



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

PLAISTOW BOARD OF SELECTMEN MINUTES:

DATE: December 9, 2019

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

SELECTMEN:

Selectwoman, Francine Hart, Chairman

Selectman, Steve Ranlett - Absent

Selectman, Greg Taillon

Greg Colby, Finance Director/Asst. Town Manager

Selectman, Julian Kiszka, Vice Chairman

Selectman, John A. Blinn, Sr.

Mark Pearson, Town Manager

MINUTES

G. Taillon motions to approve the minutes of November 18, 2019. Seconded by J. Blinn.

Vote: 4-0-0

Motion carries

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

APPROVAL OF 2020 OLD HOME DAY OFFICERS

At the October Old Home Day Committee Meeting new officers were elected for 2020. They are:

Chair: Haley Bush

Vice-Chair: Tammy Bergeron

Recording Secretary: Barbara Kiszka

F. Hart asks if there is consensus amongst the Board in favor of the new officers. The Board agrees.

REVIEW 2018 AUDIT REPORT

G. Coby states there is a copy of the 2018 Audit Report in tonight's packets. We received an unmodified opinion from our auditing firm, Plodzik & Sanderson. This is the highest level of opinion an entity can have. It means the Town is managing its finances well. The fund balance at the end of 2018 was a little over 2.6 million which is healthy.

F. Hart thanks Greg Colby and Mark Pearson for all the hard work they continue to do. We are fortunate to have them.

HEALTHTRUST INC.

On a yearly basis the Board is asked to approve the membership agreement between the Town and HealthTrust, Inc. HealthTrust provides coverage for short-term disability, long-term disability,

dental insurance and life insurance. The agreement sets forth the terms and conditions of the Towns membership.

J. Kiszka motions to authorize and direct Mark A. Pearson, Town Manager to execute and deliver to HealthTrust, on behalf of the Town, the “Application and Membership Agreement” in substantially the form presented at this meeting. Seconded by J. Blinn.

Vote: 4-0-0

Motion carries

DISCUSS CERTIFICATE OF AUTHORITY FOR ARM FUND GRANT

M. Pearson states the Town received a letter from New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NH DES) regarding the Aquatic Resource Mitigation (ARM) Grant for the Pollard Road Culvert. The project has been recommended for funding in the amount of \$135,000.00 which is about 50% of the total cost. The remainder of the funding will be a 2020 warrant Article for \$85,000.00 – \$90,000.00. The Town has already paid for the design and permitting. The granting authority is requesting the Board make a motion to grant a “Certificate of Authority” to the Town Manager to sign the Grant Agreement. When this is complete NH DES will assemble all the materials for submittal to the Governor and Council for final approval.

G. Taillon motions to hereby grant the Plaistow Town Manager, Mark A. Pearson, with a “Certificate of Authority” to sign any and all “Grant Agreements” related to the Aquatic Resource Mitigation (ARM) Fund Program Application, NH DES File #2019-3140 letter dated November 21, 2019. Seconded by J. Kiszka.

Vote: 4-0-0

Motion carries

RECREATION BUDGET

F. Hart would like to amend the Recreation Budget.

F. Hart motions to amend the Recreation Budget to a bottom line totaling \$187,955.00. Seconded by G. Taillon.

Discussion: F. Hart states the line item for grounds keeping and maintenance can be reduced by \$15,500.00 as this was a one-time expense. The Recreation Director position would remain at full-time and the salary line item will be level funded from the 2019 budget. . There is a Recreation Revolving Fund with a current balance of about \$40,000.00. This should be used to pay for programming. A revolving fund should not have that much money in it. It is not a savings account. Money should come in and go out. That is the spirit of the creation language of the fund. She would like to use \$3,000.00 from this account to fund the senior transportation line thus reducing this line item to \$1.00 for 2020.

