



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

PLAISTOW BOARD OF SELECTMEN MINUTES:

DATE: January 6, 2020

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

SELECTMEN:

Selectwoman, Francine Hart, Chairman - Excused	Selectman, Julian Kiszka, Vice Chairman
Selectman, Steve Ranlett	Selectman, John A. Blinn, Sr. - Excused
Selectman, Greg Taillon	Mark Pearson, Town Manager

MINUTES

G. Taillon motions to approve the minutes of December 30, 2019. Seconded by S. Ranlett.

Discussion: S. Ranlett would like the word absent next to his named changed to excused. He was in a car accident and was not able to attend the meeting.

J. Kiszka agrees.

Vote: 2-0-1 (abstain S. Ranlett)

Motion carries

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

PUBLIC HEARING – WATER GRANT

J. Kiszka opens the public hearing to consider the grant at 6:33 p.m. There is no discussion from the public.

J. Kiszka closes the public hearing at 6:34 p.m.

S. Ranlett motions to accept a grant from New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services in the amount of \$368,000 for the potable water system. Seconded by G. Taillon.

Vote: 3-0-0

Motion carries

SWEARING IN OF NEW FIRE CHIEF - CHRIS KNUTSEN

M. Pearson introduces Chris Knutsen as the new Fire Chief of Plaistow. He asks Chris to come to the podium to say a few words.

C. Knutsen thanks M. Pearson for having him here tonight. He states he has been working in Public Safety for twenty-four (24) years. He is from East Tennessee right outside the Smokey Mountains where they have over twelve (12) million visitors per year. He has been a Fire Captain of Training and Education. C. Knutsen states he appreciates the opportunity to lead an already great Fire Department here in Plaistow.

Town Clerk, Martha Fowler swears him into office.

WARRANT ARTICLE – LANDFILL CLOSURE WORK

M. Pearson states at the last meeting Eric Steinhauser, PE from Sanborn Head was in attendance to explain the settling of the landfill. The settling must be addressed, and associated costs will be incurred for engineering, design and permitting. Additional funds will be required for construction. The Board asked for a draft warrant article for \$150,000 with the money to come from the general fund, unassigned fund balance to get the process started.

J. Kiszka believes \$150,000 is not the total cost.

M. Pearson agrees and states the \$150,000 will get the ball rolling.

S. Ranlett asks how they repair/fix it. Do they strip it off?

M. Pearson states they will take measurements and compare them to the original plans. The area is sloped, and they need to come up with a way to allow the water to shed from the site safely. They will take samples of the landfill contents.

G. Taillon states regulations have expanded since the landfill was capped.

M. Pearson agrees, as Eric stated last week the regulations are different from five (5), ten (10) and twenty (20) years ago. Also, costs increase yearly. We need to take action the problem is not going away.

G. Taillon states J. Kiszka mentioned having the landfill completely removed. However, the costs would be 10-11 million.

M. Pearson states the contents would have to be put in a vault. There are not many vaults available and the ones that are, are filling up fast. We can ask Sanborn Head for a cost estimate to remove the landfill.

S. Ranlett motions to place the warrant article regarding the landfill post-closure on the ballot. It reads “To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$150,000 for the engineering services for the preliminary design and permitting through bidding to address the post-closure settlement of the Town of Plaistow Landfill located at 37 Old County Road.”

Seconded by G. Taillon.

Discussion: J. Kiszka asks who will do the work, will it be Normandeau?

M. Pearson replies Normandeau does the monitoring of the landfill and they contracted with Sanborn Head to provide solutions to the settling. If the warrant article passes an RFP will be sent out to hire a company to do the work.

Vote: 3-0-0

Motion carries

WARRANT ARTICLE - ELDERLY & DISABLED TAX RELIEF

The warrant article will be called the Voluntary Donation Fund.

S. Ranlett would like to see the warrant article on the ballot. The next Board can work out the details about choosing a committee and establishing the rules etc. The funding is all voluntary. It has nothing to do with Town money.

