



Town of Plaistow ♦ Board of Selectmen
145 Main Street ♦ Plaistow ♦ NH ♦ 03865

PLAISTOW BOARD OF SELECTMEN MINUTES

DATE: January 11, 2021

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER: 6:30 p.m.

SELECTMEN:

Selectwoman, Francine Hart, Chairman
Selectman, Julian Kiszka
Selectman, Jay DeRoche
Greg Colby, Finance Director – Remotely

Selectman, Greg Taillon, Vice Chairman
Selectman, John A. Blinn, Sr. - Excused
Mark Pearson, Town Manager – Remotely

F. Hart reads Governor Sununu's Emergency Order #12 pursuant to Executive Order 2020-004 allowing municipal boards to hold remote meeting during the COVID-19/Coronavirus crisis.

G. Taillon motions to approve the minutes of December 21, 2020. Seconded by J. DeRoche.

Vote: 5-0-0

Motion carries.

PUBLIC HEARING – WATER BOND

F. Hart opens the Public Hearing at 6:33 p.m. She states the water bond warrant article is for \$450,000 to be used as an incentive for citizens who want to hook up to the potable water system. M. Pearson states the bond is exclusively written as an incentive program for people who want to join the system and cannot afford the upfront costs to hook up. The Town borrows the money and citizens who borrow it from the town will pay it back over time. It will be part of their quarterly water bill until paid back. If the money runs out as we move forward, we will do another warrant article next year.

Jim Peck, Oak Ridge Road asks how many people will be able to participate in the bond.

M. Pearson replies, it was modeled for 45-55 people to use over the first year. It is a beta test amount as we do not know how many people want to participate. It is a way for people to finance the connection over a long term.

J. DeRoche asks for the types of options available to secure funding. Will we ask for a large amount of money or use a line of credit.

G. Colby replies, there are three options.

1. Issue the full amount by borrowing from the Bond Bank at a low interest rate. The rate on the last issue was 0.86%.

2. Borrow from the State Revolving Fund (SRF). This is a competitive process, and the interest rate is higher. There may be eighty (80) to ninety (90) communities applying and only about fourteen (14) get approved.
3. The last option is a line of credit from a local bank. The interest is higher at 3-5%.

J. Kiszka asks when the deadline is to select a financing option.

G. Colby states the Bond Bank offers loans twice a year. Once in June/July and again in December/January. A line of credit can be done anytime. We will know more at the end of May.

F. Hart states it is not mandatory, it is voluntary for citizens to use if they want. It is not taxable to taxpayers, just to users. She will support it for those that want it. She hopes people will vote in favor of it for those who want to use it.

J. Kiszka agrees with F. Hart and states it will be a tragedy if people vote no on the article.

G. Taillon asks if anything has been done to solicit a number of people who may be interested in hooking up.

M. Pearson states we have collected information on all people who have reached out to us. Once the bond passes, we can reach out more and accept applications.

J. DeRoche asks how we have reached out.

M. Pearson replies it started in 2018. We mailed a survey to all residents and have had several meetings.

J. Kiszka states people who have polluted water near the Beede site, and other contaminated places site will get their connections paid for by the state and will not be part of the water bond. Is that correct?

M. Pearson states, people near the Beede site have been connected to the Pennichuck water system and that system will remain consistent. We are waiting for Pennichuck to decide if they want to connect to our system or continue to use their own wells. People near the Dunkin Donuts who have contaminated water will be hooked up at the State of New Hampshire's expense. The incentive program will help people connect if they want to. You will have to be near new water pipes or existing pipes. The cost of connection depends on individual circumstances. It may range from \$4000 to \$10,000.

Gary Hartford, 139 Sweet Hill Road states he lives near the new water tank and wants to get put on the list. He states he has not been contacted. He asks when water will be available.

M. Pearson states the survey of interest was mailed out in 2018 to all property owners. We do not know when the system will be up and running. Before that happens, the pumping station must be built, all pipes must be out in the ground, all the lines must be flushed and disinfected. Hopefully, the water will be turned on in 2022. If anyone contacts the Town, we save their name and phone number on a spreadsheet.

F. Hart states will personally make sure he is on the list.

Larrie Ingalls, 7 Elm Street wants an estimate of the cost to hookup.

M. Pearson suggest he call Town Hall tomorrow and speak to Dee Voss. The Town will pay for the water line to go curb side. The owner will pay for the line to continue to the house and the connection. The work will have to be done by a certified contractor.

