

TOWN OF TAMWORTH
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
84 MAIN STREET
TAMWORTH, NH 03886
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Non-Public per RSA 91-A:3 II (a) 5:30pm
Selectmen's Meeting 6:00pm
Town Office

Thursday, January 9, 2020

MINUTES

Present: Chairman Poirier, Selectman Farnum, Mason and Streeter, Road Agent Roberts, Transfer Station Manager Johnson, Police Chief Littlefield, EDC Chairman Farley, Friends of the Town House member L Cook, Advisory Budget Committee members C Cook, Siniscalchi & Mason, Forest Service representative Jim Innes & Jessica Dubuque, Sara Baker, Tiffany Roberts, John Swiriduk, Jason Baker, Jessica Perkins, Brook Barron, Brenna Sheehan, Steve Gray, Jim Hidden, Shyanne Sheehan and several members of the public.

- CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Poirier opened the meeting at 5:30pm.
- NON-PUBLIC PER RSA 91-A:3, II (a)
 - Motion made by Chairman Poirier at 5:30 pm to enter a non-public session under RSA 91 A: 3 II (a). Motion seconded by Selectman Mason and passed by roll call vote. Poirier Y, Farnum Y, Mason Y & Streeter Y.
 - Motion made by Chairman Poirier to reopen the regular session at 6:00 pm. Motion seconded by Selectman Mason and passed unanimously.
- DEPARTMENTS & COMMITTEES:
 - Highway Department
 - Road Agent Roberts reported the need to re-treat the roads after the storms. The bids will go out for Bunker Hill Bridge on January 13th or 14th. Mr. Roberts presented a Snow Plowing Policy that he would like on the website and an ad be placed in the Conway Daily Sun. The Policy reads as follows:

It is important that all plowed town roads be kept clear of obstacles for the proper removal of snow.

Obstructions left within the town right of way will be at owner's risk. It is the obligation of all owners and occupants of property within the town to assure that no mailboxes, paper delivery boxes, signs or similar structure obstruct the plowed right of way. Any structure within the right of way exists there at the risk of the owner. Neither the town nor the road crews are responsible for damage caused to the structures by the plow.

Any vehicle parked on any road in the town, which is obstructing snow removal or sanding shall be towed at the owner's expense.

The town's Winter Roads Policy prohibits the plowing of snow across a roadway. No person shall throw, place or plow any snow or ice from private property onto any public street or roads.

- Transfer Station
 - Transfer Station Manager Johnson reported that the last couple of weeks have been very busy. Art Mason asked if the facility had drinkable water. He was told the employees bring in water from home. Mr. Johnson will attend a recycling meeting in Madison on Thursday, January 16th with the Tamworth Recycling Project. The facility shipped its first shipment of 4100 lbs. of cans.
- Police Department
 - Police Chief Littlefield submitted the department statistics for December and correspondence. The month of December was quite but the Christmas and New Year's holidays were rather quiet. Police Chief Littlefield asked to discuss his evaluation and wanted some clarification on a couple of points. "The board cited needs improvements in dealing with the public.". He asked for examples. Selectman Farnum said one person told him the Chief didn't return their call. Selectman Mason commented that the Chief was not willing to work with the Advisory Budget Committee. The board also commented he didn't change the way he reported his statistics when asked. They also commented that he needed to improve his time management. Chief asked for examples and the board had none. Selectman Farnum stated the board is not perfect. Chief Littlefield read and signed the review and left without a dialogue. A short dialogue ensued between budget member Siniscalchi and the Chief.
- EDC
 - Chairman Farley reported that the next Economic Development Commission meeting is scheduled for January 22, 2020. Mount Washington Valley Economic Commission will meet next week. LRPC meets again in February. The EDC is working with the Outing Club to create a skating circle/trail on Chocorua Lake and will accept input from the public.
- Friends of the Town House
 - Member Linda Cook reported the Town House is being used by 12 different organizations. 8 kids participated in Squeaky Sneakers.
- Administration
 - Town Administrator McWhirter reported John Wheeler will not be seeking another term as a Trustee of the Trust Funds but will be running for Cemetery Trustee. Streetlights that are not working have been reported to Eversource. The Selectman agreed to increase the forester's hourly rate to \$48.00 per hour. The FEMA Excess Fund Program has been extended to 2021.
 - The board will vote on the budget at the January 14th work session beginning at 5:30pm. The 2020 Budget Public Hearing is scheduled for January 28th, at 6pm. January 23rd is a BOS meeting and a public hearing for the Road Regulation and Traffic Policy at 6pm.

