

**Selectmen Meeting
Minutes
April 22, 2020**

Chairman Connolly, Selectman Boisoneau, and Selectman Devault were present. Selectmen Kerrigan and Selectman Dziokonski tele conferenced into the meeting. Town Administrator Ward and Solicitor Gibbons were attendees. Chairman Connolly opened the meeting at 7:07PM.

Chairman Connolly asked for a moment of silence for Bob Pasquale, he served the community in many capacities as a former Selectman, member of the School Committee and Board of Health. He explained Bob was an outspoken advocate for what he believed in.

Review of Minutes

The board received minutes from April 8, 2020 Selectmen's meeting for review and approval. Selectman Devault made a motion to approve minutes as presented. Selectman Boisoneau seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

FY2021 Draft Town Budget

Chairman Connolly asked if the board was willing to pass over the Administrative and Old & New Business for discussion. The board agreed.

Old & New Business

Award Berlin Street Roadway Improvements Contract

Superintendent McGown was before the board to review the bids were opened last week for the Berlin Street roadway improvements. He recommended awarding the contract to the lowest bidder EH Perkins, in the amount of \$1,065,000.00. The project will include roadway improvements from Cameron Hill to the town line with Berlin. It will also include concrete sidewalks with granite curbing to the West Ledge Estate property, it is very difficult to continue further then there. He explained he has worked with EH Perkins in the past on prior town projects, they completed Water Street and are the current contractor for Walnut Street. Selectman Boisoneau made a motion to award the Berlin roadway improvement project to EH Perkins in the Amount of \$1,065,000.00 as recommended by Superintendent McGown. Selectman Boisoneau seconded the motion, Under Discussion: Selectman Kerrigan asked when project will start. Chairman Connolly explained almost immediately. The vote was unanimous. Superintendent McGown explained he will be using the remaining Chapter 90 funding from prior years including the current year funding, in combination with the \$1.5 million approved at town meeting for the road improvement projects.

Landfill Engineering Contract Amendments

Superintendent McGown reviewed the amendment will cover the dredging of South Meadow Pond, something the town has been pursuing for about 13-14 years, trying to get permits. He explained he received the first set of permits from the Conservation Commission, he received verbal approval at the last meeting. Now he plans to go before the Lancaster Conservation Commission for a notice of intent approval. He reviewed all the permits are coming quickly and the project will move forward this summer, it is a \$3.5 million dollar project over 8 acres of the pond. The amendment is in the amount of \$472,155.00 for engineering costs for the landfill closure project with a total project cost of \$5 million. The firm is Brown & Caldwell. Selectman Devault made a motion to approve the amendment as presented by the Superintendent McGown, not to exceed the amount of \$472,155., to Brown & Caldwell landfill engineering contract. Selectman Boisoneau seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

Legislation to Cancel Town Caucus

Chairman Connolly reviewed the Town Caucus is scheduled for May 1, with the town election scheduled for June 8th, the caucus is to be held 38 days prior to the election. The May 1st date falls within the time of Governor Baker's orders not to hold a meeting of more than 10 people. He suggested canceling the caucus. Solicitor Gibbons explained he will research the cancelling, the caucus date can be pushed out. He plans to reach out to Representative Naughton for special legislation to approve pushing out dates including the election to keep it 38 days from date of caucus. Chairman Connolly explained he would recommend cancelling caucus and pushing out town election to June 29th and town meeting until 22nd. Solicitor Gibbons explained he will pursue special legislation to postpone the caucus. Selectman Devault made a motion to cancel the caucus scheduled for May 1st, having it ratified by special legislation pursued by Town Council with Representative Naughton. Selectman Boisoneau seconded the motion. The vote was 4/0/1 abstention Selectman Kerrigan.

2020 Annual Municipal Election Date

Chairman Connolly reviewed the Town Election is scheduled for June 8th, he recommends rescheduling to June 29th, this is similar to the town caucus, special legislation request needed. Selectman Devault made a motion to move the municipal election to June 29th, pending the results with legal counsel investigation. Selectman Boisoneau seconded the motion. The vote was 4/0/1 abstention Selectman Kerrigan.

2020 Annual Town Meeting Date

Chairman Connolly explained the June 1st date should be extended to June 22nd, this will allow for the warrant article timeline. The further out date will allow for more people to be comfortable working and with attending to make the quorum needed. Town Administrator agreed, explaining the Governor's budget has been released but the House budget will be voted on within the next two weeks. The state aid numbers may change, funds from the Federal Stimulus may be used. There will be a clearer picture

by the end of June regarding the state aid. Selectman Devault explained the board has some planning to do with accommodating the social distancing for the meeting. Perhaps hosting it in an outdoor area would work out best. It will be helpful to watch what other communities plan. Solicitor Gibbons explained the meeting may be pushed out beyond June 30th, this decision is made by the Town Moderator and Board. Administrator Ward agreed explaining if pushed out beyond July 1, 1/12 of the current level funded budget will be used. Selectman Devault made a motion to post pone the annual town meeting to June 22nd. Selectman Boisoneau seconded the motion. Under Discussion: Selectman Kerrigan reviewed pushing the date back will help with making the quorum of 200 people. Selectman Devault asked if the board should consider lowering the quorum. Administrator Ward explained the board may pursue special legislation to lower the quorum to get business completed. Solicitor Gibbons reviewed the Governor is working on more special acts which will be coming out. The vote was unanimous. Chairman Connolly asked for the Town Administrator to communicate with the Town Moderator and Town Clerk. He asked for the Moderator to be invited to the future discussion. Administrator Ward explained he had a discussion with the Town Clerk who explained she will take the direction from the board on how to proceed. She has concerns for the workers and recommended protective equipment be available.