J. Kiszka agrees. It gives people the opportunity to donate if they want to.

S. Ranlett motions to place the warrant article regarding the Voluntary Donation Fund on the ballot. It reads “Shall the Town vote to establish a Town Elderly and Disabled Tax Relief Expendable Trust Fund per RSA 31:19-a, for the express purpose of depositing any voluntary

donations to the fund; said fund shall be used to defray the real estate taxes of elderly and disabled Plaistow residents of low income; further to name the Board of Selectmen as agents to expend from said fund.” Seconded by G. Taillon.

Discussion: J. Kiszka wants to make sure this is clearly explained in the Voter’s Guide that the fund is voluntary.

Vote: 3-0-0

Motion carries

REVIEW WARRANT ARTICLES/VOTER’S GUIDE

G. Taillon states Sam Cafiso recommended the verbiage be more consistent in the Voter’s Guide so voters would know if a warrant article was raising new taxes or not. For example, warrant article P-20-09 Capital Reserve Fund Deposit – Fire Department Apparatus would have a line showing the total amount to be raised as \$100,000.

M. Pearson states the amount in the fund as of 12/31/19 should also be listed.

G. Taillon asks if the Budget Committee votes on non-monetary warrant articles.

M. Pearson replies, no.

J. Kiszka thinks article P-20-03 Operating Budget: Water Department is confusing.

M. Pearson recommends adding the total appropriation line of \$157,444 and showing the funding is coming from the water fund with zero to be raised from new taxes. The Board agrees.

J. Kiszka would like to change the words “rather than” to “not” in the explanation. The Board agrees.

S. Ranlett recommends the dollar amount of the impact fees should be included for article P-20-08 Highway Department Equipment – Forklift. The Board agrees.

The explanation for article P-20-02 Operating Budget: General Fund is discussed. There is consensus to leave it as is.

J. Kiszka states the explanation for article P-20-04 Public Works Garage Phase 3 doesn’t state why we need it. The salt shed will be larger than the old one so we can store more salt and buy it during the off season to save money.

S. Ranlett states you need to be consistent and not try to sway voters either way.

Article P-20-07 Highway Department - Truck Bed is discussed next. J. Kiszka suggests adding a statement that the cost of new truck would be \$200,000. Many voters may not know that.

S. Ranlett does not agree. He thinks that sways voters.

M. Pearson states it is just providing factual information.

G. Taillon states the goal of the Voter’s Guide is to be vanilla and not sway voters. The Board agrees to put the cost of a new truck in parenthesis {\$200,000}.

J. Kiszka asks if there are any other comments on Warrant Articles or the Voter’s Guide. There are none.

DISCUSSION ON STATUS OF LIGHTING CONTRACT

The original plan was to have the streetlights changed to LED starting in September and finishing in December of 2019. Recently the Board agreed to extend the contract beyond December however Plaistow's concern was the Until rebates and the cost value of the write-offs. The contractor stated they would provide the same rebates if Until did not allow the rebates in 2020. The contractor sat in a Board meeting a few weeks ago and said he would provide the information in writing and we still do not have it.

J. Kiszka asks if they are in jeopardy of violating their contract.

M. Pearson states, it seems like they already have.

OTHER BUSINESS

J. Kiszka asks if there has been any progress with the double telephone poles.

M. Pearson replies, no.

J. Kiszka states sending double tax bills was mentioned in the past, maybe we should do it.

M. Pearson replies he can talk to a Utility expert and possibly get a class action suit going. This has been ongoing since he came to Plaistow.

J. Kiszka states it is a problem and should be fixed.

G. Taillon has a question on encumbrances. He is concerned that the \$42,400 added to the list for the Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus may not apply if we do not have a signed contract to purchase them.

