



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

PLAISTOW BOARD OF SELECTMEN MINUTES

DATE: August 24, 2020

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

SELECTMEN:

Selectwoman, Francine Hart, Chairman

Selectman, Julian Kiszka

Selectman, Jay DeRoche

Greg Colby, Finance Dir./Asst. Town Manager - Remotely

Selectman, Greg Taillon, Vice Chairman

Selectman, John A. Blinn, Sr.

F. Hart calls the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

G. Taillon motions to approve the minutes of August 10, 2020. Seconded by J. Kiszka.

Vote: 5-0-0

Motion carries

PUBLIC HEARING TO CONSIDER A FIREFIGHTERS ASSISTANCE GRANT

F. Hart opens the Public Hearing at 6:33 p.m.

F. Hart states at our last meeting Fire Chief Knutsen told the Board about the grant he applied for to cover Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for firefighters to assist with COVID-19. The grant is from the Federal Government in the amount of \$18,017.14. This grant does require a 5% match of \$900.86 however this cost will come from the GOFERR (Governor's Office for Emergency Relief & Recovery) Grant. Taxpayers will pay zero and gain \$18,918.00 in grant money.

J. Kiszka motions to accept the Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program COVID-19

Supplemental AFG in the amount of \$18,017.14 from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The 5% match will come from the

GOFERR (Governor's Office for Emergency Relief & Recovery) Grant. Fire Chief Knutsen

will be the person of contact for the grant. J. Kiszka further motions to authorize Town

Manager Mark Pearson to sign any and all paperwork relating to the grant. The grant will be

used for Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and related supplies to prevent, prepare for, and respond to the coronavirus. Seconded by J. Blinn.

Discussion: J. DeRoche asks if the motion should be made during or after the public hearing is closed.

F. Hart replies, the public hearing should be closed first. She closes the public hearing at 6:35 p.m.

J. Kiszka repeats his motions and J. Blinn seconds it.

Vote: 5-0-0

Motion carries

RECREATION COMMISSION PRESENTATION

Bill Coye, Recreation Commission Chair and Jenn Gusler, Recreation Director are here to provide an update on recreation activities.

B. Coye states, it has been quite a year. One of the things they did was to try to work with other groups in town. Since they were not able to have the typical Easter egg hunt, they had an Easter Parade. The parade included the Fire, Police and Highway Departments as well as the First Baptist Church. It was successful. Baseball was able to have a short season. Softball will start in the fall.

J. Gusler states the outdoor movies with the Recreation Department and the Library collaborating were also a big hit. She will try to keep this going into the fall.

Summer Recreation was successful too. Shannon Matthews, a UNH graduate was the Summer Recreation Director and she really sold the program to Jenn and Bill.

Jenn states on the first week of summer recreation there were only nineteen (19) children and by the last week there were forty-eight (48) children and a waiting list. The program was so successful they extended the program to Friday Fun Days through September 4.

F. Hart states not one (1) child came down with COVID-19. She thanks, Jenn, Bill and all the counselors. She states they reimagined many activities and kept the program going.

B. Coye states the Wednesday night concerts were moved to P.A.R.C this year. It worked out well and they may continue to use P.A.R.C. next year. It allows for more parking and more space for people to spread out. They averaged over one hundred (100) people per concert.

F. Hart asks if Recreation has moved to its new location yet.

Jenn and Bill reply yes, they moved today.

Bill states some of the fields were rented this summer.

Jenn states the pavilion will be rented to both Boy and Girl Scouts for meetings.

J. DeRoche states they did a great job and he commends them. They were able to bring back some normalcy this summer.

F. Hart states collaborating with other groups worked well and she wants Jenn and Bill to reach out to the Board if they need help.

AWARD APPRECIATION CERTIFICATES

F. Hart states the Board would like to recognize two (2) young ladies who took it upon themselves to make face masks for others. They made over fifteen hundred (1500) masks.

Casie Richards, a 15-year old sophomore in high school is also a flute player. She is here tonight to receive her certificate.

Gracie Donahue was unable to be here tonight however her grandmother is here on her behalf.

Gracie is 9-years old. Her grandmother states she was making surgical caps for her daughter who is a nurse. Gracie wanted to help. She began making masks. Gracie decided to hand out masks with the lunch pickup program. It was successful and she continued making masks for others, especially children.

