

Town of Swanzey, New Hampshire
Board of Selectmen
Meeting – August 10, 2016
Swanzey Town Hall, 620 Old Homestead Highway, Swanzey, NH

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Selectmen Chair W. William Hutwelker III at 6:00 p.m. at the Swanzey Town Hall at 620 Old Homestead Highway. Present were Selectmen Kenneth P. Colby, Jr., Sylvester Karasinski and W. William Hutwelker III. Also present was Town Administrator Michael Branley and Recording Secretary Beverly Bernard.

OTHERS PRESENT

P.E. Rob Hitchcock, and Resident Kai Dafeldecker along with several residents from the Swanzey Lake area homeowner's association including Bill Stetson, Jeff Lapid, Jon Hoden, Mark Richie, Ursula Dafeldecker, and Martha Zimmerman.

PUBLIC INPUT

There was no input.

MINUTES

- The regular meeting Minutes of August 3, 2016 were considered. There was a **motion** by Colby to approve the regular meeting Minutes of August 3, 2016. The motion was seconded by Karasinski. All were in favor. ***Motion passed.***
- The non-public meeting Minutes of August 3, 2016 were considered. There was a **motion** by Colby to approve the non-public Minutes of August 3, 2016. The motion was seconded by Karasinski. All were in favor. ***Motion passed.***

CONSENT AGENDA

Motion was made by Colby to approve the Consent Agenda. There was a second by Karasinski. There was no further discussion. All were in favor. ***Motion passed.***

- Payroll Manifest
- Payables Manifest
- Raffle Permit #2016-20 – Northern Lights Parents' Association
- Personnel Action Report(s)

OLD BUSINESS

Main Street Project

Rob Hitchcock was present to discuss some proposed changes to the plan, including moving a monument, adding water pipes, and rearranging the library posts, among other changes. He said the water line for 2-60 foot runs were quoted at \$12,500.00, which is over \$100.00 a linear foot. Hitchcock said that price is not acceptable. Karasinski said that \$10.00 per linear foot is about the right price. Hitchcock asked about approval for \$40.00 per linear foot, which is about \$5,000.00, considering some extra work that would need to be done. Assuming the amount for the water lines will come out of the contingency fund, the Board agreed to have the Town Administrator move ahead for approval on the water lines as long as the pipe cost comes in at no more than \$40.00 per linear feet.

There was more discussion regarding the library entrance posts for the Stratton Library. Hutwelker determined that notification of neighbors has occurred. Hitchcock said that he is pleased with the progress made thus far on the overall project and that there have been few complaints from the neighbors.

NEW BUSINESS

Carpenter Home Expenditure – Additional Camera

Discussion was held regarding Carpenter Home Administrator Bohannon wishing to correct a current blind spot on the camera system directly in front of the outside of the building leading out to the driveway. Branley reported that Bohannon is requesting purchase of an additional camera to monitor that area. Based on a discussion with her camera installer, the estimate to add a camera for that area is \$441.00. It was noted that the J. Edgar Bouvier - Carpenter Home Common Fund Income Fund has an estimated balance of \$898.46.

Colby **moved** to approve the expenditure of up to \$450.00 from the J. Edgar Bouvier - Carpenter Home Common Fund Income Fund for the installation of a camera at the Carpenter Home. There was a second to the motion by Karasinski and no further discussion. All were in favor. ***Motion passed.***

Repeal of the Carpenter Home Uniform Policy

Branley reported that Carpenter Home Administrator Bohannon requested that the Board repeal the Carpenter Home Uniform Policy. Branley said that Bohannon does not feel investing in uniforms is a good way to spend the Carpenter Home's limited resources and does not believe they have much of a positive impact retaining employees. Branley said that the Town has been buying uniforms for folks who subsequently leave and many of the employees work at other similar facilities so they already have their own scrubs. The Board agreed that the uniform policy was not an efficient use of limited funds for the Home.

Colby **moved** to repeal the Carpenter Home Uniform Policy. There was a second to the motion by Karasinski and no further discussion. All were in favor. ***Motion passed.***

Review of Job Description: Clinical Care Coordinator

The Board reviewed the proposed job description for Clinical Care Coordinator and agreed to accept it.

Colby **moved** to approve the job description for the Clinical Care Coordinator as proposed. There was a second to the motion by Karasinski and no further discussion. All were in favor. ***Motion passed.***

Memo to Employees regarding Wage Study

The Board reviewed the memo from the agenda packet and there was no discussion. The Board agreed to send it out.

Property Tax Abatement Recommendation for Map 19 Lot 94

The Board discussed the request of the Cheshire Fair Association to abate their taxes. Branley reported that Assessor Marazoff agrees with the Board's position from last year when the request initially came forward for denial of the abatement and agrees that the Town should begin discussions regarding a new agreement.

