

SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES

March 29, 2021

PRESENT: Cindy Silver, Select Board Chair, Kevin Meehan and Norm Brown, Select Board members comprising a quorum of the board.

ALSO PRESENT: Kathi Marshall, Assistant to the Select Board, Mark Dubois, Highway Foreman, Terri Larcomb, Joe Marshall, Jason Call, Cheryl Marshall, Sean Toomey, Julia Gilmore and Anthony Plant

Board Chair Cindy Silver called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. The following letter was read:

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 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 by Zoom conference, 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 going to the Town of Jefferson website at www.jeffersonnh.org and clicking on the Zoom Meeting link. The meeting number is 752 621 9315 and the Passcode is 0rAf0p.
- 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. 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 accessing the meeting, please call 603.586-4553 or e-mail townofjefferson@myfairpoint.net
- D. *In the event the public is unable to access the meeting they will be adjourned and rescheduled.*

Please note that all votes taken during this meeting will be done by a roll call vote, so let's begin the meeting by taking roll call attendance: Cindy Silver, Chair "present." Select Board Member Kevin Meehan, "present." Select Board Member Norman Brown, "present." Assistant to the Select Board, Kathi Marshall, "present." Kevin was alone, Norm was alone in a room at the Community Center, and Cindy and Kathi were at the Jefferson Community Center with Troy Merner.

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE/PAYROLL

Kevin made a motion to approve Accounts Payable and Payroll items for the week ending March 27, 2021 and to authorize Kathi to pay invoices and payroll. Norm seconded the motion and added a point of clarification. He asked Kathi to make a note of any expense that was replaced due to the fire, and Kathi said she would mark those for the board. A roll call vote was taken with Norm voting "aye," Kevin voting "aye," and Cindy voting "aye." The motion passed.

PUBLIC INPUT

Sean Toomey (Deputy State Fire Marshal's Office): Sean mentioned he has had discussions with Chris Milligan

regarding the uptick in commercial activity in the town, and he would like to extend an offer to assist in these cases. He said it would benefit everyone to discuss the process so there was no question when it was necessary to call on his services. He said the town doesn't need to question whether or not his department would be willing to get involved. They are happy to help, and particularly with commercial projects. Sean stressed the importance of consistency. He said if we call on him for some projects and not others it can create friction in the community because people will wonder why they had to have the fire marshal inspect their project and other people didn't have to have him.

Norm said he felt if the project was commercial it should be sent to Sean as a matter of procedure. Kevin agreed and said that was a good line of distinction—commercial vs. residential. In commercial building situations the state fire marshal's office will automatically be brought in. Kevin also asked how Sean would like the process to go, if the town should forward the building permit directly to him. Sean agreed that was the best way to proceed. He said the application should also include a letter from the town asking him to review the application and letting him know the applicant has met all local requirements.

Troy Merner/State Representative: Troy is a New Hampshire state representative who serves Coös County on committees dealing with science, technology and energy. He mentioned solar farms and how many towns in New Hampshire are looking into the feasibility of having them on town property. Troy said right now he is telling towns to hold off as there are bills pending in Concord dealing with this issue, and you want to be absolutely certain it will be worth it should the town opt to take such a step.

Cindy said there were certainly costs associated with setting up a solar farm, and the added question of who is responsible for maintaining it. She also mentioned that when the town sent out a survey about the school building, respondents did show an interest in solar power for the building itself. Kevin had previously mentioned that the electric grid we have may not be able to handle the energy produced by solar power, which would defeat its purpose. (Kevin also said a 1 gigawatt solar farm takes about 2.8 acres of land. A 5 gigawatt farm would take approximately 14 acres. Norm did not like tying up town land for years to come.

Norm asked Troy if he might help the town concerning a couple railroad crossings that cross town roads. They used to be maintained by the state, and now the work seems to be on the town. He would like Troy to check into it to see if they will take care of their own crossings—particularly if they want them to remain viable—or remove them and let us maintain the road. Troy said he would look into it.

