



Town of Amherst, NH
BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES
Barbara Landry Meeting Room
2 Main Street
Monday, April 24, 2017

1. Call to Order

Chairman Dwight Brew called the public meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Attendees: Chairman Dwight Brew, Vice Chairman Nate Jensen, Selectmen Tom Grella, Peter Lyon, and Reed Panasiti. Also present: Executive Assistant, Mary Guild, and Suzanne Beauchesne taking minutes. [Town Administrator, Jim O'Mara, was absent].

2. Pledge of Allegiance – Mary Guild, Executive Assistant, led the pledge.

3. Citizen's Forum - None

4. Introduction of Town Volunteer

Chairman Brew introduced Conor Frain, a new member of the Heritage Commission. Mr. Frain said he and his family moved to Amherst two years ago. He has four little boys. He grew up in Manchester where his grandparents worked in the mills. That, along with an interest in history, led him to the Heritage Commission where he could give back to the town. Selectman Grella said Mr. Frain has already attended a few commission meetings and has proven to be an asset. Chairman Brew thanked Mr. Frain for coming in and for his willingness to serve.

5. Eversource Information Presentation

Chairman Brew indicated that the town has received notification of Eversource's intent to clear brush and trees from under and around high tension power lines and, at the Board's request, a number of Eversource representatives were in attendance to provide more information about the work they will be doing. Chairman Brew said that a year ago Kinder Morgan had proposed a pipeline to go along power line routes and Eversource assured the town that this work has nothing to do with that proposal. Eversource representatives in attendance included: Elizabeth LaRocca, Community Relations; Logan Young, Burns & McDonnell; Kaitlin Wood, Media; John Troiano, Right-of-Way Program (TRRP); and Michael Stanek, Arborist. Mr. Troiano and Mr. Stanek came forward and went through a PowerPoint presentation as attached. The presentation included photos and maps of the Right-of-Way work to be done beginning June and some storm hardening

work to be done in December. The work is necessary to protect the electric system. They described the scope of work as follows:

W-157 Line: Affects approximately 23 properties and .28 acres of tall-growing tree species to be cleared. The work will occur over one to two weeks.

380 Line: Affects approximately eight properties and .26 acres of tall-growing tree species to be cleared. The work will occur over one week.

Board members asked about handling of scenic roads, stone walls, wetlands and species. Outreach to property owners will be done in April. Eversource said that they get Planning Board approval if needed when working on scenic roads. No stone walls need to be breached. With regard to wetlands, they comply with state-approved plans and they seek to avoid areas that may have species as listed by the NH Fish & Game Department annually. Work being done is not likely to be needed again for another 50 years. Selectman Grella asked about what is done with the timber. Mr. Stanek said it was up to the property owner. Selectman Lyon said it was a well-organized plan and asked what the hours of operation would be. Mr. Stanek indicated that they work from 7:30 to 4:30 and there will be no need for any large, noisy machinery. Chairman Brew suggested putting the map and presentation on the town's website and thanked the Eversource representatives for coming in.

6. Town Administrator

6.1 Jones Road Fence Bid – REC

Executive Assistant, Mary Guild, went over a bid for replacement of the Jones Road Fence and recommended it be awarded to Gate City Fence of Nashua. Vice Chairman Jensen moved, second by Selectman Lyon, to award the Jones Road Fence bid to Gate City Fence being the lowest bidder at a cost of \$6,425 and to authorize the Town Administrator to sign related documents on behalf of the Board of Selectmen. Selectman Grella confirmed that the fence post would be removed as well. Selectman Panasiti asked how this affected the agreement between the town and school district and their paying half the cost. Chairman Brew said the school district owns the land that the town maintains with the understanding that schools can use the fields for school activities. The agreement benefits both parties, and while it would be nice to share the costs, the town would replace the fence either way. Selectman Panasiti said he hopes this doesn't become the norm. Chairman Brew said there are a couple of fields that the Recreation Department uses that is owned by the school district. Selectman Lyon said the matter can be explored but shouldn't delay Board action on the bid tonight. Selectman Grella said the Historic District Committee "approved the whole thing". Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

6.2 New Hire – AFR

Vice Chairman Jensen moved, second by Selectman Grella, to approve the hiring of Noemi Bickford as a firefighter effective April 20, 2017. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

6.3 Hawkers & Vendors Application

Selectman Lyon moved, second by Vice Chairman Jensen, to grant a permit to sell concessions to Mary O'Donovan Dix from April 24, 2017 to April 23, 2018 to benefit the Amherst Soccer Club. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

6.4 Salt Shed Roof Bid – DPW

The Board reviewed a memo to Administrator O'Mara from Bruce Berry, Director of Public Works, indicating that the salt storage facility that was constructed in 1998 suffered loose and broken shingles late last summer. In March of this year, seven vendors each received a bid package to re-roof the building. Two responded – one for \$15,850 and the other \$24,900. Selectman Panasiti asked why such a large difference. Director Berry said both vendors have done work for the town and perhaps the higher bidder needed to rent a lift but he was unsure of that. Selectman Lyon moved, second by Vice Chairman Jensen, to award the Salt Shed Roof bid to Chris Brown Construction being the lowest bidder and to authorize the Town Administrator to sign related documents on behalf of the Board of Selectmen. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

