

Minutes
Town of Londonderry Select Board
Monday January 18th, 2016

1. **Call meeting to order**

Board Members Present: Jim Ameden, Steve Prouty, Cathy Aragi, Paul Gordon.
Wayne Blanchard was absent at the start of the meeting.

Staff Present: Stephanie Thompson, Tina LaBeau, Kelly Pajala, Kevin Beattie,
Duane Hart.

The Meeting was called to order by Chairman Jim Ameden at 7:00 p.m.

2. **Additions or deletions to the agenda**

3. **Minutes**

Regular Board of Selectmen's Minutes – Monday January 4th, 2016

Budget Meeting Minutes – Wednesday January 13th, 2016

Motion to approve the minutes from January 4, 2016 made by Cathy.

Seconded by Paul. Motion passed with all in favor.

Motion to approve the minutes from January 13, 2016 made by Paul.

Seconded by Cathy. Motion passed with all in favor.

4. **Convene Liquor Board**

Approval of Restaurant Liquor License – Mazana, Inc., DBA SoLo Farm & Table

Motion made to approve the license by Steve. Seconded by Cathy. Motion passed with all in favor.

Wayne Blanchard arrived at 7:04 p.m.

5. **Select board pay orders**

Passed around for review and signing.

6. **Announcements/correspondence**

Passed around for review.

No announcements.

7. **Visitors and concerned citizens**

Hec Ras Study (Kevin)

Kevin reported back that since the December meeting when it was last discussed, that to date he still has not heard anything, despite placing two calls since the holidays. He recommends that the Board provide written notice that the work has not been done and that the Town would like to hire someone else.

Paul asked if we need another RFP, but Kevin suggested we contact the other firms that submitted bids and see if they are interested and want to adjust their bid, etc. Given how far behind we are, we need to move as we can. Steve asked if anything has been paid to them yet – no there has not been.

Paul made a motion to write a letter to Eckman Engineering to rescind the engineering contract, and get information from the remaining bidders on the RFP to determine if interested, and look at the proposal as soon as possible. Cathy seconded.

Kevin suggested giving them until January 29th to either produce the product and that the need to contact us right away, otherwise we will terminate. Paul amended his motion. Cathy seconded the amendment. Kevin said he will call them and tell them the letter is coming. Paul suggested also sending an email to cover. Motion passed with all in favor.

8. **Town official's business**

Signing of amended Facilities Agreement and Purchasing Policy

9. **Roads and bridges**

Receipt of Truck Bids

Jim opened the bids for the one-ton RFP.

John C. Stewart and Son – 2016 F550 Super Cab and chassis - \$47,877, price for the plow and dump body - \$29,160 (\$77,037 total).

Foster Motors – 2016 truck expense \$48,259, plow and sander \$29,819 (\$78,073 total) or \$13,117 for additional body features from Tarco (\$91,195 total)

No trade-in is figured on these bids.

Duane suggested that because of the options, he and Steve review them and make a recommendation at the next meeting.

Steve asked if because of the holiday, we should wait? Duane contacted the others by email and we had received from others, and that they would be opened tonight, so they are closed.

International Update

The insurance adjuster on the claim called on Friday and he has tried call him back. He expects he will talk to him on Tuesday, and will email the Board. Jim asked if he had a gut feeling on if totaled or not. The adjuster had a 50/50 feeling about if it would be a total loss and the message did not indicate.

Bob Cowles asked if we knew how much we might get, and Duane advised he did not yet know that.

Possible Truck Acquisition

Duane presented to the Board that we have been offered a truck from the Champion Fire Company #5. It is an old truck they no longer are using. Associated insurance cost figured. We do have some storage for it, and it would not be immediate use – we would need to do some work over the summer, and winterize it for storage. Insurance would \$317 for the year. There is a \$50 one-time fee for a plate, then no annual registration fee. Steve asked if it would be used, and Duane said yes – it would come in handy when cleaning culverts.

Steve made a motion to accept the truck donation. Wayne seconded. Motion passed with all in favor.

Others

- Steve brought up that a few citizens on Lowell Lake Road, are asking us to possibly look at our snow plow route and that they feel we run late given it being a school bus route. He did not get a chance to check with the school bus driver. He said he does not think that is where the concern, but rather from the citizens in the area with children who ride the bus. Duane said he would call Greg in the morning, but usually if there are any issues with the bus routes, he is contacted. He will email him and copy the Board with the response.
- Duane mentioned a turn-around issue on Magoon Road. Steve plowed up there. The turn-around has a lot of stuff in – bins, trailer, a vehicle. Steve has a call in to Peter Matosik. Paul asked if it was in the right away? Steve said there was an agreement – the turn-around use to be a drive way, the Town built it up for turning around, and hasn't heard anything more since it was

done, and this is the first time he had heard of the issue. Duane said it was cleaned up better and you can turn around the small truck, but not the grader or bigger trucks. Steve will follow-up.