J. Kiszka would like the Town to get a list of approved contractors to do the work so it is done right.

Jim Peck, Oak Ridge Road asks about the wording of the warrant article regarding betterment authority by the Board of Selectmen. Some people are concerned about that.

M. Pearson replies, the language is required from a legal standpoint. The costs will only be borne by those who borrow money. The only betterment fee is for those who borrow the money to join the system.

Ralph Bolduc, 271 Main Street asks about the amount of water pressure from the system. Will residents still need a pump and tank?

M. Pearson states the municipal water system will provide enough pressure. No pumps or wells will be necessary.

J. DeRoche asks if the warrant article should be read aloud since this is a public hearing.

F. Hart states we will be reviewing all the warrant articles later tonight.

G. Taillon states there is a sentence that explains the term betterment. He reads the warrant article.

Jim Peck asks if the language can be changed.

F. Hart states we must follow the Department of Revenue Administration rules and make it legal.

F. Hart ends the Public Hearing at 7:07 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT

F. Hart reads a letter from Joan Tellier regarding recycling. J. Tellier thanks the Board for all they do for the Town. She would like to see recycling continue. If it stops, she does not think one (1) barrel of trash per household will be enough.

F. Hart thanks her for the comment and states this will be discussed during our trash vendor discussion.

Jim Peck, Oak Ridge Road thanks the Board for all they do for the Town too. He does agree that curbside recycling should continue. He emailed a comment to the Board for the October 26th, 2020 meeting. He was concerned that the Board agreed to pursue a trash contract that did not include recycling. Mr. Peck believes the process was not open. He thinks a public hearing should have been held. He knows many others in the community want curbside recycling to continue. He states the bids and costs are hard to follow. Mr. Peck mentions a letter Brian Stack wrote to the Board which included a Face Book poll. Everyone knows that is not an accurate poll. Yet, he believes at least 1/3 of Plaistow's population wants recycling. He also states the 17% of recycling is not what it sounds like. The 17% comes from the total tonnage. If the total tonnage is 4200 tons, the recycling tonnage is 700 tons.

F. Hart replies, the proposals they received that included recycling had an addendum that if the contractor fell below their breakeven point for the costs of recycling, they will charge it to the town. Her concern is that with the low recycling rate Plaistow has (11% uncontaminated rate) the charge back to the town might be as high as \$260,000. There is no way to even budget for an unknown like this. She also states recycling prices are adjusted monthly and it is not economically feasible unless we have a much higher uncontaminated recycling rate.

Mr. Peck states without recycling the tipping fees for tonnage will increase since more items will be thrown away. He understands the Board had to make a decision however he thinks residents would rather have recycling available and not trash carts. He would like to see the Trash and Recycling

Advisory Committee (TRAC) reformed. Mr. Peck state a citizen's petition will be received tomorrow regarding recycling.

Bob Kincaid, Old County Road is in favor of Town wide curbside recycling. He makes the following points.

- You can't win if you don't play. If recycling goes away tonnage goes up.
- The situation in China impacts us as they are not buying recycling materials. However, things will work out over time. If we abandon recycling it will be much harder to bring it back once it's gone.
- He checked with the New Hampshire Municipal Association. Their viewpoint is to dispel the myth that if recycling cannot be used as a money maker it should be thrown away. Recycling should be used as a cost avoidance strategy rather than a money maker. The Northeast region of the country has the highest cost for tipping fees due to a lack of space. This cost will continue to increase over time and make recycling more attractive over time.
- Three New Hampshire communities stopped curbside recycling and one has already brought it back.
- People want to recycle, and they want to continue curbside recycling as a town service.

Lynn Jeffreys, 12 Ridgewood Road thanks Jim Peck for discussing the 17%. She is concerned about the number of households (127) listed on the RFP as wanting a subscription recycling service. She wants to know how an accurate quote will be received with that number. She does not think the number of households is accurate. Another concern is that many people still do not know recycling will go away.

F. Hart thanks her for her comments.

F. Hart replies, we are not eliminating recycling. We are providing other options that are less costly.

CHOOSE A TRASH VENDOR

F. Hart states she spoke with Atkinson's Town Administrator, Mr. Cressman. He provided some interesting information. Atkinson's census is similar to Plaistow. In 2020 total tonnage for Atkinson was 3168 tons and of that 708 was recycling which is 22%. One potential vendor, Casella has a distribution site in Haverhill, MA called Covanta. They monitor recycling and reject it if it is contaminated. Mr. Cressman said they have not had a contamination problem in Atkinson. Plaistow can learn how to recycle with education.