Colby **moved** to deny the abatement for the property known as Map 19 Lot 94 as recommended by the contract assessor. There was a second to the motion by Karasinski and no further discussion. All were in favor. ***Motion passed.***

The Board asked Branley to proceed with steps for securing a new agreement with the Cheshire Fair Association, which will begin with a meeting with the assessor and town counsel.

CORRESPONDENCE

Resignation of Chuck Mills from ARLAC

The resignation of Chuck Mills from the Ashuelot River LAC was acknowledged by the Board.

OLD BUSINESS

Main Street Project

Branley informed the Board that a meeting with Carol Haley regarding access to Stratton Library had come to an agreeable solution. Also discussed was the question of the water line running up to Whitcomb Hall.

ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATE

Ford Property

Grace Ford's property was discussed and Branley informed the Board of additional loads of debris and trash needing to be picked up at the property to complete the clean-up. He passed out pictures of the debris to be collected and removed from the property. Branley asked the Board for approval of an additional \$1,500.00 out of the operating budget to finish the work.

Motion was made by Colby to approve \$1,500.00 for additional clean-up of the Grace Ford property from the operating budget. The motion was seconded by Karasinski and there was no further discussion. All were in favor. ***Motion passed.***

Solar Array

Branley said that a property owner off Route 10 is looking to potentially sell land for a solar farm and wanted to know how that property would be taxed. The owner is looking for a pre-determined estimated value. Branley said an estimate for a pre-determined value for the property could cost up to \$5,000.00. Branley asked the Board for consensus on this idea of providing a pre-determined value.

Hutwelker said the property owner/applicant should be responsible for costs associated with obtaining a pre-determined value of any given property similar to a similar requirement for consulting work by a land use board, not the Town. Colby and Karasinski agreed with Hutwelker. Branley asked and the Board agreed this would be the Town's standard operating procedure for future requests going forward.

APPOINTMENTS

6:30 Kai Dafeldecker & other Swanzey Lake property owners – Beaver Issue

Residents of the Swanzey Lake area were present to discuss with the Board the beaver situation at the inlet of Swanzey Lake on Town property, which has been a recurring issue over the years. Branley noted that an email received from Department of Public Works (DPW) Director Dunham indicated that he has engaged a trapper to trap on the Town property where there is a beaver house.

Dafeldecker from 42 E. Shore Road addressed the Board. He talked about the problem with the beavers. Jeff Lapid handed out a document to the Board and said that given the environmental and health issues associated with the presence of beavers, the lake is somewhat dangerous to swim in. The document noted Giardia parasites could be in the water from the presence of beavers and stated that the Town Beach at Richardson Park could be impacted as well as homes along the shore; also noted erosion and destruction of trees along the shore and asserted that beavers are coming into the lake from wetlands off Christian Hill, which they believe increases when the lake is drawn down by the Town. He said that nothing has been done in the past although the Department of Public Works (DPW) has been contracted repeatedly. Hutwelker said that this is the first time that the Board has heard about the problem. Bill Stetson said he had been in to see the Board in April of this year and informed the

Board then that beavers had obstructed the path from the mill pond to the lake and that was a concern. He said the State of NH and DPW Director Lee Dunham got involved and the obstruction was removed, but the beavers are the problem and they haven't been removed. He said he has spoken to Dunham about the issue which he said began on Town owned land. It is now a lake-wide problem. He said the residents are present to see what the Town can do to alleviate the situation.

Branley informed the residents that a trapper has been engaged for the Town's property. He noted that beyond the Town's property he was not sure what the Town can do legally. Trapping at the mill pond is being done. Lapid said that there is another beaver problem near the public beach. Jon Hoden said that trapping cannot occur if there is not a beaver dam or beaver house in the area. Hoden said that the Town should remove the beaver house, and it wasn't enough to remove the beavers. Dafeldecker said that his frustration comes from his speaking to a DPW employee about the problem but there hasn't been a response for seven years.

Hutwelker stressed that the Board was not aware of the water quality issues, but was aware of Mr. Stetson's complaint in April. Hutwelker asked Branley to determine who should be engaged regarding the proper procedure to address the residents' requests for removal of beavers and beaver houses. Colby pointed out the trapper who has been engaged is also a Wildlife Control Officer and it was agreed to follow up with him.

Hutwelker asked if folks might leave an email address for follow-up. Dafeldecker also spoke about damage to trees being done by beavers, which are skinning the bark of large trees on multiple properties.

Stetson asked about trapping in regard to pets and visitors, asking if there any danger to any person or animal on the lake while the trapping is being done. Branley said the trapper is licensed and he should be able to determine the correct course of action.

