

SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES

April 27, 2020

The regular weekly meeting of the Select Board was held Monday, April 27, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. The meeting was held by remote teleconference.

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

ALSO PRESENT: Kathi Marshall, Assistant to the Select Board. Forrest Hicks and John Silver Jr. were also present.

Tom Brady called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and read the following statement:

As Chair of the Jefferson, New Hampshire Select Board I find that due to the state of emergency declared by the governor as the result of the COVID-19 pandemic and in accordance with the governor's emergency order #12 pursuant to executive order 2020-04 this public body is authorized to meet electronically. Please note that there is no physical location to observe and listen contemporaneously to this meeting which was authorized pursuant to the governor's emergency order. However, in accordance with the emergency order I am confirming that we are:

- A. *Providing public access to the meeting by telephone, and we are utilizing a telephone service so all members of the Town of Jefferson Select Board have the ability to communicate contemporaneously during this meeting through this platform. And the public has access to listen and, if necessary, to participate in this meeting by dialing the following phone number: 1-866-678-6823 and needing ID number 8959399 followed by the pound (#) sign.*
- B. *Providing public notice of necessary information for accessing the meeting. We previously gave notice to the public of the necessary information for accessing the meeting including how to access the meeting telephonically. Instructions have also been provided through the Town of Jefferson's website www.jeffersonnh.org*
- C. *Providing a mechanism for the public to alert the public body during the meeting if there is a problem with access. If anybody has a problem please call 586-4553 or e-mail towwnofjefferson@myfairpoint.net.*
- D. *During the meeting if the public is unable to access the meeting. In the event the public is unable to access the meeting they will be adjourned and rescheduled.*

Please note that all votes that are taken during this meeting will be done by a roll call vote, so let's start the meeting by taking roll call attendance: Chair, Tom Brady, "present." Select Board member Cindy Silver, "present." Kevin Meehan, Select Board Member, "present."

PUBLIC INPUT

Tom suggested the meeting immediately go to Public Input since Forrest Hicks was already on the line. Tom invited him to speak.

Mr. Hicks explained that a resident of Jefferson has a septic system that runs into the brook by his house. There hasn't been a real problem until recently. There are now many more people living in the home, and the impact on his property has been terrible. He went on to note that this resident was told years ago that the septic had to be fixed, but as time went on nothing happened. Now, however, the situation is very bad, and he has raw sewage and more appearing in the brook.

Tom asked if anyone remembered what had occurred years ago when this was originally reported since he knew that DES had been involved. Kevin said he thought Tri County Cap was also involved somehow. Tom asked Forrest if he minded if Kathi followed up on the situation to see what happened. Forrest said that was fine, but he has been calling DES and has not been able to get an answer. Kathi said she would follow up with Cathy Conway, who designed the new septic system, and with DES to see why there was no follow-through.

Tom asked if anyone else had come online to the meeting with public input, but no one had.

Invoices/Accounts Payable

Payroll: There were 40 hours for Mark Dubois for \$616.26, Bruce Hartford had 10½ hours for \$101.24, Jimmey Howland had 29 hours for \$286.42, Mike Kenison had 40 hours for \$503.99, Kathi Marshall had 40 hours for \$624.14, Joy McCorkhill had 18 hours for \$221.75, and Charlene Wheeler had 10¾ hours for \$145.15.

For accounts payable the invoice from Aubuchon Hardware was \$195.78 which was a power brush and accessories for the Highway Department. A C.N. Brown invoice (liquid propane for the library), was for \$65.37, Harrison Shrader Enterprises for \$1,980.00 for disposable medical masks which go under the COVID-19 expenses, the monthly invoice from HealthTrust was \$970.66, Impact Fire with the remaining invoices for fire extinguisher inspections was \$440.00, Jimmey Howland took electronics to Berlin and his mileage check was \$32.48, McDevitt Trucks was for \$146.64 (Engine #2), Opal Bronson for \$84.00, and the White Mountain Regional School District monthly check for \$144,000.

Cindy asked if the road crew was submitting a weekly summary of where they were working and what they were doing. Kathi said they have been e-mailing their hours to her, but she just told them to drop off their time cards in the mailbox so she could record their hours and activities. Kathi told Cindy she would update the board next week.

Cindy made a motion to approve the expenditures for payment, and Kevin seconded the motion. Tom took a roll call vote. Cindy Silver said "aye," Kevin Meehan said, "aye," and Tom Brady voted "aye." The motion carried.