Extension for Payment of Quarterly Property Taxes

Administrative Ward explained the board is allowed to extend the due date for this quarter from May 1st to June 1st to help residents during this time. He reviewed he had spoken with the Town Treasurer who is supportive of the extension, payment should be made before the end of the year. The extension would be until June 1st without penalty. Selectman Boisoneau made a motion to approve the extension to the last quarter tax payment due date from May 1st to June 1st as allowed by the Governors special acts, this is a fair request. Selectman Devault seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

Annual Town Meeting Warrant Articles

Chairman Connolly reviewed the discussion will continue at the next meeting to post pone the meeting date. Administrator Ward explained a draft warrant will be available at the next meeting, the deadline for submittal of articles is May 1st. Chairman Connolly explained the board will finalize the warrant at the next meeting.

FY 20201 Draft Budget Review

Chairman Connolly reviewed Tow Administrator Ward distributed the Paramedic study that has been completed it was distributed to each board member. Town Administrator Ward has prepared a draft budget for the boards review based on budgets received from departments. He reviewed the Facility Director submitted a Capitol Project plan. Selectman Kerrigan stated he reviewed and is aware they are large numbers to get that department off the ground, piece by piece is alternate funding available. Chairman Connolly agreed explaining larger projects can pursue funding through warrant articles,

then the Finance Committee can determine if the article can be supported through borrowing or appropriating funding. Selectman Kerrigan explained it is important to determine if this is a special occasion cost, or is the increase a cost to do business, with the creation of the department. This should be evaluated at the next meeting to determine necessary costs to take care of town properties. Chairman Connolly reviewed the non-union employee COLA needs to be reviewed. He explained the contract employees have negotiated a 2% increase. Selectman Kerrigan made a motion to support a 2% COLA for the non-union employees. Selectman Boisoeneau seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous. Draft budget discussion continued with the review of each department, review of the Selectmen department budget, Administrator Ward explained there was only an increase to the computer expense line item to support the maintenance contract, he will add in the 2% increase to salaries. A spreadsheet will be created to cover the step increases and COLA to all non-union employees. Review continued Chairman Connolly explained he is proposing an increase to the Civic Fund to support local community events. He will work with the Administrator on the amount reviewing the funding expended in the past two years. Discussion continued with the School Department budget review, the budget presented has Governors numbers that may change, and this will require further review. Board of Health department discussion, Selectman Kerrigan asked for review of a possible overtime line item to cover the long hours of the department employees. Chairman Connolly explained the Chair of the Board of Health explained at the last meeting an increase of \$5000.00 to the budget will cover the needs of the department to replenish the supplies for the department. Selectman Kerrigan stated he will follow up with the Board of Health Chair, regarding compensation to the employees. Review continued with the Fuller Field Department requesting \$10,500.00 in repair costs, the Human Resource Department should be staffed shortly. The total budget requests for an FY21 operating budget \$54,477,454.00, which will be reviewed further by the subcommittee. Further review and discussion continued with review of local expenditures like the snow & ice. Administrator Ward explained this is one area a deficit is allowed, last year it was \$295,000. Chairman Connolly asked if board members had any questions on sources of funding, how resources are allocated. Administrator War explained the state revenue numbers are fluid now but will be firmer over the next two to four weeks, then the Chapter 70 and State Aid numbers will be available from the state. These are extraordinary times and these numbers are not final yet. Chairman Connolly agreed explaining 50% of the budget is from the state, not property taxes. A reduction in state aid will affect the budget. If you have questions regarding the budget or the funding sources please contact Town Administrator Ward. Selectman Devault asked if the Town Treasurer has determined if the recent events will affect the revenue or tax collection, what impact it will have. Administrator Ward explained the local receipts are \$2.7 million, the property taxes the town is in first position to be paid, the town can pursue tax title. He explained the \$2.7 million is a conservative number based on what is coming in out of the \$54 million operating budget. There may be a reduction in excise tax number where people will not be

purchasing new vehicles. The model may go down 5 or 10%. There will also be collected revenue from permitting, local revenue payments in lieu of taxes, for example \$100,000 from MDC, and the state aid numbers which are a big piece. He reviewed the COLA expenses are \$500,000, the Health Insurance increase is \$500,000. If the state aid numbers are cut it will be a huge impact, Federal funding may back fill the funding to the state. It will be important to watch the numbers.

Old & New Business Continued

Chairman Connolly reviewed the agenda for the next meeting will include the budget and warrant article review.

Human Resource Search

Selectman Devault asked for an update on the Human Resource position search, it is important this move forward. He is aware it is challenging to get committee together, therefor the Administrator should move forward and pick dates to interview. He explained the committee is just an advisory one and the process should move forward.

Administrator Ward explained he plans to move forward, he had been speaking with Dr. Meyers on scheduling interviews through Zoom. He intends to keep the committee informed. Chairman Connolly agreed, the subcommittee is an advisory one, he strongly recommends the process move forward. He understands there is a lot going on, this needs to get done. Administrator Ward explained the committee has been very helpful, they reviewed the applicants creating a short list to be interviewed from 150 applicants. The process will continue.

The next meeting is scheduled for May 6th, which falls after the Governor's stay at home order expires on May 4th unless it is extended.

Selectman Devault made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:07PM. Selectman Boisoineau seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

Meeting Adjourned,

Joyce A. Corbosiero

Executive Assistant to the Clinton Board of Selectmen/Town Administrator