Another call comes in for the Public Hearing. F. Hart accepts the call.

Isabelle Gaucho, 185 Main Street states she agrees with J. Peck and B. Kincaid. Also, the number of households listed on the RFP is not realistic and will not entice companies to bid on it.

F. Hart thanks her for her comments.

Another call comes in for the Public Hearing. F. Hart accepts the call.

Marianne LaCascio, 8 Sunrise Terrace thanks the Board for all they do. She agrees with I Gaucho, J. Peck and B. Kincaid. She is interested in getting involved with TRAC. She believes recycling is important and options are available. Options include a transfer station, and composting. She wants Plaistow to be a progressive Town and not a regressive Town.

F. Hart thanks her for her comments.

F. Hart states the RFP for a subscription recycling service was put out with the number of 127 from the Face Book poll. The Board really has no idea how many people are willing to pay for a subscription service. This was just an initial way to see how many vendors who are out there may be interested. This is one of the things the Board is looking into. If the public wants a public hearing it can be done on the twenty-fifth.

J. DeRoche suggest the Board pull the RFP and write a new one. Having the 127 households based on a Face Book number was probably not the best way to handle it.

J. Kiszka motions to withdraw the RFP for a subscription recycling service and write a new one. Seconded by J. DeRoche.

Discussion: G. Taillon states we need to determine how many people would be willing to pay for a subscription recycling service. A survey could be sent to every household with a return card. He states we do not need to pull the RFP we simply do not need to act on any proposals.

F. Hart asks, how we will find out who is willing to pay, and how much for recycling?

J. DeRoche states a new RFP should not list a number. It should say up to 3200 households.

J. Kiszka agrees and states companies will respond with pricing up to certain levels.

Another call comes in for the Public Hearing. F. Hart accepts the call.

Samas Anthony, 4 Village Way states in this day and age we should not go backwards and stop recycling. She believes we should reach out to the community. High School students could make videos to show on Face Book with recycling rules. She is willing to help.

Jim Peck, Oak Ridge Road states this is an important topic. People he has talked to do not want a subscription service or a centrally located dumpster, they want curbside recycling. He hopes the Board does not approve a trash proposal tonight he thinks that would be a mistake.

Erin Robinson, 14 Dundee Drive, she wants to omit submission.

F. Hart calls for a vote for the motion on the floor.

Vote: 3-1-0 (F. Hart no)

Motion carries.

Discussion on choosing a trash vendor resumes.

G. Taillon states if a vendor is selected tonight it will not exclude us from going back and asking for recycling. Another thought to keep in mind is trash collection is also more expensive than our last contract.

J. Kiszka agrees with G. Taillon's statement however he does not feel comfortable selecting a vendor without the full board present.

F. Hart states she talked with Selectmen Blinn over the phone and his preference was Casella.

G. Taillon motions to accept Casella's bid as a waste management hauler for Plaistow. They have a good reputation; a lower cost and they are the only company that complied to the letter of the RFP. Seconded by F. Hart.

Discussion: J. DeRoche wants recycling however he likes the Casella proposal best. He states he will vote no since recycling is not included.

J. Kiszka agrees with J. DeRoche.

F. Hart states she will vote in favor of Casella. A lot of negotiations occurred. They lowered their base rate and the fuel rate. She is concerned there is not enough time to delay this vote. Some recycling options that are available are a 10-yard lockable dumpster can be used, Plaistow has access to the Raymond Transfer Station and bulk items can be picked up on a quarterly basis in Plaistow. We can re-negotiate a contract to include recycling if and when it becomes favorable. She would like to accept Casella's proposal and get it to Town Counsel for review soon.

G. Taillon asks both J. Kiszka and J. DeRoche if the Casella proposal is approved do you think recycling will be forgotten?

J. DeRoche hears the concern regarding time.

G. Taillon states recycling will involve purchasing more carts and there should be another line item added to the budget.

J. Kiszka states red flags arise if we move forward with trash pickup and no recycling or move forward with a high cost of recycling. Waiting one (1) more week will not matter. He wants J. Blinn to be included in the vote.

G. Taillon states we cannot allow the Board to stop voting when one (1) Selectman is away on vacation. He would like to pick a trash vendor and then move forward with recycling. We have been through this for months and months.

J. DeRoche ask if the purchasing of carts for trash pickup is set in stone or can we change it.

F. Hart states we should do things in a linear and sequential manor. We do have a contract for carts. We do not know what the public is willing to pay to continue recycling.

