

Town of Boscawen

Select Board

Draft Minutes

Thursday November 5, 2020 at 6:00pm

In attendance: Ed Cherian, Lorrie Carey, Paul Dickey, Alan Hardy, Katie Phelps, Kellee Easler, Tama Tillman, Gary Tillman, Dean Hollins, Tim Kenney, Kevin Wyman, Kearsten O'Brien, Barbara Randall, Mark Varney, William Gatchell, Kerry Connor, Mark Stetson, Nicole Hoyt, and Sarah Gerlack.

This meeting is being held under a Declaration of Emergency by the Governor and by the Board. Under RSA 91-A: 2, III (b) the requirement of a physical quorum is waived and this meeting is being held entirely remotely, and is being recorded.

Chairman Cherian made a motion to accept the October 22, 2020 minutes as presented and the October 29, 2020 minutes as amended by Selectwoman Carey. Seconded by Selectwoman Carey. All in favor.

Old Business:

Selectwoman Carey suggested in light of the fact that the Select Board approved to improve the Health Care Plan for this year, she would recommend that they keep the COLA increase at 1.3%. Chairman Cherian and Selectman Dickey agreed.

Chairman Cherian motioned to recommend a 1.3% COLA increase for employees in 2021. Seconded by Selectwoman Carey. All in favor.

The Select Board received a letter back from the Penacook Boscawen Water Precinct. Chairman Cherian said he was disappointed and was not sure they understood the purpose of the report, in which the tax payers spent \$10,000. The letter indicated that they did not want to have any further discussion. He said he believes it is worth continuing the discussion because there may come a time for the Town to become more involved. It is a critical step for the Economic Development of the Town. Selectwoman Carey said particularly in the development that is currently taking place on Water Street, and if we are going to be able to grow any further as a town. The letter does not state anything about the current capacity of water that can be distributed by this system. Selectwoman Carey said we also know that the pump station is at its limits in terms of its ability. Although it is not addressed in the letter it is something the Town should keep on their radar, should there be a catastrophic failure the Town may be called in to assist. As the wells age and losing capacity there needs to be a new well which, is a major investment. Selectwoman Carey said last she knew the PBWP had failed to renew their license on the well at the Veteran's Cemetery therefore another study at a six figure cost and then the building of the well at a three million dollar cost. Town Administrator Alan Hardy asked if there was an issue with the Water St and Knowlton Road area of a pressure concern and hydrant flow, and that the Water Street homes are not protected with a hydrant system that meets the minimum standards. Is there a test that the Town should be looking at when it comes to long term planning?

Fire Chief Tim Kenney said there is a test that is laid out for fire prevention. For future development to go in there has to be proof of water which would come from NFPA. Fire Chief Kenney said he

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can reach out to the Fire Marshall Office to see if they have any information they can offer for guidance. Selectwoman Carey said there is a test as Fire Chief that you can and should request, she cannot remember what it is called and will look through her notes. The test does test the pressure of the hydrants and knows it has not been done for about ten years. Fire Chief Kenney said the issue on Water St is the infrastructure of the pipes. Chairman Cherian said that if Fire Chief Kenney sees any life safety issues with the hydrants it should be brought to the attention of the Fire Marshall's Office and the PBWP.

Department Head Updates:

Finance Director Katie Phelps presented checks for acceptance. The first being from James St. Jean Auctioneers for the Public Works 2008 F350 and a minute mount plow, the amount of the Check was \$8,100.

Chairman Cherian motioned to accept the check from James St. Jean Auctioneers in the amount of \$8,100. Seconded by Selectman Dickey. All in favor.

Public Works Director Dean Hollins asked if the Select Board could earmark the check for the outstanding GMI bill.

Selectwoman Carey motioned to accept the check into the General Fund and earmark it for Public Works. Seconded by Chairman Cherian. All in favor.

Finance Director Phelps received a check from the State of New Hampshire to reimburse the Town for absentee ballots of \$1,606.62.

Selectwoman Carey motioned to accept \$1,606.62 into the General Fund for reimbursements of absentee ballots. Seconded by Selectman Dickey. All in favor.