Vote: 4-0-0

Motion carries

WARRANT ARTICLE DISCUSSION

F. Hart states residents pay taxes not just on the operating budget but on Warrant Articles too. She has had several meetings with the Budget Committee Chair and Vice-Chair and together they would like to see the dollar amount of warrant articles decrease by 5% from 2019. Some warrant

articles already have funding from the unassigned fund balance. Some warrant articles are non-monetary, yet others raise funds through taxes. Some of the warrant articles being considered for 2020 include a contingency fund. The purpose of this is to cover the expenses of an unanticipated emergency. No new taxes will need to be raised for this warrant article. There will be a warrant article for the Pollard Road Culvert replacement. Again, no new taxes will be used to fund this. There will be a warrant article for the Public Works Facility Garage - Phase 3. It will include solar panels. No new taxes will be required. Some non-monetary warrant article includes, a change in language to the Conflict of Interest Committee. A warrant article to change the agents to expend monies from the existing Highway Department Expendable Trust Fund. An article to create an expendable trust fund for Old Home Day will be created. All proceeds from the advertising brochure will be deposited into the fund and used for Old Home Day expenses.

J. Blinn asks if the expendable trust fund will be only used for proceeds from the brochure. Some people donate money to Old Home Day.

G. Colby states the article could be written to include other donations as well.

Another non-monetary warrant article will be to change the position of the Town Treasurer to an appointed rather than an elected position. The idea is to attract a treasurer with a skill set better equipped for managing the finances of the Town. If the position remains elected there is no way to require any specific skills.

G. Taillon asks if the Treasurer reports to the Town Manager and if the position becomes an appointed one would it change the chain of command.

M. Pearson states, no, the Treasurer does not report to him and if appointed that would not change. The Treasurer will be independent and there will still be a segregation of duties. The reason this idea came up is because the Town has had a series of elected Treasurers resign and the Deputy Treasurer does not want to step up to become Treasurer and then the Deputy resigns. It leaves a hardship for the finance department and the Town.

G. Taillon suggests the warrant article language should have the Treasurer vetted by the Town Manager and appointed/approved by the Board.

G. Colby replies according to RSA 41:26-e the Board would be involved in the process.

J. Kiszka asks if appointing a Treasurer would require a full-time salary with benefits.

M. Pearson states currently the position is a part-time stipend position. There is no intent to create a fulltime benefited position.

G. Taillon asks if an increase in pay would have to be done through a vote like the Town Clerk or Tax Collector.

M. Pearson replies, no. The goal is to get a competent person. The stipend is \$7,000.00 per year which is low. It should probably be closer to \$20,000.00 or perhaps it should be paid hourly at \$20 - \$25 per hour.

G. Taillon asks if we should revisit the Finance Department Budget.

J. Kiszka states we cannot unless the warrant article to appoint a Treasurer passes.

F. Hart states it is a juggling act.

J. Blinn asks if we will discuss these potential warrant articles in more detail.

F. Hart states, yes. They will be part of next weeks agenda.

REVIEW MEETING SCHEDULE - JANUARY – MARCH 2020

F. Hart asks if anyone has any concerns with the schedule through the end of March. There is a suggestion to designate January 27 and March 30, 2020 as Water Meetings. The Board agrees to discuss these dates with Underwood at the December 30, 2019 Water Meeting.

M. Pearson is glad the Board is willing to have extra water meetings if needed. He states there will be a technical meeting on Wednesday, December 11 here at Town Hall at 2:00 p.m. with State Officials. The Board is welcome to attend. He states, he and Gene Forbes recently met with Timberlane School Officials. They are interested in potable water. A lot is happening with the Southern NH Regional Water Project.

J. Kiszka states the Board does not really know the cost of hiring a Water Operator.

M. Pearson states Underwood Engineers will provide some guidelines and suggestions.

J. Blinn states it seems like every month there is more interest in connecting to potable water.

M. Pearson agrees and states we currently have the equivalent of about 200 users.

He attended the Atkinson Board of Selectmen's meeting last Monday with G. Forbes to inquire about the easement. The Board did not make a decision that evening but there should be one by the end of the year.