G. Taillon states to answer J. DeRoche we can add more carts to the contract. He agrees with F. Hart in selecting a trash vendor tonight and continue to discuss recycling at the next meeting.

J. Kiszka states he is glad people spoke up tonight. His issue is not that a selectman is on vacation however with such an important vote at stake a full Board should be present.

F. Hart calls for a vote on the floor.

Vote: 2-2-0 (F. Hart. G. Taillon yes, J. Kiszka, J. DeRoche no)

Motion fails.

DISCUSSION/APPROVE ENCUMBRANCES FOR 2020

F. Hart reviews RSA's regarding encumbrances. The Board does not need to vote on year end encumbrance by December 31. One of the Town Elected auditors, Peter Bracci sent an email to the Board stating not all the encumbrances were acceptable to the auditors.

F. Hart reviews the list of 2020 encumbrances and asks the Board if they agree or disagree with each one.

Assessing Contract – Corcoran & Associates	\$45,000.00
Drainage Project – Select Excavation & Landscaping	7,971.83
Drainage Project – Select Excavation & Landscaping	6,666.72
Highway Paving Appropriation – Continental Paving	45,000.00
Police Equipment – Witmer Public Safety Group	6,530.00
Police Equipment – AAA Police Supply	1,757.05
PWG Network Enhancements – Systems Engineering	1,400.00
vCIO – Systems Engineering	20,418.75
FD Computer configuration for trucks – Systems Engineering	4,960.00
Landfill Cap/Maintenance – Sanborn Head	37,000.00
Solar Panels Salt Shed – Revision Energy	63,966.00

Balance of Special Warrant Articles 67,787.66
There is consensus amongst the Board to accept all the above listed encumbrances.

M. Pearson mentions at the December 14, 2020 Board meeting, while discussing an overview of encumbrances for 2020 a statement was made that Warrant Article P-20-04, Public Works Facility – Phase 3 was not written as a non-lapsing article. Warrant Article P-20-04 was written as non-lapsing. He recommends a correction to the minutes.

G. Taillon motions to add a statement to the meeting minutes of 12/14/20, stating article P-20-04, Public Works Facility Phase 3 was in fact written as a non-lapsing warrant article. Seconded by J. DeRoche.

Vote: 4-0-0

Motion carries.

DISCUSSION/APPROVE BUDGET FOR 2021

F. Hart notes the Budget Committee sets the Budget. The Board of Selectmen's votes are only advisory. The Board reviews the changes to the 2021 proposed budget made by the Budget Committee. The department changes are listed below.

The Finance budget was increased by \$550.

G. Taillon motions to approve the revised budget for Finance in the amount of \$183,375.00. Seconded by J. DeRoche.

Vote: 4-0-0

Motion carries.

The Legal budget was decreased by \$6,000.

G. Taillon motions not to approve the Legal budget in the amount of \$75,000.00. Seconded by J. DeRoche.

Vote: 4-0-0

Motion carries.

The planning board budget was decreased by \$5,054.

G. Taillon motions to approve the planning budget at the prior Board amount of \$97,561.00. Seconded by J. Kiszka.

Vote: 4-0-0

Motion carries.

The Zoning budget was decreased by \$500.

G. Taillon motions to approve the Zoning budget in the amount of \$3,550.00. as recommended by the Budget Committee. Seconded by J. DeRoche.

Vote: 4-0-0

Motion carries.

The Government Buildings budget was decreased by \$16,465.

G. Taillon motions to approve the BOS numbers for Government Buildings in the amount of \$348,650.00. Seconded by J. DeRoche.

Vote: 4-0-0

Motion carries.

The Advertising budget was decreased by \$1000.

J. Kiszka motions to approve the Advertising budget in the amount of \$25,500.00 as recommended by the Budget Committee. Seconded by G. Taillon.

Vote: 4-0-0

Motion carries.

The Other General Government was reduced by \$6,000.

M. Pearson states the Board approved an amount of \$196,000. The Budget Committee recommended cutting the budget by \$47,500. M. Pearson explained to the Budget Committee the reason for the increase was for IT upgrades and COVID-19 issues. The Budget Committee made a motion to put the amount back to \$196,000 and it failed. A new motion was made to approve the amount of \$190,000. That motion passed. That is where the \$6000.00 difference came from. Both M. Pearson and G. Colby believe they can work with the \$190,000.

J. Kiszka motions to approve the Other General Government budget for a reduced amount to match the Budget Committee in the of \$190,000.00. Seconded by G. Taillon.