Julia Gilmore/Broadband: Through feedback from residents in town Julia collected a list of internet providers. The Broadband Committee has provided templates for letters to be sent to providers asking for their coverage areas, level of service and so on. Julia suggested letters go to Spectrum, Consolidated Communications, Netafy, and Mountain Top Telecom. Kathi said she has the letters typed up and ready for Select Board members to sign.

Norm mentioned his service with Mountain Top Telecom. He said he could see the tower from his home, but his signal was less than satisfactory. Troy Merner said the company has not upgraded their equipment for some time and are hoping someone will take over the business. He said discussions are ongoing about this issue, and he is hoping for the best outcome for the company and residents who use their service.

Julia mentioned that the town of Bristol has gone through this process and now has a reliable internet system for their town with good access for most everyone. Troy mentioned that Amherst is another town that has completed the process. Julia added that Bristol is two or three years ahead of us, and Troy agreed.

The Coos County Broadband Committee meets the last Wednesday of every month and Julia suggested that she and/or Joe be scheduled on the board's agenda the first Monday meeting of the month so they can give the board members an update.

Anthony Plant/New Business: Anthony called in because the board had discussed the vehicles on his property and were planning to send him a letter. He called to let the board know he was hoping to start an automotive business on his property and wasn't sure what the process was.

Kevin explained the first step would be to contact the secretary of the zoning board and she would walk him through the process. Kevin told him to put together his business plan for the future and bring that to the board.

Anthony asked about the letter the board was going to send to him. He said he wanted to comply with the town's regulations, but couldn't find them on the website. Kevin said he should refer to RSA 236: 90-129. These particular RSAs refer to salvage yards or junk yards, and Kevin said it sounded like Anthony was planning on work as a mechanic on his premises. Anthony agreed that was his intent.

Norm said it was important as Anthony moved forward to establish his business that he let people know it was to include both lots that he owned. Norm said if he only lists one and then his business expands onto the other lot, he would no longer be in compliance and could lose his business. Anthony said it would only be one lot at 6 Turnpike Road. Norm also mentioned the statutes limit the number of unregistered vehicles on the property.

REPORT OF DEPARTMENTS AND/OR BOARDS

Mark said they fixed the grader and the tube for the tire. He mentioned he would like to haul some stone and gravel mostly on Whipple Road and Turnpike Road as well. He said it was to take care of the mud holes. He would probably need about \$5,000 worth of gravel on each road. Norm asked if that was budgeted for this year, and Mark said he didn't believe so.

Norm asked what the best solution would be for those roads in the long term. He said it seems like we just keep pushing the good stuff down farther and farther. Mark said it would be great if we had the money to rebuild those roads. Norm asked how the drainage was, and Mark said Whipple Road crosses the swamp. Norm said maybe it would be more efficient to rebuild those roads a section at a time. Mark said they were never designed to be roads anyway, they were originally for horse and buggy. They've just been expanded over the years.

Terri commended Mark on the condition of Whipple Road. She said in the past ten years it has been in good shape. Mark said when he first started working for the town they closed Whipple Road because it was impassable. Norm said the condition of these roads, and the most cost-effective way to improve them was worth discussing in the future.

Cindy added that the board needed to revisit capital improvements this year as well.

NEW BUSINESS

Cystic Fibrosis Softball Tournament: Cindy said the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation was being featured in a fundraiser at Couture Field, which they have had for many years. They are asking for permission to use the field once again over Memorial Day weekend, May 28-30. Norm said he assumed they would comply with all the state requirements for safety. Cindy said she would ensure they complied. Kevin said to make certain they followed through with the insurance rider that was required.

New Committee for JCC Building: Norm said he would like to put out a "wanted poster" seeking people with

certain skills in particular areas such as landscaping, parking, painting, etc. He would like to ask people who are interested to submit a letter of intent to the Select Board. These people would form new committees to help with completing the project of moving the other entities into the Community Center. He said we could post the signs at the Old Corner Store, the Post Office, the Library, the Transfer Station and the Community Center. He added we may want to have a work session with ADG and others to see what suggestions they might offer as we move forward.