Ursula Dafeldecker of 127 West Shore Road said beavers swim by her cottage every evening and she is afraid to go into the water for fear of Giardia. Mark Ritchie spoke about the problem of beavers getting aggressive with kayakers. Martha Zimmerman made a comment about Giardia saying that she knows someone who has the disease and it can be debilitating. Kai Dafeldecker noted that the mill pond is not generally where people swim. He said beavers are building another beaver house near the middle of the lake near Peter Delaney's home. Hoden asked about lowering the lake which would be an opportunity to rid the lake of beaver houses.

The Board agreed to move ahead with contacting NH Fish & Game and Town Counsel about how to proceed. Hutwelker asked if the residents understood what the Board will attempt to do. Kai Dafeldecker repeated that he felt that DPW has not been responsive and there was a lack of communication with the Board. Karasinski pointed out that DPW is focused on roads and culverts.

Branley passed out a sheet of paper for residents to sign up for follow-up information via email. Hutwelker spoke about the email list being used for communication for other Town business as well. Stetson said that the Conservation Commission might be contacted to support the Lake Association. Bernard, as a member of the Conservation Commission, acknowledged that the message will be passed on to the Commission.

Hutwelker noted the Board's Coffee & Conversation meetings could be held in the lake area in the future. It was noted that the Lake Association has annual meetings and August 20 at 9:00 a.m. at Jana Blake's home is the next planned meeting.

Consideration of Comparable Communities for Wage Study

The Board reviewed and discussed the list of communities comparable to Swanzey provided by the consultant. About fifteen communities are targeted for comparison purposes. Branley noted that there was no effort to find communities outside of New Hampshire although that could be done if the Board would like. Colby suggested sticking with New Hampshire. Karasinski said he would like to add Chesterfield to the list. The Board agreed to remain in New Hampshire. The also agreed to remove Hollis and add Chesterfield to the list and move forward.

NON-PUBLIC SESSIONS

Non-public session(s) per RSA 91-A:3, II (c) Reputation

Motion was made by Colby to enter nonpublic session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3 II (c) Reputation seconded by Karasinski. All in favor by Roll Call and the ***motion passed***. The Board entered nonpublic session at 7:15 p.m. Present was Kenneth P. Colby, Jr., W. William Hutwelker III, and Sylvester Karasinski. Also present was Town Administrator Michael Branley and Recording Secretary Beverly Bernard.

Motion was made by Colby to come out of non-public session, seconded by Karasinski. All in favor by Roll Call and the ***motion passed***. Non-public session ended at 7:24 pm.

Motion was made by Colby to seal the minutes because divulgence of the information likely would affect adversely the reputation of a person other than a member of this board, seconded by Karasinski. All were in favor and the ***motion passed***.

A discussion ensued about an extra bench being donated and installed at the West Swanzey AA Memorial Park without the Board being aware of it or granting permission to do so. Hutwelker stressed the importance of having a policy for dedications of Town property. Colby noted that he would be willing to be the clearing house for future additions. Colby suggested that something could be added to "Swanzey Uncovered" newsletter which highlights the park speaks to the process for asking for a dedication for benches at Town property or for donating a bench for Town property. Karasinski suggested an application be created for folks to fill out. Branley agreed to follow up.

Non-public session(s) per RSA 91-A:3, II (a) Personnel Matter(s)

Motion was made by Colby to enter nonpublic session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3 II (a) Personnel Matter(s) seconded by Karasinski. All in favor by Roll Call and the ***motion passed***. The Board entered nonpublic session at 7:31 p.m. Present was Kenneth P. Colby, Jr., W. William Hutwelker III, and Sylvester Karasinski. Also present was Town Administrator Michael Branley and Recording Secretary Beverly Bernard.

Motion was made by Colby to come out of non-public session, seconded by Karasinski. All in favor by Roll Call and the ***motion passed***. Non-public session ended at 7:36 pm.

Non-public session(s) per RSA 91-A:3, II (a) Personnel Matter(s)

Motion was made by Colby to enter nonpublic session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3 II (a) Personnel Matter(s) seconded by Karasinski. All in favor by Roll Call and the ***motion passed***. The Board entered nonpublic session at 7:36 p.m. Present was Kenneth P. Colby, Jr., W. William Hutwelker III, and Sylvester Karasinski. Also present was Town Administrator Michael Branley and Recording Secretary Beverly Bernard.

Motion was made by Colby to come out of non-public session, seconded by Karasinski. All in favor by Roll Call and the ***motion passed***. Non-public session ended at 7:39 pm.

OTHER BUSINESS

Recreation Committee

Hutwelker asked about Recreation Director Ian Fraunfelder's efforts to clarify the role of the recreation committee. Branley said Fraunfelder is working on the project with Branley. Fraunfelder had to spend some time working with camp staff regarding concerns about policies and job descriptions so that took up some time he had not been planning on.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn was made by Colby. The motion was seconded by Karasinski without further discussion. All were in favor. ***Motion passed.*** Adjournment occurred at 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Beverly Bernard, Recording Secretary

Approved on August 17, 2016