10. Transfer Station/ Recycling Center-

Wayne asked Paul if he had heard from Matt. He called Wayne on Sunday that it needed to be sanded. Paul will follow-up with David Johnson who is contracted to plow and sand there. Duane added that the area near the tire area, wasn't getting done. Paul thought there was some guidance from the employees not to do it. Paul will follow-up.

11. New Business

Possible Land Purchase

- Steve presented that there is a piece of land available for purchase from Jeff Yrsha just south of the existing transfer station where the has been considerable gravel business done. It had been up for auction. The Board has discussed a number of uses for the property, including the need to at some point soon build a salt and sand shed, and will help to organize some of the Town infrastructure near one another. There are feelings that there might be enough material on that property to sell that would cover the overall purchase cost. Another bonus is the access to the transfer station, and that there have been many accidents and close calls. This would allow the entrance to be moved south to create better sight lines. Also Esther has noted that the Transfer Station may need scales at some point, which will require additional space. We have been told that such scales cannot go on fill, which is what the whole property we own is, so the new parcel could accommodate. It has been looked at for possible use after sand and gravel is removed, such as solar, by Jeff's engineer. Steve said he is leading the charge to ask the Town at Town Meeting to purchase the property for \$150,000 purchased over a set period of time.
- Jeff added that there will be signed contract which will tie him up in pursuing others regarding the property. He would like to see some more specific figures for the tax payers to understand. The Town is spending roughly \$30,000 on winter sand, and if a third of that purchase goes to the land, \$10,000 towards land purchase, based on using about 2,000 yards a year. With the four years he had available, the Town spent \$192,900 on gravel and aggregate and \$88,000 for winter sand. An additional \$40,000 was spent during Irene. He said if he is going to get tied up in a contract, he would like to see the Town provide this to voters. He feels the property should have been purchased years ago. He is currently buying gravel for much more than \$1.00 a yard, and at \$1.50 it would pay for the land. Steve said there could be approximately \$300,000 worth of product there.
- Steve agrees that there is a lot of valuable material. He said if it can get the information out to voters and into the Town Report, and then spend time between the budget and Town meeting to put together figures on savings, etc.
- Jim said this is the first public meeting that this has been discussed at and no vote has been taken, and it is on the warrant for Town Meeting. It is written to raise \$30,000 this year, and the remainder financed over no more than five years. Steve asked if we could wait on the figure to contribute based on what the tax payers want to do – Jim said there needs to be a figure on the warrant and that needs to be approved tonight.
- Jeff suggested sitting down with Cathy and Steve to try to work out a contract for purchase. Jeff said he hasn't put any effort into that because he did not know where the Board stood.

- Jim said he thinks it would be a great investment for the Town, but his concern is with the number of items going on the table for consideration at Town Meeting. Maybe too much, and his opinion is that something needs to go. The rate will go up considerably if all items pass this year.
- Jeff agreed with the concerns, but that the Town can show that the cost savings would make it cost effective. Show the cost savings on winter sand, gravel, etc. He said there was a study on feasibility of a solar farm.
- Jim was clear that it may not be this that gets cut, but that something needs to happen to make the budget slimmer.
- Bob Cowles asked about the acreage. Paul said 24.52 acres that was provided by Sandra Clark, from the tax bill. He also asked how the \$150,000 was reached. Jim said it was through negotiations with the property owner.
- Paul said he is ready to act to put this on the Town Meeting Warrant, and that the Board work between now and Town Meeting to prepare information, as well as other issues we are talking about money-wise to allow the voters to make an educated decision. Paul added that the Board needs to decide where it stands on issues to best inform the public.

Discussion and Approval of Special Appropriations Requests for Town Meeting

Jim said if they ask and send in a financial report, they are put on. Friends of West River Trail financials were received. Memorial Park – Paul asked if that should be in the Special Appropriations or in the budget. If it is in the budget, then we have financial control, as an item under the Parks Board budget. There were some items lumped in that need to be warned separately.

Jim – bottom line is getting bigger. The Board may need to take closer looks at what is being approved.

Tina and Kelly noted there was a two-person committee to review but they did not make any judgements – we could make this a bigger responsibly next year.