Jason Call had spoken with Kim Perry about the Boy Scouts doing a community project and cleaning up the playground at the Community Center. Kim thought it was a good idea. Jason suggested a bullet list of what the board would like to see done.

Norm asked if Jason noticed any of the playground equipment that was worn out or dangerous. Jason said some of the wood is splintered and some bolts may need to be tightened, but he did not test anything. He said we might need some new pressure-treated lumber. Norm added at some point we may want to remove all that mulch and replace it with something that would prevent the growth of thistles and burrs. Many places are now using rubber chips that don't deteriorate.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Advertisement for Cleaning-Maintenance: Norm said he feels this position would be a 15-20-hour week depending on what jobs were added to the description. Once they settle on the description they would need to determine a wage scale. Cindy said we should take into consideration that when the building is finished and fully occupied, this position could turn into a full-time job.

Website Update: Cindy said she would like to act on the proposed update of the website. We currently pay \$336 annually which is \$28 monthly. The update would be \$420 annually or \$35 monthly. It would be an increase of \$84 a year.

Norm made a motion to approve the contract to update the town's website. Kevin seconded the motion. Jason commented that he works in different towns and asked Whitefield what they paid for their website. It's about \$2,000 a year. He thought the update of the town's website was very reasonable. A roll call vote was taken with Kevin voting "aye," Norm voting "aye," and Cindy voting "aye." The motion carried.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Kathi had an e-mail from a town resident who asked about the solar-powered speed signs that you see in other towns such as Lancaster and Whitefield. She mentioned the trucks and cars that speed through on Presidential Highway and asked the board to look into obtaining one.

Kevin said the town has looked into it before, and they are very expensive. Norm said the New Hampshire Highway Safety Foundation does have grant money available for such things. The town could purchase them through a state bid process. There are some concerns though since we don't have a full-time police force to enforce them, and there is the issue of vandalism, and so on. We can investigate the viability and discuss it from there.

Kathi had another concern from a resident who asked who was responsible for making sure that a culvert that went under the road was not clogged or backed up. This particular culvert was on Enman Drive. Mark said if the culvert is under the road the town is responsible for making sure it is not clogged. He said he would check out the one on Enman to make sure.

Norm asked for the board's consent to have the town's attorney draft a lease agreement for the Historical

Society for them to take occupancy in the Jefferson Community Center. Kevin and Cindy both agreed.

PUBLIC INPUT

Jason mentioned the importance of the town boards to be on the same page when it comes to serving the community. He said it was important for the board members to be familiar with the land use ordinance. He said there is a lot going on around town that should really be forwarded to the Board of Adjustment—new businesses that seem to be evolving or expansion of existing businesses. These often require permitting from the BOA as they are an expansion of a non-conforming use. He said abutters need to be aware of what’s going on beside them. He supported the idea of the boards meeting a couple times a year so we could all work as a team.

Cindy said she would be happy to meet quarterly with the other boards.

NON-PUBLIC RSA 91-A:3 II

Norm made a motion to go into a Non-Public session citing RSA 91-A:3 II. Kevin seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken with Kevin voting “aye,” Norm voting “aye,” and Cindy voting “aye.” The motion carried and the board members went into a non-public session.

Upon convening the non-public session Kevin made a motion to seal the non-public minutes. Cindy seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken with Kevin voting “aye,” Norm voting “aye,” and Cindy voting “aye.” The motion passed.

ADJOURNMENT

Norm made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Kevin seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken with Kevin voting “aye,” Norm voting “aye,” and Cindy voting “aye.” The motion passed, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:56 p.m.

The next meeting of the Select Board will be Monday, April 5, 2021 in person at the Jefferson Community Center.

Respectfully submitted,