



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

**PLAISTOW BOARD OF SELECTMEN MINUTES:**

**DATE:** August 1, 2016

**MEETING CALLED TO ORDER:** 6:32PM

**SELECTMEN:**

Selectman, Steve Ranlett, Chairman  
Selectman, Tammy Bergeron  
Selectman, Peter Bracci

Selectman, John Sherman Vice Chairman  
Selectman, Julian Kiszka  
Town Manager, Sean Fitzgerald

**AGENDA**

**MINUTES**

*J. Sherman motions to approve the minutes of July 25, 2016. Second by J. Kiszka*

*Vote: 5-0-0*

*Motion passes.*

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

**INTRODUCTION OF DESIREE CHAPMAN**

Chief Jones introduces Desiree Chapman, new Records Clerk at the Police Department. She has been a resident of Plaistow for 2 years. She graduated Magna cum Laude from Hesser College. Desiree has a terrific skill set and has jumped right into her new job. She is happy to be here. The Board welcomes her aboard.

**METHUEN CONSTRUCTION LAND SWAP**

S. Ranlett quickly reviews the responses received from Department Heads and Committee Chairpersons. There are no concerns or problems with the suggested land swap as all Boards and committees are in agreement.

S. Fitzgerald recommends scheduling a public hearing for the land swap.

J. Barbone states he is all set to move forward with the process.

*J. Sherman motions to direct the Town Manager to move forward with the land swap as proposed with Methuen Construction based upon the positive responses from all Department Heads and Committee Chairs. Second by T. Bergeron.*

*Vote: 5-0-0*

*Motion passes.*

**SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL – PUBLIC HEARING**

Stephan Haas from Hoyle and Tanner presents. He begins with the meeting agenda and goals including:

- Project Background
- Purpose & Need
- Previous Alternatives
- Preferred Alternative
- Project Funding
- Proposed Project Schedule
- Next Steps

The greatest concerns of residents is a reduction in speed on Main Street and crossing Main Street at Elm St. He reviews the new plan known as the Preferred Alternative. This plan includes:

- Increased Visibility
- Reduced Crossing Width
- Anticipated Crossing Location
- ADA Compliant Sidewalk Widths
- Vertical Granite Curbing
- Enhanced Pedestrian Signage

S. Ranlett opens the meeting to the public.

Dolores Coyle-Quirk of 15 Elm Street is concerned with the proposed cross walk at Elm Street. She feels vehicles taking a right from Main Street onto Elm Street will still drive too fast which is a concern for anyone trying to use the crosswalk.

S. Fitzgerald agrees and states preventing stop and go traffic which can cause more issues is preferred along with ensuring emergency vehicles can easily pass.

Chief McArdle states he is not in favor of a stop sign at the intersection of Main Street and Elm Street traveling north. This would cause a delay in first responders arriving at the Fire Station.

Chief Jones is concerned with backups that would be caused by installing a stop sign especially when school is starting and letting out for the day.

Jim Unger of 141 Main St. is also concerned with a stop sign and a cross walk. A stop sign would cause a lot of backup in traffic and would make it very difficult for emergency vehicles to pass. Discussion ensues regarding the location of a crosswalk, stop signs, signal lights, and reducing conflict points with the closure of the slip lane.

Dolores Coyle-Quirk states we need to keep in mind safe routes to school. Children walking to school need sidewalks and a cross walk with a safe place to cross.

Funding will come from a grant through the Federal Highway Administration. The total funding is \$240,000. The Town has applied for an additional grant through the Transportation Alternative Program(TAP).

S. Hass reviews the project schedule. The next step is to submit the feasibility study. This will be reviewed by NHDOT and include a budget review. The goal to begin construction is the summer of 2017.

J. Peck inquires what the non construction costs are.

S. Hass states about \$75,000 to \$90,000.

S. Fitzgerald states this is higher than a typical project and will most likely result in a reduction of the scope of work when the final design comes in.

J. Kiszka states he wants to make sure all flora and bushes are low profile.

S. Hass agrees.

J. Sherman inquires if any Town funds will be used for any portion of the project.

S. Fitzgerald states No. Once Hoyle & Tanner submit the feasibility study and NHDOT approves, the project will be put out to bid.

The scope will be scaled back if necessary based on costs.

J. Sherman notes there may be a way to save some money by having resident volunteers do some of the plantings. He wants to make sure this is still on the table.

S. Hass states the Town would have to pursue this with NHDOT.

T. Moore wants to help clarify non infrastructure costs. He states a portion of the costs for non infrastructure were spent on the Bike Rodeo, helmets and cross walk signs. He also mentions the Transportation Alternative Program(TAP) grant can be used to dovetail the Safe Routes To School project if we are awarded it, though does require a 20% local match.

Kimberly Raymond of 7 Linwood Ave Apt 1 is concerned about spending town funds, replacing existing sidewalks and the crosswalk at the intersection of Main and Elm Streets.

Bob Hamilton of Balsam Way notes one of the aspects of the project was traffic calming. He believes raised crosswalks will help with this at a small cost. He also notes this should be about safe routes to school and not safe routes to Town Hall. He personally does not like the sidewalk at the intersection of Main and Elm Streets. Discussion about raised crosswalks ensues. It is noted they cause damage to plows, can lead to potholes and NHDOT is not in favor of them. It is noted that NHDOT maintains that section of the road.

Dick Colcord of Center Circle states years ago there was a crosswalk at the intersection of Main and Elm Streets. People still cross there often. Re-establishing the sidewalk might help to some extent as people tend to take the path of less resistance. S. Ranlett states that narrowing the road will lead to traffic slowing down.