M. Pearson replies, the warrant article started in 2015 and money was going to be added each year for six years until there was enough money to purchase them. During this year's budgeting process, there was an increased effort to lower the dollar amount of warrant articles. A suggestion was made to purchase the SCBA with funds from the 2019 budget. However, the Fire Department is not ready to make a purchase. Research needs to be done to find which ones will be compatible and most effective for Plaistow. The \$42,400 will be removed from the encumbrance list. A warrant article can be added this year, or we may wait one (1) more year to allow the new Fire Chief to find the best product and add it to the ballot in 2021. The total encumbrances for 2019 will be \$106,424.47

S. Ranlett motions to remove the \$42,400 for the self-contained breathing apparatus from the encumbrances. Seconded by J. Kiszka.

Vote: 3-0-0

Motion carries

The Board would like a draft warrant article for the SCBA prepared for the next meeting.

J. Kiszka asks the status of the old tanker truck at the Fire Station.

M. Pearson replies, it the primary vehicle used for mutual aid. It has low mileage and it still works. It helps residents with their ISO rating. If the tanker truck were sold it would generate about \$25,000 for the general fund however M. Pearson thinks it has more value staying at the Safety Complex.

J. Kiszka understands the part about the ISO rating but he does not think Plaistow taxpayers should be subsidizing mutual aid.

M. Pearson replies, mutual aid is a good thing. Other towns provide mutual aid to Plaistow in return.

TOWN MANAGERS REPORT

- Attended several meetings.
- M. Pearson states there is information in the folders regarding the report on the implementation of the Accessible Ballot for Americans with Disabilities. It has been distributed to all election officials and must be complied with.
- Jill Senter, Chair of the Trustee of the Trust Funds received for Kara-Ann Gilroy's resignation. They still have enough members for a quorum, and they recommend leaving the spot vacant until elections in March.
- Department Heads are working on their reports for the annual Town Report.
- There will be an Open House at the Public Works Facility on January 25-26. The building is mostly done. Contractors are completing punch lists. The building is ADA compliant and soon Primex and the Department of Labor will visit the facility to make sure everything is as is should be. We do have the occupancy permit. Hopefully the Salt Shed will be approved in March.
- Chris Knutsen, Fire Chief has started at the Fire Department and things are going well.
- The Public Hearing on the proposed 2020 Budget will be held on Tuesday, January 14, 2020 in the Great Hall at 7:00 p.m.
- Only two (2) responses were received from the RFP for Values-a-new for Assessing. They were opened however Select Chair Hart wants a full Board available to vote on the bid. M. Pearson replies receiving only two (2) proposals is typical compared to past RFP's. We do not get many bids. S. Ranlett states even with the purchase of new software we only received two bids and one of them was from the new software company. G. Taillon believes the proposal from Corcoran expires in 30 days. M. Pearson agrees and states he is not sure why they put a time limit on it.

ACTION ITEMS

Reviewed.

OTHER FOLDERS

The Accounts Payable Manifest is being passed around.

SELECTMEN'S REPORTS

S. Ranlett – states Honorable Citizens of Plaistow after over 30 years of public service to the Town as a Police Officer, Planning Board Member and Selectman I tender my resignation as I will be moving to Haverhill and begin a new chapter in my life. While it is bittersweet to step down as Selectman, I am proud my years of service and the work accomplished. I will be forever grateful for the honor of working for the Town of Plaistow. I will look forward to seeing many of you at future Old Home Days as we celebrate the greatest Town in America.

G. Taillon

- Has been attending all the Budget Committee Meetings. It is nice the Budget Committee and Board of Selectmen are in sync on the departmental budgets.

BOARD OF SELECTMEN 1/06/2020

- Has been doing a lot of work on the Voter's Guide. He has enjoyed working with many sincere and talented people in Town.

J. Kiszka

- Visited the Highway Garage. A lot of progress has been made.
- Will attend the Rockingham Planning Commission meeting in Hampton on Wednesday, January 8. The topic is New Hampshire's housing shortage. The public is welcome to attend.

J. Kiszka adjourned the meeting at 8:09 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Hossack,
Recording Secretary