Vote: 4-0-0

Motion carries.

The Highway budget decreased by \$33,669.00.

G. Taillon motions to approve the Highway budget at the prior Board amount of \$842,165.00. Seconded by J. DeRoche.

Vote: 3-1-0 (F. Hart no)

Motion carries.

After a lengthy discussion, the trash budget was increased from \$789,437.00 to \$823,490.20 by the Board of Selectmen.

G. Taillon motions to approve the trash budget as revised by the Board in the amount of \$823,490.00. Seconded by J. Kiszka.

Vote: 4-0-0

Motion carries.

The Recreation budget was decreased by the Budget Committee in the amount of \$31,382.00.

J. DeRoche asks if there is a plan to keep up with cleaning the swales every so often to keep drainage issues away. Will the Cape Cod Berm be included in the warrant article?

M. Pearson talks about drainage issues and the softball field.

G. Taillon motions to modify and approve the Recreation budget in amount of \$186,695.00 to include a full-time Recreation Director. Seconded by J. DeRoche.

Vote: 4-0-0

Motion carries.

F. Hart recommends ending the meeting and scheduling a meeting for Thursday, January 21 since it is getting late.

M. Pearson asks if we have time to consider the Fire Suppression Water Line Connection Assessment for 2020.

F. Hart agrees.

M. Pearson states the current rate is \$0.11 per square foot of building structure. The last time the rate was increased was in 2005. He recommends increasing the rate to \$0.125. This will increase revenue from \$134,970 to \$140,593.

G. Taillon motions to increase the Fire Suppression rate to \$0.125. Seconded by J. DeRoche.

Vote: 4-0-0

Motion carries.

F. Hart would like to cover one more item tonight. G. Colby, Finance Director received the MS-60A which must be completed and returned to the New Hampshire Department of Revenue. The MS-60A is the form used to select the type of financial audit to be completed. The options are:

1. Locally Elected Auditor/s
2. Independent Public Accountant Auditor/s
3. Alternative Option – the town has been granted an Audit Waiver under RSA 41:31-c II:

F. Hart states G. Taillon has a proposal for the Board. She turns the meeting over to him.

G. Taillon proposes Plaistow appoint a local Auditor rather than electing one. An appointed auditor would be required to have a financial background and experience. Since 1999 Plaistow has been contracting with an outside certified CPA firm to complete an annual general purpose financial audit. Since then, elected auditors have not provided the town with an annual report or published any findings.

J. Kiszka agrees with selecting a qualified person. He likes a second set of eyes. He asks what will happen if we cannot find a qualified person.

G. Taillon replies, he does not think it will be difficult to find someone. The goal is to have a good working relationship.

J. DeRoche states currently we have a professional CPA firm, and two (2) elected auditors, do we need a third.

F. Hart replies no, an appointed auditor will take the place of an elected auditor, we will not have both. She believes this option is best. We will have professional auditors and an experienced person as another pair of eyes.

G. Taillon motions that the Select Board appoint an internal auditor position with required financial/accounting background and define a specific set of auditing responsibilities as listed

below. Further that the appointed auditor provide an annual report of recommendations/findings to the Select Board 10 days after the end of each fiscal year.

Required Background

- ***BA Degree in Finance or Accounting.***
- ***5-10 years of Financial or Accounting working experience.***

Specific Auditing Responsibilities

- ***Review proposed annual encumbrances making recommendations to the BOS for any that are questionable or not having sufficient documentation (i.e., Invoices, Contracts, etc.).***
- ***Review all annual balances of all Town Capital Reserve Funds. Make recommendations to the BOS to close unused CRFs or those with limited balances.***
- ***Review use of Revolving Funds and make recommendations for changes to their balance and use.***
- ***Complete subset or specific sections for the MS-60 report (BOS to define pertinent sections).***
- ***Other areas as defined by the Board of Selectmen.***

Seconded by J. Kiszka.

Discussion: J. DeRoche asks what happens at Town Meeting with the ballot.

F. Hart replies, the elected position will be removed from the ballot as of March 9th, 2021.

G. Taillon states Peter and Bob's terms expire in March.

J. Kiszka asks if there is a term associated with an appointed auditor.

G. Taillon replies, it would be up to the Select Board.

Vote: 4-0-0

Motion carries.

There is consensus to table the rest of the agenda. The next two meetings will be held on Thursday, January 21st and Monday, January 25th.

F. Hart adjourns the meeting at 9:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Beth Hossack

Recording Secretary