 6th meeting at Mildred Hall for the request of \$2,500 and will let Betty Straw, Chairman come in next Monday to let the BOS give them their decision. TA Bolton went over the Right to Know Requests. Selectman Mathews asked TA Bolton to remind the PB that it is in the law that they need to meet once a month.

Correspondence/ Other Business:

Selectman Burdick said that she believes she is up on a three-year term with the Conservation Commission and would like to be re-appointed. Selectman Burdick said when the perambulation for Henniker, Francetown, and Goffstown takes place she would like to attend if possible.

Selectman Blume went over some transition notes for the newly appointed Select People.

Selectman Mathews said that the BOS did complete the performance reviews and they should be put into the employees' files. Selectman Mathews said that Finance Administrator Rouse sent out the audit questionnaire that needs to be completed.

Chair Hippler read a letter into the record as follows:

"Board members,

I had time to reflect on the dialogue of last night's BOS agenda item regarding the building inspector position. After careful thought, I am withdrawing my offer to fill in, on a strictly temporary basis, and offer the following explanation. The board voted, conditionally, to offer the position to me on a part-time basis and explained what that might entail. Attaining the ICC certification and proof thereof prior to employment was to be provided. I would like to point out the following, while I would have no issue getting re-certified and providing proof, the inspector before Goffstown's, was not ICC certified (working for several months this way. TA Bolton also, curiously, had in hand at last night's meeting and a prior meeting, an application for someone who could start immediately (not ICC certified). One could conclude, with the repeated resistance of 2 people, that the "conditional" requirement is discriminatory (not by majority). The appearance of "it seems to be working the way it is", has been misleading for a time now. I will not assume, nor infer that this is the sentiment of ALL those in attendance and seated at the table last night. I will not waste the town's money on getting Re-certified when it seems that this is not an immediate priority anyway and maybe a recurrent cost with another candidate. I am requesting that this email be brought up under "

communication" at the next scheduled public BOS meeting and be read to be entered into the recorded minutes, not just summarized.

Regards,
Kyle Parker
A resident of Weare"

Selectman Mathews, there was an email from a resident regarding noise and blasting. Chair Hippler said there was blasting on River Road and attached to the email was a complaint form. Chair Hippler read the following complaint into the record *"The blasting in the area has long been an issue impacting my residence, both from the perspective of the level of noise, but more importantly from the vibration and reverberation impacting my house and property. At 2:00 pm today the impact of the blast was at a level warranting reaching out to file a complaint. The blast could be felt moving through my home like an earthquake. It shook my windows to the point that it blew things off windowsills. This is causing unnecessary repairs and damage to my residence and personal property. I don't typically get involved or complain, but the force of the blasting is out of hand."* Chair Hippler did respond to the complaint and forwarded the response to the board.

Chair Hippler read the following letter into the minutes:

*"Dear Board of Selectmen,
The Board of Fire Wards (BOFW), is aware that the Board of Selectmen (BOS) will be the authority over the Weare Fire Rescue Department on March 15, 2024. You should know as Selectmen that the BOS already participates in the Fire Rescue Department finances. The Selectmen were in control of vendors, paying bills, etc. until 2018. At that time the selectmen met with the BOFW and worked out a path to manage expenses. It was the goal of the BOFW to streamline those duties and minimize costs by using the Town Finance Director to process all payments and the BOS to continue authorizing payroll for the employees as part of the town's weekly payroll. The selectmen already control the contracts, Capital purchases, and equipment inventory. Any questions you have regarding those issues should be addressed by the Finance Director. The BOFW has worked to bring the Department from failure to provide a minimal response in 2010 to having a part-time chief and 2 fire/EMS responders in the station twenty-four hours a day presently.*

If you look at the voting records the voters have over and over supported this model for ensuring an adequate response to those in need. There has been a lot of time and effort to give the voters correct information by the BOFW on these issues. Sadly, there has been a lot of false information put out by a few. Your duty is to manage the Weare Fire Rescue Department giving the voters an adequate service for the money they have voted for. I want to thank the BOFW members for their service as well as the members of the Weare Fire Rescue Department for their dedication to helping those in need.

*Sincerely,
Steve Roberts, Chairman"*

Chair Hippler said that his parents had been cleaning out their house and they found a gavel that was his grandfather's. He was a mason and the lodge master and would like a motion to close the meeting.

Being there was no further business to come before the Board, Chair Hippler made a motion, and Selectman Blume seconded to adjourn at 8:33 p.m. Passed 5-0-0

ADJOURNMENT

A True Record.

Kearsten O'Brien

Kearsten O'Brien, Minute Taker