APPROVAL OF PRIOR NON-PUBLIC SESSION MINUTES

J. Kiszka motions to approve the minutes of September 9, 2019. Seconded by G. Taillon.

Vote: 4-0-0

Motion carries

G. Taillon motions to approve the minutes of November 4, 2019. Seconded by J. Blinn.

Vote: 4-0-0

Motion carries

G. Taillon motions to approve the minutes of November 18, 2019, session #1. Seconded by J. Blinn.

Vote: 4-0-0

Motion carries

G. Taillon motions to approve the minutes of November 18, 2019, session #2. Seconded by J. Blinn.

Vote: 4-0-0

Motion carries

G. Taillon motions to unseal the minutes of November 18, 2019, session #2. Seconded by J. Blinn.

Vote: 4-0-0

Motion carries

G. Taillon motions to approve the minutes of November 25, 2019. Seconded by J. Kiszka.

Vote: 4-0-0

Motion carries

TOWN MANAGERS REPORT

- Attended Several Meetings
- Water Department Page – Town's Website
- Southern New Hampshire Regional Water Interconnection Project Meeting – Workshop
- New Highway Garage – Update

- Proposed Salt Shed Meeting – Waiting for Response
- Recreation Commission – Update
- Atkinson Meeting about an Easement
- Public Safety Complex Road and Cemetery Expansion Projects – Update
- Sale of Tax Deeded Property – 33 Garden Road Building A, Unit 8, the property sold for more than we needed. Back taxes and legal fees have been recouped.
- ARM Grant
- Meeting with New Fire Chief
- Personnel

M. Pearson states Detective Ed Lukas resigned his position to accept a position with the Boston Police Department. He will be missed, and M. Pearson gives him a shout out as he was instrumental in assisting with bringing Plaistow back in compliance for asset forfeiture monies. He wishes him well on his new endeavor.

OTHER BUSINESS

F. Hart asks the Board to consider accepting the Energy Committee's recommendations to award the Town Hall LED Lighting Conversion to Affinity LED Lighting. Affinity offered the lowest bid and greatest incentives/rebates resulting in lower costs overall for the Town.

J. Kiszka motions to accept the Energy Committee's recommendation to contract with Affinity LED Lighting for the Town Hall LED Conversion Project. I further move that Payment Option #2, (\$20,802 project costs, \$10,401 estimated incentives/rebates and on-bill financing of \$10,401) be the selected payment option with all funding for the costs of the project to come from the Energy Capital Reserve Fund and all incentives and rebates returned to the same. Seconded by G. Taillon.

Discussion: J. Blinn asks if it includes outside lights.

F. Hart replies, no, just inside.

Vote: 4-0-0

Motion carries

F. Hart states there are four ornamental streetlights on Main Street near Pollard School and at the intersection of Main and Elm Streets. These streetlights were part of the Safe Routes to School Project and are owned by the Town. The Energy Committee asked Affinity to provide a cost estimate to convert these fixtures to LED fixtures. The estimate is \$1,000. A rebate of \$20 per light is available.

G. Taillon motions to accept the Energy Committee's recommendation to include converting the four (4) ornamental LED streetlights that were installed as part of the Safe Routes to School program as part of the town's over all conversion project. The cost of converting these lights is not to exceed \$1,000 and the funding for the costs of the project to come from the Energy Capital Reserve Fund with any rebates returned to the same. Seconded by J. Blinn.

Vote: 4-0-0

Motion carries

ACTION ITEMS

Reviewed.

OTHER FOLDERS

The Accounts Payable, Signature Folder, and FYI Folders are being passed around.

SELECTMEN'S REPORTS

J. Blinn – nothing to report

J. Kiszka

- Attended the Energy Committee Meeting
- Will attend the Highway Safety Committee Meeting on Friday
- Attended the Board of Selectmen's meeting in Atkinson on Monday.
- Attended the Festival of Trees.
- Attended the Tree Lighting at Town Hall.
- Wants the Board to consider coming up with a voluntary fund to help seniors in need pay their property taxes. F. Hart states this will be added to the next agenda.

G. Taillon

- On Friday 12/13 Tasha Vincent from Visions Software will be here at Town Hall to do a demonstration on Visions Software. It will be from 9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

F. Hart

- Attended the Water Meeting.
- Attended the Planning Board Public Hearing.
- Attended the Public Auction for 33 Garden Road.
- Met the new Fire Chief.

F. Hart adjourned the meeting at 8:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Hossack,
Recording Secretary