

# SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES

February 24, 2020

PRESENT: Kevin Meehan, Chair, Tom Brady and Cindy Silver members comprising a quorum of the board

ALSO PRESENT: Kathi Marshall, Assistant to the Select Board

Kevin Meehan opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance. The board signed warrants for payroll and accounts payable. Invoices were approved for payment March 2, 2020. Kathi presented a building permit for a new modular home, but the owners-to-be attached a note that would indicate special stipulations needed for the permit. Board members agreed it should be run by Chris to determine the charge with regard to the heating system. They also suggested that the applicants come before the Select Board regarding the additional note with the application.

Cindy made a motion to approve the Select Board Meeting Minutes from January 20, January 23, January 27, and February 3, 2020 as recorded. Tom seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

## Public Input

**Lorena Johnson:** Lorena brought an application to put her property in current use. Kathi had her application and Lorena wanted to update the map she had attached to her application—she gave the board members a newer map.

Lorena explained she has wetland on her property with all kinds of wildlife. She wanted to place it in current use and get a conservation easement put on it. She wanted to know if she could do both. Kevin said the conservation easement would be a more substantial change than current use. If she got a conservation easement she would not need to place it in current use.

Tom asked her how many acres she owned, and she said it was 7.92 acres. Tom said he believed she needed at least ten acres for current use unless the wetlands qualifies for the easement. He asked Lorena if she knew what she was being assessed on her property, and she said she thought it was pretty high because it was considered riverfront property. Kathi got Tom a tax card for her property so he could see what her acreage was being assessed at.

She also mentioned she was having a problem with water run-off that was coming awfully close to her house. She wasn't sure if it was from the town road, or if it was from her own property. She was going to do some repair work herself but was told she should speak with the town first to see if they could do anything. Lorena asked if the town crew could go out and see if they could straighten out a ten-foot section of road for her. She said if they could do that it would dry out. Kevin said maybe they could point it in a different direction. He told Kathi to check with Mark to see if he would go out and take a look at it. Kathi told Lorena she would give her a call.

**Aaron and Michelle Gross:** Aaron and Michelle are hoping to downsize their house that currently sits on 4.5 acres. They hate to break up the farm so would like to keep the house and barn on a parcel of 2.5 acres and keep a 2-acre lot for themselves and a new home. There is a driveway that goes through the land so they would have access. Tom said the request would probably have to go to the Board of Adjustment. Aaron and Michelle said they have an appointment with the Planning Board the following evening to get an idea if this is even possible. If they do decide to build, the land they will need will be awfully close to the barn, so they are

hoping the Board of Adjustment will allow them to take a smaller portion than two acres. Kevin said they raise issues the Board of Adjustment has dealt with before, so it will not be new. And the Planning Board will work with them through the process.

### **Report of Departments and/or Boards**

**Business Office:** Kathi let the board members know that the warrants and budget were all posted publicly. During the week she proofread the town report and she was expecting the reports to be delivered the following day. She also updated the minutes online for the Conservation Commission and the Planning Board so they were all up-to-date. She also went back through all the minutes and spent time getting answers to all the questions the board had given to her at the time, but that she hadn't answered because she was so busy trying to get the budget and warrants online.

**Highway:** Mark was not present.

### **Unfinished Business**

At the previous meeting Kevin had asked Kathi for the amount of taxes that had to be raised in 2019 so they could be compared to the figures for the proposed 2020 budget. Kathi presented each of the members with a comparison of 2019 and 2020 figures.

**Warrants:** Kathi also mentioned that at the meeting with Stuart Arnett and Sean Toomey, Stuart mentioned he thought that warrants were good for three years. To be certain Kathi checked with DRA, and they told her if the warrants do not pass, it is a moot point. If they pass they are good in perpetuity or until the project is completed. If they pass and ultimately the project is rejected for whatever reason, a warrant cannot be rescinded for at least five years.

The warrant that was submitted by petition by the Nelsons is required to have at least 25 valid/current registered voters on it. Kathi let the board know that she had Polly and Cheryl Meehan go over the list, and together they have confirmed there are 25 registered voters who have signed the warrant petition.

**Bank Notes for Warrants:** Kathi explained to the board that she did submit a formal request to the bank for information on interest rates and payment estimates on the \$99,000 notes for the warrants (if approved). When she did not hear back after four days she contacted the bank and asked about the request. Unfortunately it had been overlooked and the bank said they would get right on it. Kathi said she should have all the information for the next board meeting, and certainly for town meeting.

**Snowmobile Trail:** Earlier in the winter there had been discussion about allowing a snowmobile or ATV trail to go across town property in order to access more popular trails. The club guaranteed the town they would not be liable for any damages because the club's insurance would cover the town. Kathi told board members she checked with the lawyers and they said as long as we had a copy of the insurance policy that listed the Town of Jefferson as "othered insured" we would be fine.

**Renting Town Property:** Kathi mentioned to the board members that a gentleman had come into the office that week and mentioned that the board had no right to rent space in the school or in the old town office building if the town offices relocated. He specifically told her that municipalities are not meant to be "money-making" entities. Since Kathi was making a call to the lawyers that day, she added the question to her list. The legal team sent her information regarding a town renting property, which is totally legal, but there were limits to the amount of time a contract could be without having the town vote on it. Kathi gave a copy of these rental

guidelines to the members.

**Winter evictions:** Kathi also asked the lawyers if there was any law that prohibited the town from evicting a person from their home for continuous non-payment of taxes, even in the middle of winter. There is no law against it—the town can evict at any time of year.

**Demolition Inspections:** At previous meetings board members asked if the Fire Department went out to do inspections, whether for demolition purposes or for homebuilders, could the town be found liable if they approved something and later there was a fire. Kathi asked the lawyers that questions and they told her the town is not liable. As long as the inspection deals with safety issues, warnings of things found to be unsafe, or standard protocols of home safety and code requirements, they cannot be found liable for any incident that may follow and cause damage.

Cindy made a motion to adjourn. Tom seconded the motion and the motion carried.

The next meeting will be Monday, March 2, 2020 at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,