6.5 Land Lease – ACC

The Board reviewed a property lease between the Town of Amherst and Pomeroy Farm. Chairman Brew stated that the Board is not allowed to enter into multi-year contracts under state law and suggested removing the language in the agreement allowing “automatic renewal for five years” to keep the contract language consistent with state law. This does not change the intention of the town to renew this agreement each year as appropriate, it is just a housekeeping action. Vice Chairman Jensen moved, second by Selectman Grella to approve the lease with the removal of the language as proposed. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

6.6 Road & Bridge Commission Appointment

Vice Chairman Jensen moved, second by Selectman Grella, to appoint Rob Clemens to the Road and Bridge Commission as the Amherst Conservation Commission representative. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

7. Approvals

7.1 Intent to Excavate

Vice Chairman Jensen moved, second by Selectman Panasiti, to approve and sign the 2017 Intent to Excavate for Map 2, Lot 34-1 located off Howe Drive. Chairman Brew stated that private landowners owe the town a fee if excavating more than 1,000 cubic yards. The matter was raised four or five years ago. At that time, the fee structure did not make sense. Selectman Panasiti asked if the hole was protected. Chairman Brew said the homeowner is required to bring the land back to some sort of natural state. He suggested having Gordon Leedy, Director of Community Development, come to a future meeting to provide an update on this matter and make sure that the town doesn't end up with something unsafe. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

7.2 All Service Veterans' Tax Credit

The qualifications for this credit require that the service member has served 90 days active duty and was honorably discharged or an officer honorably separated from service. Selectman Lyon moved, second by Vice Chairman Jensen, to approve the All Service Veterans' Tax Credit in the amount of \$500 each for two properties located at 247 Route 101, Map/Lot 8-83-20. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

7.3 Veteran Tax Credit

Selectman Lyon moved, second by Vice Chairman Jensen, to approve the Veteran Tax Credit under RSA 72:28 in the amount of \$500 for property located at 9 Oak Hill Drive, Map/Lot 20-13. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

7.4 Elderly Exemption

Selectman Lyon moved, second by Vice Chairman Jensen, to approve the Elderly Exemption under RSA 72:39-a as follows: Map/Lot 3-47-18 in the amount of \$76,000; Map/Lot 3-82-10 in the amount of \$76,000; Map/Lot 9-4-1 in the amount of \$151,000; and Map/Lot 15-2 in the amount of \$76,000. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

7.5 Gravel Tax Levy

Selectman Lyon moved, second by Selectman Grella, to approve a gravel tax levy for property located at 2 Howe Drive, Map/Lot 2-34-1, in the amount of \$25.02. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0. The NH Department of Revenue Administration (DRA) provides the tax per cubic yard values that are used to calculate the tax.

7.6 Abatements

The subject property is a colonial style dwelling situated on 0.90 acres. The owners request a reduction in value because they feel the property is over valued compared to assessments of the neighboring properties. After a complete inspection of the subject property, the only inadequacy is the finished basement, which is in poor condition. After making the adjustment for the basement finish, the assessment was reduced \$14,900 to \$386,500. It is recommended that the abatement be granted. Selectman Lyon moved, second by Selectman Panasiti, to approve the abatement for Map/Lot 2-87-78 located at 18 Rhodora Drive in the amount of \$373.99. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

Selectman Lyon moved, second by Vice Chairman Jensen, to approve the abatement for Map/Lot 3-76-9 located at 29 Colonel Wilkins Road in the amount of \$687.74. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

The subject property is a colonial style dwelling on 1.71 acres. After an inspection of the subject property, the sketch had errors in the square footage of finished basement and the quality of construction should be a C+ not a B-. Also, the building was in fair condition with observed deferred maintenance. After making the adjustments, the assessment was reduced \$26,900 to \$312,400. It is recommended that the abatement be granted. Selectman Lyon moved, second by

Vice Chairman Jensen, to approve the abatement for Map/Lot 4-112-8 located at 17 Hemlock Hill Road in the amount of \$675.19. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

The subject property is a colonial style dwelling on 1.9 acres. After a complete inspection of the subject property the overall condition should be fair with some deferred maintenance. The grade appears to be a B- not a B. After making the adjustments, the assessment was reduced \$47,900 to \$343,600. It is recommended that the abatement be granted. Selectman Lyon moved, second by Vice Chairman Jensen, to approve the abatement for Map/Lot 5-133-7 located at 3 Peach Hill Road in the amount of \$1,202.29. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

The subject property is a colonial style dwelling situated on 2.08 acres. The owners request a reduction in value because they feel the property is over valued compared to similar properties. After a complete inspection of the subject property some of the subareas were mislabeled. Also it appears the quality of construction is a B- not a B. After making the adjustments, the assessment was reduced \$32,400 to \$391,400. It is recommended that the abatement be granted. Selectman Lyon moved, second by Vice Chairman Jensen, to approve the abatement for Map/Lot 6-104-12 located at 7 Evergreen Lane in the amount of \$813.24. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