S. Ranlett closes the public hearing at 7:58pm and calls for a 5 minute recess.

Back in session at 8:09pm

## **2016 ASSESSING RECOMMENDATIONS**

S. Ranlett reads the Press Release. "I am pleased to report that Plaistow continues to see significant growth in both residential and commercial real estate investment. This special meeting of the Board of Selectmen will help present information to the public on how residential and commercial valuations are appraised and assessed in Plaistow."

To help provide the public with additional information on the process of updating valuations, the Plaistow Board of Selectmen has scheduled an informational hearing to help explain the process before formally voting on accepting the assessing firm's recommendations. This recommendation will affect approximately 3,300 parcels in Town. (2,962 are residential and 338 are commercial.)

As per NH State Constitution, values are required to be taken anew at least every 5 years. It is important to note that the town is scheduled for certification by the New Hampshire Department of Revenue Administration in 2016 (otherwise known as DRA). This will require that all properties in Plaistow be assessed at 100% of their value. The last full revaluation of values in Plaistow occurred in 2011 based on market sales from the prior years. To meet this 5 year requirement, a

values anew will be performed to bring all properties in-line with the market conditions as of April 1, 2016. Work to be done this year includes: market analysis, valuations, field review and informal hearings. Over the past six weeks Plaistow property owners have seen and will continue to see representatives from *Corcoran Consulting Associates*, Plaistow's contracted assessing agents out in the community. All agents will be carrying identification. In addition, representatives of the state of NHDRA may be in Town during the revaluation process to monitor its compliance with state requirements and they also carry identification as well. Concerns about whether an individual is working on this project may be directed to the Assessor's Office at 603-382-1200, extension 230 or Plaistow Police Department, non emergency line at 603-382-1200. **It is recommended that homeowners request identification before granting anyone permission to enter your home.**

Wil Corcoran and Marybeth Walker of *Corcoran Consulting Associates* are present to review revaluation procedures. As part of the process the following must be re-qualified.

- all exemptions & credits
- current use properties
- visit all properties for data verification
- create values "anew" as of April 1, 2016

They go through each step explaining the purpose and result. The premise behind revaluations is to ensure that no taxpayer is paying neither more nor less than their proportionate share of the tax burden.

J. Sherman requests W. Corcoran to do an analysis of commercial properties to help us understand the potential commercial impact on valuations. This will give us an idea of the overall assessment dollars.

W. Corcoran mentions it is good to remember the higher the assessed value the lower the tax rate will be as long as the budget stays the same or similar. The goal of *Corcoran Consulting Associates* is to maintain equity. That is why they make adjustments every year, not just in the 5<sup>th</sup> year.

Discussion ensues regarding authorization of *Corcoran Consulting Associates* to move forward with the process of revaluation. It is noted they are not changing values to properties without authorization from The Board of Selectman.

P. Bracci would like Wil to provide a statement showing the top 50 commercial properties with their value in 2015 vs. 2016.

Wil stated he will be able to provide that information but it is a long process and will not be available until about the end of September.

J. Peck inquires when the process for commercial revaluation begins.

W. Corcoran states no process happens until authorized by the Board. Although some information is provided by any building permits issued.

K. Raymond of 7 Lynwood St Apt 1 wants to know where and when the press release was issued and if tonight's meeting is a public hearing.

S. Fitzgerald states the press release was in the Carriage Town News and the Eagle Tribune approximately 2 weeks ago.

S. Ranlett states this is not a public hearing but an informational hearing.

K. Raymond wants to know why it was not put on Face Book or other social media.

S. Fitzgerald states it could be done that way in the future.

W. Corcoran and M. Walker explain how the commercial and residential process for valuation is very different. The field review that has been going on for residential properties is just to make sure property record cards are correct. For commercial properties it is easier to adjust the cost tables first. Any income and expense information available along with sales over the past 2 years and sales in Southern NH will aid in providing information. W. Corcoran will then have to visit each commercial property and hand appraise them. Several questions are asked regarding the process of assessing commercial properties and why the assessors need authorization now when they have not needed it up to this point.

M. Walker explains they are not authorized to perform the re-evaluation and adjust any values anew until authorized by the Board of Selectmen. Gathering residential information for property record cards alone does not change the value.

W. Corcoran reiterates that more value equals less tax rate depending on operating budget.

The longer it takes for the Board to grant permission to the assessing firm to continue the longer it will take for process to be completed. A percentage ratio does not need to be determined tonight. Corcoran & Associates always recommend valuation to be 98-100% but the Board will ultimately decide. Once the assessing work is complete the Board will vote before the MS-1 is completed, signed and sent to the state.

*J. Kiszka motions to allow Corcoran & Associates to move forward gathering information for the Values anew process and to give a preliminary update on Commercial Properties in 2 weeks but no tax rate ratio will be set tonight. Second by J. Sherman.*

*Vote 5-0-0*

*Motion passes*

## **TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT**

Not reviewed tonight

## **ACTION ITEM REVIEW**

Reviewed

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

None

## **SELECTMAN REPORTS**

J. Sherman –

S. Ranlett- Reads a Thank You note from Joyce Ingerson

J. Kiszka

P. Bracci – states the Charter for the Trash Committee that Sean prepared was good. He suggests changing the number of members to 5 and each Selectman can recommend someone. He inquires if the JRM contract was signed.

S. Fitzgerald states it was signed. The contract is discussed and a final copy will be emailed to the Board once Sean has it.

T. Bergeron – reads from the NH RSA Section 37:6

Noting the Town Manager is responsible for hiring and terminating employees. She wanted to clarify this point.

**SIGNATURE FOLDER**

S. Ranlett states the signature folder and manifest are going around.

S. Ranlett adjourns the meeting at 9:53pm

Respectfully submitted,

Gayle Hamel,  
Recording Secretary