Finance Director Phelps updated the Select Board that they will be speaking with DRA on November 6, 2020 to review revenues and set the tax rate. Chairman Cherian asked if it is the intent of the Select Board was to set a tax rate at the meeting. Town Administrator Hardy said yes. Chairman Cherian asked if there was a reason why they must do it last minute in an emergency meeting. Town Administrator Hardy said he has never not known the meeting to be an emergency meeting. Tax Collector Nicole Hoyt said it's been the practice to give the residents at least forty days' notice as this bill is a change in tax rate. If the bill in July was not paid by a resident it will be tacked on to their new bill. This can complicate escrow accounts. Finance Director Phelps stated that she wanted to inform the Select Board that reserves this time of year begin to dwindle and we have a \$700,000 county bill due in December. Town Administrator Hardy said the later we get into setting the tax rate it makes it harder for the liening and deeding process. Selectman Dickey asked when the meeting was created. Town Administrator Hardy said the meeting was made this afternoon. Selectman Dickey said he does not feel this gives the Select Board enough notice. Selectwoman Carey asked if the Town Treasurer would be attending the meeting. Town Administrator Hardy said he does not

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believe so. Planning and Community Development Director Kellee Easler said that once the tax rate is set then she can bill the individual PILOTs which will then generate more income for the Town. Chairman Cherian and Selectwoman Carey said they will be able to make the meeting. Selectman Dickey said he is unavailable to attend.

Public Works Director Hollins updated the Select Board that Dan Remillard who has been building most of the new properties on Knowlton Rd and Water St reached out to him. Mr. Remillard said he would be happy if the Public Works department put in a culvert pipe on his two properties on one side of the road to the other. It would work out great for the Town where he still owns the properties and where he has already given permission. Public Works Director Hollis would like approval from the Select Board for him to speak with Counsel about creating an easement that allows the Public Works department back on the property to clean the culvert in later years to come.

Selectman Dickey motioned to allow Public Works Director Hollins to contact counsel to create an easement. Seconded by Chairman Cherian. All in favor.

Public Works Director said they poured a new concrete pad for the roll off container to sit on. One of the roll off containers is very rusty and has holes in the side, it has been patched up. He has asked for a quote for a new roll off container to replace the older one. Public Works Director Hollins said he would like to keep the older one as a spare and keep patching the holes. He would also like the purchase a grapple bucket which would make it easier to scoop things up in the bins, and will be looking into different vendors for that as well. He also said at the Highway Garage there are a couple doors that are rusted out and one of the foot pedals to seal the door tight and lock it had broke. He got a quote to get two overhead doors fixed and do a general overall maintenance.

Emergency Management Director Mark Varney gave a current COVID-19 update. There were 202 new cases as of today. We have a positivity test rate now of 1.8, which has increased from two months ago when the rate was at .7. There are seven counties in the red zone. Two new long term care outbreaks along with a youth residential outbreak.

New Business:

Mark Stetson from Avitar Associates introduced Kerry Connor to the Select Board. Mr. Connor has been with Avitar for nineteen years and will be the new assessor for Boscawen.

Town Administrator Hardy asked the Select Board for their approval for him to be the signatory for the Town on the Harriman Contract for the Fire Department study.

Chairman Cherian motioned to allow Town Administrator Hardy to sign on behalf of the Select Board. Seconded by Lorrie Carey. All in favor.

Opening the sealed bids for 170 North Main Street. The Town received one sealed bid for 170 North Main St from River Edge Properties, with the bid amount of \$15,201. Town Administrator

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Hardy said they will review the bid and bring a recommendation to the next meeting.

Tama Tillman, a Trustee of the Trust Fund, would like to set up a time to speak with the Select Board on different investment options for the capital assets. Currently the investments for the Town are only at a half percent. The Trustees would like to put it into a Fidelity account. The Library Trustees have an account with Fidelity and it has made back about fourteen percent income. Chairman Cherian that sounds great and to set up a time with Town Administrator Hardy.

Motion made by Selectwoman Carey to adjourn. Seconded by Selectman Dickey. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Kearsten O'Brien