The subject property is a colonial style dwelling on 3.69 acres. After a complete inspection of the subject property a few subareas were incorrectly labeled. After making the adjustments, the assessment was reduced \$14,300 to \$744,000. It is recommended that the abatement be granted. Selectman Lyon moved, second by Vice Chairman Jensen, to approve the abatement for Map/Lot 7-33-13 located at 7 High Meadow Lane in the amount of \$358.93. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

The subject property is an antique cape on 9.01 acres. After a complete inspection of the subject property the overall condition should be poor with apparent deferred maintenance. The dwelling also has low ceiling height on the second story. The home owner provided an appraisal with an appraised value of \$233,000. After making the adjustments, the assessment was reduced \$94,000 to \$231,400. It is recommended that the abatement be granted. Selectman Lyon moved, second by Vice Chairman Jensen, to approve the abatement for Map/Lot 8-28 located at 27 Horace Greeley Road in the amount of \$2,359.40. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

The subject property is a colonial style dwelling on 5.38 acres. The interior inspection of the subject property was denied by the property owner. After a review of the lot, it was determined the road noise caused by being abutted to Route 101 created an economic obsolescence. After making the adjustment, the assessment was reduced \$16,400 to \$428,200. It is recommended that the abatement be granted. Selectman Lyon moved, second by Vice Chairman Jensen, to approve the abatement for Map/Lot 8-45-22 located at 2 Saddle Hill Road in the amount of \$411.64. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

The subject property is a converted camp situated on 0.24 acres. The owner requested a reduction due to the property being on a private road. After reviewing comparable sales the assigned value is supported. It was recommended that the abatement be denied. Selectman Lyon moved, second by Vice Chairman Jensen, to deny the abatement for Map/Lot 8-123 located at 4 Lake Outlet Road. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

The subject property is a garrison style colonial situated on 1.51 acres. The owners request a reduction in value because they purchased the home in June of 2015 and have had major issues

with the home after the sale. After a complete inspection of the subject property and reviewing reports from Castagna Consulting Group, the dwelling has major structural issues. The back exterior wall has an 85 degree pitch. The homeowner had an engineering firm place a temporary support holding the back end of the house up. This limits the use of one garage stall and some of the unfinished basement. According to the report filed by Castagna Consulting Group, major issues to be remedied include a new well, proper installation of a septic system, demolition and reconstruction of existing foundation and slab, demolition and reconstruction of the addition and porch, gut house down to the studs and correct structural deficiencies and rebuild, and mold remediation. The dwelling should be listed in poor condition with an abnormal physical damage of 56%. After making the adjustments, the assessment was reduced \$202,900 to \$140,200. It is recommended that the abatement be granted. Selectman Lyon moved, second by Vice Chairman Jensen, to approve the abatement for Map/Lot 19-18-1 located at 2 Steeple Lane in the amount of \$5,092.79. Motion passed, 4-0-1 [Selectman Grella abstained since his daughter was involved in the transaction]. Selectman Panasiti said this sounded like a safety issue for the homeowner. Town Administrator O'Mara will look into the issue.

7.7 Payroll

Vice Chairman Jensen moved, second by Selectman Lyon, to approve one (1) FY17 Payroll Manifest in the amount of \$200,049.70 dated April 13, 2017 subject to review and audit. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

7.8 Accounts Payable

Vice Chairman Jensen moved, second by Selectman Lyon, to approve one (1) FY17 Accounts Payable Manifest in the amount of \$31,173.10 dated April 17, 2017, subject to review and audit. (Town Clerk Transfers to the State of NH). Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

Vice Chairman Jensen moved, second by Selectman Lyon, to approve one (1) FY17 Accounts Payable Manifest in the amount of \$359,874.18 dated April 18, 2017, subject to review and audit. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

Vice Chairman Jensen moved, second by Selectman Lyon, to approve one (1) FY17 Accounts Payable Manifest in the amount of \$2,641,533.00 dated May 1, 2017, subject to review and audit. (School Disbursements). Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

7.9 Previous Meeting Minutes: April 10, 2017

Vice Chairman Jensen moved, second by Selectman Lyon, to approve the Board of Selectmen's public meeting minutes of April 10, 2017, as presented. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

8. New/Old Business

Selectman Grella said work had been done on the town clock and is worth a visit.


Selectman Lyon said the Planning Board continues to work on subdivision regulations including road regulations.

278 Chairman Brew said two cameras had been placed at the landfill, primarily to level loads. He said
279 the implementation did not turn out as anticipated. DPW is working with the vendor and a remedy
280 is expected within the next three or four weeks.

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282 **9. Adjournment**

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284 Vice Chairman Jensen moved, second by Selectman Lyon, to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 p.m.
285 Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

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288 **NEXT MEETING: May 8, 2017**
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297 Selectman Peter Lyon
298 Clerk, Board of Selectmen

5-8-17

Date