Meeting Minutes: Kevin made a motion to approve the meeting minutes for April 20, 2020 as recorded. Cindy seconded the motion. Tom took a roll call vote. Cindy Silver said “aye,” Kevin Meehan said, “aye,” and Tom Brady voted “aye.” The motion carried.

REPORT OF DEPARTMENTS

Highway Department: Mark was not present at the meeting, but Tom mentioned the road crew had worked on Turnpike Road that week and had done a very nice job.

Town Office: Kathi said the week was routine as far as regular work goes, such as payroll, paying bills and responding to e-mails and phone calls. She spent the entire day Tuesday working on the debris removal issue. She informed the board that she had been told the town should always let the insurance company pay debris removal fees if a house is damaged by fire since it is covered under the homeowner’s insurance policy. Kathi said she checked with two insurance companies as well as the homeowner’s insurance agent, and they all agreed. Debris removal can cost as much as \$10,000 depending on the size of the house and the debris left to remove. The town is not responsible for that. It is also an opportunity for someone to “double dip,” allowing the insurance company and the town to pay for the same expense. In this particular case the homeowner’s insurance agent told her that “debris removal was a part of the payout.” Kathi did confirm with the homeowner that he had already been paid, so she told him it was now a matter between him and the hauling company. He agreed.

Kathi said she also received information that while Starr King Trail was closed to the public, last weekend there were approximately 22 vehicles there with hikers going on the trail. Most of the vehicles were from New York, New Jersey, Rhode Island, Connecticut and Kansas. A few were from New Hampshire. The trail has now been barricaded and a sign is posted informing the public the trail is closed. Kathi was asked to put a notice on the website, and she did.

NEW BUSINESS

Building Permit: Kathi said she has another building permit for US Cellular for 65 Fire Tower Road. It is a huge application and the company has included a check in the amount of \$200. Kathi is going to call them for all the details before she presents it to the board. She wants to know if they will be changing the footprint on the ground, changing the original height, and exactly what the check is meant to cover. She will follow up with the board next week.

Kathi had another building permit that is for a new home being built. The gentleman would like to begin pouring concrete right away. He plans on building the same style house as the one he had before fire destroyed it. The new house will be smaller. It is going in the same place because the septic and the well are already there, and he doesn’t have much choice regarding location.

Kevin mentioned that a building permit must be on file for a new building. Tom indicated before a building permit for a new home comes before the board, anyone planning on using electric or fossil fuel heat must obtain a NH residential energy code approval. That approval must

accompany the permit. Kathi said she will print out those requirements and give them to the homeowner since he has to take care of that before he can give the board the permit to be approved.

Broadband Study: Tom said Representative Edith Tucker has requested that the county gather information from the school districts about broadband access for schools and students. She wants to know if anyone is experiencing difficulty with this issue. Presidential candidates are talking about spending trillions of dollars on making sure rural areas have internet access. Tom suggested to Ms. Tucker that information should be gathered from every town office, because they have the best information on how serious the problem is for residents in rural areas. Tom said they will be calling town offices to get this information, and he wanted members to know that many still believe there is no problem. He said we can't let this chance go by without trying to acquire internet access for the town and its residents.

School Grounds Maintenance: The mowing season is fast approaching for both the cemeteries and the school. John Silver Jr. was present to comment on the maintenance needs of the school. He said there is clean-up that needs to be done before regular maintenance. He felt it would be good to get rid of the fences that are falling down. He has tried to stand them up, but they are in very poor condition. He said it takes a while to trim around them. He will also get to those four cedars that need to come down. He didn't have a chance to address them last fall.

Tom asked if the fence is on the part of the property where the new parking lot will go in. Kevin said they shouldn't impact the parking lot, and he thought we didn't really need them there. Tom asked if it was okay if John took them down, and board members agreed the fence could come down. John said there are areas out back that also need attention, such as the dugouts. He's worried the kids who play on the swings might get hurt since there is also a huge bees nest there.

John said he charges \$165 every two weeks for mowing and trimming. Tom said he would get back to John next week regarding upcoming regular maintenance. Kevin felt they should take a look at the fences, the dugouts, etc. and go from there. Tom said each board member should go out to the school on their own and check out the property so a decision can be made on future maintenance. John said he would wait to hear from the board before he made any changes.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Website: Tom asked if it was okay if we skipped discussion on the new town website since there were other issues that needed to be discussed and might take a while. Board members agreed to move it to next week.