Kevin noted that to turn any down it is too late for them petition. Paul said it is up to the voters if they want to amend the article.

Jim said in the future we could require a petition with a 5 percent of the voters. That will be a discussion for the future.

Jim said we should send a letter to Memorial Park to notify them of the decision. Paul said Tina has worked to get the check book and Paul has left a message for one of the people up for election and a long-standing member and has not heard anything back as of yet to discuss this issue as well as the issues that had been brought up in the past. It was made clear the Board has tried to work with them and we have had no success. There was a question as to why they are requesting \$4,000 instead of \$3,000 as they have in the past. Tina advised it was to redo the bathhouse and basketball courts.

Jim made a motion for Memorial Park for \$4,000 be moved from a separate item to be within the Town Budget. Paul seconded. Motion passed with all in favor.

Motion made to approve the remaining groups that do have their own article, totaling \$32,700.

Discussion and Adoption of 2016 Town Budget

Reappraisal Budget – It was discussed to remove the \$14,000 this year, and fund just the next two years to help back fund the expenses. Cathy suggested a smaller amount. It was agreed to remove it this year. Offsetting revenue was not in – this was changed. Tina said that more of that budget could come out of that revenue line as it is only a partial year. There is about \$150,000 in the fund

currently. Sandra talked to Steve that there was concern about funding cut from the wages budget. It was funded based on what was spent last year. She is worried due to the reappraisals of possible extra cost. Board felt comfortable leaving this number lower and that there should be enough room in the budget to cover.

Other - Kelly said we can lower recording supplies to \$1,500 and should raise Town Report printing – it was suggested to move this to \$4,500 to come closer to what was spent last year, and given that there are some additional pages this year.

Bob Cowles asked about the health insurance for the treasurer as there was nothing in last year. It was explained due to documented hours of 30 we need to offer or take a penalty. Kelly added at some point in the future her plan will go down to a single.

Revenues – The amount collected on delinquent taxes was less than budgeted. With some upcoming tax sales, Tina said we should get about the same amount in interest, the penalties are paid to the delinquent tax collector. There will be three tax sales this year – no dates set yet. Paul just wants to paint a clear picture on what we will bring in. Jim said at this point we need to hope that we collect the revenues as projected. Transfer Station revenues will go up based on the additional charges to other towns that use the facility. Cathy asked about any revenue for Better Back Roads – Duane said we apply each year, but we do not know yet what we will get. Duane said this needs to be better communicated between him and the Treasurer as to what is coming, what it is for and when it comes in. Septage was brought up – we have some that is due to us that we have billed and are waiting to collect on for around \$12,000, and with a balance due, the total owed is about \$15,000. The final quarter will be done by Steve and Stephanie and we will get on a regular schedule for billing in 2016. Bob Cowles brought up in the past we have not allowed usage of the facility until payment was received. Steve said this is something that should be discussed in the future.

Insurance for Treasurer – Paul is still not comfortable with this figure and the whole package being high. In the 2014 budget, the Treasurer position was \$10,000 and the Assistant Treasurer at \$12,000 – a total of \$22,000. Jim said he did not recall the hours discussed at that time. Paul does not recall specifying hours so much as the job – that the job could be done for that amount of money. Jim asked Kevin what he recalled. He said it was based on number of hours at two different rates - \$30 for treasurer and \$15 for bookkeeper/assistant treasurer. Based on 52 weeks, 6.4 hours per week based on the \$30/hour rate. The Assistant Treasurer would be, based on 52 weeks, 15.5 hours per week – 22 hours a week total for the two positions. Tina added that what the auditors have added for things to do, it takes more time and also trying to be more accommodating in being open during tax time. The 2015 budget went up to \$25,000 to accommodate some increased hours there. It was not done by the hour – a salary versus an hourly rate. Kelly said that one thing that changed in the last few years with the way the office is run in the last few years, is that she is doing less assistant treasurer work than with the past person. Kelly helps Tina and vice versa. Some days one person can be in there and get it all done, and other days they would not be able to get it done without two people. There is very few times when citizens need to wait at the counter or at the phone. While the staff has changed it has been a positive change. She added that these positions had insurance in the past, and in fact are still paying for those individual's insurance. They do a lot in the office and it is nice to feel valued – and one of the few perks of having such a position. She said she would like people to think about how they show their respect for the work being done in that office. Paul said it has nothing to do with that but he has difficulty moving that number up so much to provide the insurance benefit, when we are looking at such a large budget already. Jim echoed there is a lot of

appreciation for the work done and it is hard to come up with these numbers and how we have to look at items that have significant change – please don't take it personal. Kelly said you look at the hours, and when you hit 30, you are required to offer insurance, and it is what is required to have the office run the way it is and way it functions. Tina this still doesn't take into account the time emailing from home, etc.