F. Hart commends both girls and publicly recognizes them for their contributions to our community.

POLICE DEPARTMENT COMMUNICATIONS PHASE 3

Back in March M. Pearson talked with the Board about the microwave issues and communication problems regarding public safety. One issues it that there is no redundancy. The problem affects both Plaistow and Atkinson. A communication consultant was hired to provide solutions to correct the issues. A new proposal was negotiated which better serves Atkinson and Plaistow both technically and financially. The new proposal is for \$44,883. The original estimate was over \$60k.

G. Taillon motions to approve the expenditure of \$44,883 from the contingency fund for the purpose of replacing and repairing the current Land Mobile Radio (LMR) Microwave communication system used in police dispatch and two transmission sites. This upgrade is essential for maintaining public safety and business continuity for the Towns of Plaistow and Atkinson. Seconded by J. DeRoche.

Discussion: J. DeRoche asks what the balance of the contingency fund will be after this expenditure.

G. Colby replies there will be about forty to fifty thousand dollars left.

J. Kiszka asks what other options are available besides the contingency fund.

G. Colby replies the only two appropriate sources are money in the current budget or the contingency fund. He recommends using the contingency fund. The money was not budgeted for and the contingency fund has not been used this year.

Vote: 5-0-0

Motion carries

REGONNITTON - PLAISTOW LION OF THE YEAR

F. Hart recognizes Jay DeRoche as Plaistow Lion of the Year. The Lions Club does a lot for the community and Jay has worked hard with the Lions Club as well as being a Selectman, having a young family and a full-time job.

F. Hart states she likes to showcase hard work.

J. DeRoche thanks F. Hart and the Board.

J. Kiszka states he is also a Lion and Jay is very active in the group.

J. DeRoche states there is a great group of Lions and he owes a lot to all of them. One good program this year was the Power Pack Program. This provides food to children from Friday evening to Sunday evening. It includes a total of seven (7) meals. Several people helped by donating food and making deliveries. The response was amazing.

F. Hart states Plaistow is a generous and kind community.

ELECTION CARES ACT FUNDING

F. Hart states funding is available to assist with election expenses related to COVID-19 under the Election CARES Act Funding Grant. This is a federal grant. Plaistow is eligible to receive approximately \$17,500. To receive the grant, the Board must designate a signing authority. According to RSA 21-P:43 a public hearing is not required to accept the grant since it is related to emergency management.

G. Taillon motions to accept and expend up to approximately \$17,500 under the CARES Election Funding Grant. He further motions to designate Greg Colby, Finance Director/Assistant Town Manager the signing authority for any and all paperwork related to the grant. This is allowable under RSA 21-P:43 for grants for the purpose of emergency management due to COVID-19. Seconded by J. Kiszka.

Discussion: J. Blinn asks if the grant covers all elections this year.

G. Colby replies, yes it will cover the September Primary & the November General Elections.

Vote: 5-0-0

Motion carries

ELECTION PROTOCOLS

The Supervisors of the Checklist will be in the Town Clerk's Office on Wednesday, August 26 from 5:00 – 7:30 pm. During this time residents may register to vote and sign up to receive an absentee ballot. The application for absentee ballots will cover the September Primary and the November election. Information is on the Town website and cable TV.

F. Hart encourages people to take advantage of absentee ballots. Both elections will be held at the Public Works Garage, 144F Main Street. Precautions will be taken to keep voters and election workers safe and healthy.

M. Fowler, Town Clerk has requested the Selectmen meet on Thursday, September 3 at 6:00 pm to calibrate voting machines.

F. Hart briefly discusses shifts for voting.

7:00 a.m. – 11:00 p.m. G. Taillon

11:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. J. Blinn

3:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. J. Kiszka

1:00 p.m. – close J. DeRoche

10:00 a.m. – close F. Hart

F. Hart states a binder coat of pavement has been put down around the Public Works Garage. It looks great. She also states disposable pens and placemats will be available for voters.

J. Kiszka wants the public to know the Public Works Garage is in front of Methuen Construction. Methuen Construction will allow voters to park in their lot if needed.

