

MINUTES

SELECT BOARD MEETING TUESDAY, OCTOBER 19, 2021 WILLIAM PULLEN MUNICIPAL BUILDING 6:30 p.m.

Selectmen present: Jim Justice, Adam Fuller, Martha Johnston-Nash, Josh White, and Bill Lombardi

Others present: Christine Simmonds (Courier Gazette) Charles Skehan, Clairlynn Rountree, Heather Jackson, Kathleen Thornton, John Gibbons

- 1. Call Selectmen's Meeting to Order:** at 6:30 p.m. by Adam Fuller.
- 2. Pledge of Allegiance**
- 3. Public Comment:**

Adam read a letter from TCC Director Lori Carlson thanking the board for the meeting. The letter also brought up two incidents in which Martha allegedly spoke out of turn to two TCC tenants.

Martha acknowledged speaking briefly with a couple of tenants but denied saying anything speculative or inflammatory.

It was agreed all TCC communication will go through the committee, CFTCC working with TCCA.

Heather Jackson reminded that it is important to be mindful considering the fear and anxiety people have around this issue, and thanked the board for its work in the hot seat.

- 4. Approve Minutes of Tuesday, October 5, 2021:**

Motion by: Bill Lombardi
2nd by: Martha Johnston-Nash
5-0

- 5. Approve Treasurer's Warrant dated October 19, 2021:**

Motion by: Jim Justice
2nd by: Martha Johnston-Nash
5-0

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Regarding the line item of \$603 to get the new tax bills out, Bill said not everyone in town (including him) received a tax bill. He asked Town Clerk Stacey about it, who said a system upgrade with serious issues had caused glitches necessitating extra work for staff. Bill hopes we get a discount or reimbursement from the software company, suggested waiving penalties for a 30- to 60-day period, and also suggested additional communication as to the possible non-delivery of tax bills.

Bill, Josh, and Adam agreed something like a banner on the website would be in order such as, “If you have not received your tax bill, contact the town office.”

6. Vote to close office on Election Day, November 2:

Motion by: Josh White

2nd by: Bill Lombardi

5-0

7. Discussion on Select Board meeting cancelation date/change November 2:

Motion to reschedule Select Board meeting to November 3 by: Bill Lombardi

2nd by: Jim Justice

5-0

8. Discussion and vote on Green Space Committee members:

Applications were received from Clairlynn Rountree, Wendy Reinemann, Kathleen Thornton, and Donald Kleiner.

Motion to accept the four applications above plus Josh White as Select Board Representative and voting member by: Bill Lombardi

2nd by: Jim Justice

5-0

A late entry application was received from Karin Rector, who lives in Camden but owns property in Union.

Bill clarified that all committee meetings are open meetings.

Adam said Karin is welcome to attend meetings and give input. He noted the five approved are just the initial voting members, and committees tend to grow over time.

Heather Jackson said she emailed an application to Jay. Adam said he would track it down.

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9. Discussion and vote on legal action on two property claims:

Valerie Farmer was in a car crash June 16 that damaged two benches on the Common. Jay said replacing the benches cost \$1,395.89. Her insurance company, Patrons Oxford, denied the claim citing a medical incident.

Consensus voiced by Adam was that, while the board sympathizes with Farmer and accidents happen, it is not fair to burden taxpayers with this; at the end of the day, one has to take responsibility for one's actions.

Motion to contact Valerie Farmer by: Jim Justice

It was noted she had already been contacted.

Amended motion to proceed with Valerie Farmer property damage claim by: Jim Justice
2nd by: Bill Lombardi
5-0

A worker for Lee Houghton damaged North Union Road earlier this summer which cost \$1500 to repair. He declined to pay the bill.

Motion to send Lee Houghton a second \$1500 bill by: Jim Justice
2nd by: Martha Johnston-Nash

Adam said when Lee received the initial bill, he came into the town office with a “colorful” response. Adam also said he has no patience for people who take out their anger on town employees.

Josh noted Lee never paid the first bill, and he doesn't think it is in his nature to pay it. We should hand it off to the lawyer.

Amended motion to proceed with Lee Houghton property damage claim by: Jim Justice
2nd by: Martha Johnston-Nash
5-0

10. Set election times for November 2, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.:

Motion by: Martha Johnston-Nash
2nd by: Jim Justice
5-0

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11. Confirm Clerk's appointments for Warden and Deputy Warden:

Motion to appoint Warden Elmer Savage and Deputy Warden Greg Grotton for the November 2 election by: Martha Johnston-Nash
2nd by: Jim Justice
5-0

12. Town Manager's Report: None.

13. Other Business:

Adam said we received two-thirds of the speed data; 85th percentile showed speeding. Bill said this means approximately 72% of 1100 vehicles are traveling above the speed limits.

It was agreed this issue needs to be on the next agenda, and there should be a budget line item for signage. Bill was disappointed it was not on this agenda. We should have another set of data by the next meeting. Adam said we will keep the sign humming until budget season to support the case.

Charles Skehan spoke about dangerous conditions caused by speeding at his property on Coggins Hill. Adam suggested he contact the sheriff's department, as such requests must come from residents. Adam will make sure speeding/signage gets on the next agenda.

14. Committee Reports:

a. Broadband

John Gibbons said they met today with LCI. They also had a good discussion with the Coalition.

Bill asked if LCI has a standard charge per customer in the towns they serve. John said yes, it depends on the package.

Josh summarized if we put money into LCI, we do not own it; we are just getting service for people. John said correct but LCI expects us to ask for certain accommodations which was purpose of our meeting with them. He added it will not be price cuts; we want to concentrate what we request in terms of protection from monopoly. Adam added 90% of the conversation with LCI is about that concern, not necessarily the immediate term but 20 years down the road; if, for example, they sell out to a big national corporation we would like some security for taxpayer investments.

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b. Aging in Place in Union

Bill sent the board transportation information. Forty people signed up for Thursday's luncheon. The takeout lunches will have resource sheets.

c. Future of the Thompson Community Center

Martha said there was a meeting last week during which they reviewed Paul's notes after the meeting with Jay, Lori, and some TCC members. They were pleased with the meeting. It seemed TCCA would be looking for a proposal as far as an interim committee; who the members might be was discussed. The next step is for Rebekah to send a letter to TCCA and hear back from them. Plan A is some CFTCC members go on an interim committee to work with TCAA to get through the next 12 months. Plan B is to ask them to allow the town to appoint members to the existing board. The next meeting is November 17.

15. Selectmen's Report:

Josh said a grader is needed on Sidelinger Ridge.

16. Future Agenda Items:

Speeding and signage.

17. Adjourn:

Motion by: Bill Lombardi
2nd by: Martha Johnston-Nash
5-0

Meeting adjourned at 7:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sherry Abaldo
Secretary