Bob Cowles asked about reducing the hourly rate – Jim said it is not hourly, it is salary. Bob said there is the hourly rate for the highway. Steve said what changed? Why did the hours go up? Both offices help each other. The auditor requirements have added to the additional hours. If the hourly rate was reduced, Tina said by that much she would likely resign. Cathy said we need to look at how we go about hours and benefits, and if we are going to ask individuals to pay a portion. Currently no one does that. It's the package that is offered. Paul asked about cutting some of the assistant clerk to save. Kelly said she could cut the hours for Dodie (she is currently there two days per week), but with elections there are some requirements in needing the help, but getting rid of the third person would make it very hard. The line item was not spent down fully last year, but Kelly left it at \$11,000 this year with three elections. Dodie is helping deal with sorting and organizing and finding documents. Kelly can reduce her hours but not cut her totally and she needs to be advised of this and not blind-sided. Kelly said based on insurance and wages offered to the past clerks and treasurers and provided the figures to the Board without insurance – which are in line with current figures. Assistant got \$12,000 and collected the fees and the Treasurer was \$22,000. It's not that we are really out of line, it was just that the numbers were not easy to find.

Steve asked if Tina had any ideas on how to soften the blow. She advised to look at the Admin budget and that we are only up \$6,000 overall because they have cut in other areas. Also the cleaning is costs are down because it is done in-house.

Jim, Wayne and Cathy are comfortable with leaving it in, based on the explanation. That was the consensus of the Board.

Cathy made a motion to approve the budget for 2016. Wayne seconded. Motion passed with four in favor, one (Paul) opposed. Motion carried.

Discussion and Adoption of Town Meeting Warrant

We would be looking at a 19% increase over last year, based on all items passing.

Steve said he doesn't know how much we can change it without knowing how the vote will go. Jim said his option is you don't need to worry about it if it doesn't go to the voters. Paul said all of these have been said we will put them on the warrant. Thus why the groups or the Board need to defend why they want the funding.

Jim reviewed new items this year. He said at this point it is up to the voters. The Board isn't responsible to sell it but to provide them with the information to make the decisions based on the information provided – how they chose to vote is up to them. Bob Cowles said that last year the Board did not take a position on the fire truck. Jim said personal opinions were shared. Bob wanted to know why it is not okay for the Board to express their opinions. Jim said they will be given if asked, but not as a whole is it the job of the Board to sell the items. It is put to the voters to make the decision for themselves. Bob asked if a vote of the individual members could be held to get a sense of where they stand – Jim said he didn't think that the opinions will not be shared and mutual by all Board members. It is to present not to sell. Steve said some of these groups have

asked that the Board form an opinion and try to sell it, maybe not by the group but by some members. Steve tends to agree with the idea of providing information versus a position.

Kevin commented that this is just the municipal tax, not the education tax. Dick Dale asked if because of the large number of possible increases, could the Select Board go on record prioritizing – example, the third year of the \$100,000 equipment fund, as part of a five-year plan. Perhaps the Board could articulate that as part of its long term plan. He said that would be useful knowledge to the average citizen who has heard some things but not all the fine details the way Board does. Paul commented that we need to provide a forum for the representative speak to the facts of each item so the voters can make an educated decision. He said as much as he has his own opinions. To even prioritize is hard. Each have its merit. Same with the special appropriations – what is important the voters need to decide.

Kelly mentioned the Policing matter lies with the Select Board – even if the funding is approved, the Board could still choose to not enter into such a contract. Jim commented that the Board agreed that if approved at Town Meeting that they would approve the contract. Duane added that the only reason it is on the warrant is that the Select Board asked for that. Jim said the idea was for the Town to make the choice for themselves.

The property purchase was brought up again and that there may be proceeds that that can help to offset some of the tax burden.

Jim said the big thing this year is to get people out, get them educated and get them to voice concerns or raise questions, and to attend Town Meeting and vote. There is a year's warning of when it is going to happen.

Cathy made a motion to approve the Warrant with proposed changes. There was no second.

Jim read through the warrant. **Paul moved to approve the warrant as read. Cathy seconded. Motion passed with all in favor.**

12. Old business

13. Executive Session

14. Adjourn

Paul made a motion to adjourn. Steven seconded. Motion passed with all in favor. Meeting was adjourned at 10:15 p.m.