G. Taillon asks if Selectmen can carry a ballot to a car for voting.

F. Hart states Bob Harb, Town Moderator is waiting for an answer from the Secretary of State.

J. Kiszka asks with so many absentee ballots expected can we start counting them earlier in the morning.

F. Hart state, that is a good question and we will be allowed to start the counting them at 8:00 a.m. this year. Just one hour after the polls open. This will be helpful.

J. DeRoche asks if an email blast can be sent regarding the Supervisors of the Checklist meeting to be held on Wednesday August 26 for absentee ballots and/or voter registration.

F. Hart would like all Selectmen to wear their name tag and picture identification.

OTHER BUSINESS

F. Hart viewed the tax card for the Westville Park and Ride. The assessed value is \$373,470. She wants to know the Boards thoughts on the property.

J. DeRoche states he liked J. Blinn's idea that many years ago a past Board bought land and held it. That land is now the location of the water tank. It may be good to pursue it. He asks if we can scrape together funds in the current budget. If not, a warrant article would have to go to the voters.

G. Colby states it is a big chunk of money. We do have money in a trust fund. It is not out of the realm of possibility however it is too early to know if we will have enough money in the budget to cover the rest.

J. Blinn would like to pursue it. Perhaps the State will help us out or allow us to make payments.

J. Kiszka likes J. Blinn's idea but he does not think it is the right time to ask residents for money.

It is prime commercial, land. Do we know what is under the pavement? Was it built on top of wetlands? There are a lot of unanswered questions.

G. Taillon appreciates the thoughts of other selectmen. His opinion is that right now we do not have a purpose for the land. He recommends we table it, leaving the door open.

F. Hart asks G. Colby if a \$500 deposit is enough to hold our place.

G. Taillon asks if there are any additional fees to be paid to hold a place.

G. Colby replies, if he remembers correctly the State wants to sell the land at fair market value. That will require an appraisal.

J. DeRoche states, he thinks there was a minimum of an additional \$1100 to be considered.

G. Colby will try to get additional information from the State.

The Board agrees to table the idea for now.

F. Hart states the Town will proceed with a 9/11 Ceremony. She asks for a volunteer Selectman to speak.

G. Taillon offers to speak.

F. Hart asks G. Colby to provide a brief overview of current Town Projects.

G. Colby states all current projects are progressing well. The Pollard Road Culvert is almost done. Proposals for the ballfield at P.A.R.C. and the road next to the Safety Complex will be received and open soon. A pre-bid meeting was already held with several interested contractors in attendance. The move for the Building and Recreation Departments began today. IT services will be installed tomorrow. On Wednesday, August 26, both departments will open to the public. The water tank construction on Sweet Hill Road is moving along well. A contract was awarded for the water main expansion. That will start ramping up soon. The Salt Shed is also moving along.

F. Hart states Plaistow is in good shape.

G. Colby agrees.

SELECTMEN'S REPORTS

J. Kiszka

- Took pictures of the water tank. It is very interesting.
- Attended the Budget Committee reorganization meeting. The Chair is Maxann Dobson and the Vice Chair is Sam Cafiso. The Budget Committee would like to assign one member of the committee to work with each department head. They also want a minute taker and an administrative assistant.

J. DeRoche – nothing to report.

G. Taillon

- Attended the Planning Board meeting. There are four major projects in the pipeline.
- Was contacted by a resident who is concerned that employees in the Town Clerk's Office were not wearing masks. F. Hart also heard from the resident. Dennise Horrocks, Health Officer spoke to the resident.
- A group of citizens created a formal petition to make the building at 4 Main Street a historic building. The petition will be brought before the Zoning Board of Adjustment.

- At a future meeting he would like to recognize three former selectmen who purchased the land on Sweet Hill Road which is now the location of the water tank. This suggestion will be added to the action items.

J. Blinn

- Drove around Town and looked at all the ongoing projects. Everything looks good.
- Did well surviving COVID-19.

F. Hart

- Attended the meeting for elections.
- Attended the Planning Board Meeting.
- The Historical Society has several records that should be scanned.
- Reminder – there is a Water Meeting scheduled for 8/31.

F. Hart adjourned the meeting at 8:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Hossack,
Recording Secretary