Opening Town Offices: Tom suggested for the foreseeable future the town offices should remain closed. Board members agreed. Kevin said we need to address safety protocols for town employees. He said if you go to other town offices they are all behind clear glass or plexiglass. Jefferson's town employees have no protection.

Tom wondered if we could secure one of the bank loans to begin preparing the school for the offices to be moved there. He suggested we contact Stuart for help with the actual layout of the office section of the school so Kathi and Polly could move down there as soon as possible.

Kevin said the asbestos should be removed before anything else is done. He said the warrant articles indicated that work to prepare the school was to allow the Library, the Historical Society and the town offices to go into the school, not just the town offices. Cindy said it would be a good idea to consult with Stuart for setting up designs for the office space, so we know in advance how to address these safety issues. He would also be helpful with a timeline for everything falling into place. Cindy also reminded members we would need to keep the Fire Marshal's office informed.

Tom said in the meantime the staff will still be in the town offices we have now. Kevin thought we might be able to work through the front windows, having Mark set up some sort of path so people could easily get to them. It couldn't be done in the winter because of the snow.

Kathi said most of the people who come to see her want building permits, stickers for the transfer station, etc. She has been using the drop box outside the door. She said the people she is most concerned about are those who want to come in to use the big maps, since we don't have our maps online at this time. She said temporarily we could have access through the door that goes into the town hall. That way the table with the big maps could be placed in the town hall, and people could look at them out there. We would have to devise a way for people to work with Polly and with Kathi through one of the two doorways.

Kevin mentioned the bathrooms and the safety issues there. It was suggested to make one of them for public use and the other for "employees only." Kathi suggested putting in a dutch door with a top portion that opens. They would have to install something for protection, such as plexiglass, so she and Polly could speak with people. People would go into the front of the town hall as opposed to the town office. She believed there must be a simple way to modify the door that goes into the town hall. She thought the expense would be tolerable.

Kathi said getting into the school is a good thing, but she would like it to be "right" and not rushed. She mentioned that currently there are other people tied to her computer. There will have to be a phone system set up that anticipates dealing with all the entities that will ultimately be there. She just wanted to make sure they were fully prepared for the move and everything it will entail to prepare the location.

Tom said for the foreseeable future we will use the drop box, but he asked all members to think about the best way to work with safety issues while we are still dealing with the public here in the town hall/town offices.

Tom asked Kathi to check with the bank to see what the annual payment would be if we didn't take out the loan until June. That would reduce the payment for this year because it would only be six months. He also asked her to check if we take out three separate loans as each warrant article requires, can we combine them and only use funds as work is completed. Cindy thought

we should ask about deferred payments, and Tom asked if there might be any grants associated with the current virus situation. Cindy thought because our offices are not safe and we are trying to move to another building, perhaps we could get help with reimbursement due to the safety issue. She felt Stuart may be able to help us with grants addressing this.

Tom asked Kathi to ask the bank if we can draw down the notes as we need them, so we don't have to take all the money at once. Kathi said she believes the bank told her that was an option. She said she will check into it again.

PUBLIC INPUT

There was no more public input.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Private Road Signs: Kathi checked to see if other towns paid for private road signs, and was told they have gone back and forth on this issue for years. Now they do pay for private road signs. Kevin said he thought the town should pay for the private road sign so 911 calls or medical calls could find the location. However the additional sign that just says "private" should be the expense of the people who live on that road. It requires a totally different bracket and separate sign with an added expense. Tom said he did research on this and said we could print up road signs that have "PVT" at the end of them as opposed to a separate sign. Board members agreed that private road signs will have "PVT" at the end of them (which the town will pay for), and the additional "private" road signs and brackets will be the responsibility of the residents on that road.

Cemetery Plot Availability: Cindy asked if Forest Vale Cemetery had any available spaces, and Kathi told her as she understands it, the only cemetery that currently has space for burials is Kilkenny. All the others have none unless sites were previously reserved. Kevin said that was his understanding as well.

Adjournment: Cindy made a motion to adjourn and Kevin seconded the motion. Tom asked for a roll call vote: Cindy Silver, "aye," Kevin Meehan, "aye," and Tom voted "aye." The motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

The next meeting of the Select Board will be Monday, May 4, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. by remote conference call.

Respectfully submitted,