▪ APPOINTMENTS:

- Jim Innes from the Forest Service (Saco Station) came before the board to present the Sandwich Conceptual Planning Proposal. He presented maps showing the Conceptual Planning Area, which includes a small piece in Tamworth. Potential opportunities are harvesting to improve wildlife habitat, wood products, improve forest health, transportation management and recreation resources and opportunities. An open house is scheduled for January 28, 2020 from 6:30pm to 8pm at the Samuel Wentworth Library in Center Sandwich. The Forest Service is seeking public input. A formal plan is expected for winter 2021.
- Selectman Farnum read the following statement before members of the public spoke:

“In my statement at last weeks’ Select-board meeting, I made a mistake and mispronounced the work personnel, please except my apology. At tonight’s meeting we cannot and will not discuss any personnel issues. We have taken the steps to reduce the Recreation Director’s position to 15 hours based on the program hours that the Recreation Director gave the Select-board. This action has nothing to do with the director’s character or what he offers the children that attend his activities. The Select-board recognized the need for a robust recreation program in Tamworth that services the whole community, and we will do our best to try and make it happen. The Select-board has a fiduciary responsibility to spend the taxpayer’s money as best we can.”

Below are comments from the public concerning the staffing of the Recreation Directors position:

Sara Baker, resident commented that the board cut the recreation position against the voter’s request from town meeting and feels it is immoral. She works with Mr. Roberts daily and can speak to his character, diligence and dedication to the children. The Recreation Advisory Surveys were positive. She asks that the board reconsider their decision and reinstate the Director and keep the program intact.

Tiffany Roberts spoke on behalf of her husband. Mrs. Roberts is very proud of her husband and feels the board made a grave error in judgement. The recreation department should be fully funded, that is what the taxpayer’s want. She also stated that a vital recreation department is very important to attract young families to town. She stated that the board has confused their responsibility with power. Over the last 23 years, his evaluations have been excellent, now they are not. Nothing about what they did to Parker is fair. Could it be the added family health care costs that led to this reduction in hours? The board has contributed to a community of very upset votes and a town full of children that deserve better.

Resident, John Swiriduk, suggests the board reconsider their decision. We need folks like Parker to mentor our children, they are leaders that our children can look up to. He thanked the Board for their service and asked that they pray and ponder their decision.

Jason Baker makes 2 observations. It seems there are a few disgruntled employees after listening tonight. Maybe the board needs to evaluate themselves.

Jessica Perkins stated that last years town meeting voted for “no cuts” to the recreation budget. How can 15 hours per week run the programs? Did the board consider the work for the 4th of July, summer program, getting uniforms, parade and just coordinating all events?

Brook Barron stated she went through the recreation programs for 12 years and worked for the department. Mr. Roberts is a positive influence on all the children he coaches, teaches etc. Stripping his family of income and benefits with 2 days notices is terrible. She believes the town is run in a deceptive manner.

Student Brenna Sheehan submitted a petition signed by 5th and 6th graders in support of Mr. Roberts. She is saddened that his hours were taken away and the programs for the kids have been cut.

Steve Gray reiterated another speaker, 15 hours per week can not run these programs. He asked if the board sought legal counsel and did this action violate any labor laws.

Jim Hidden was surprised this action was taken with little to no warning. At town meeting the public strongly said yes to keeping the recreation department intact. He reminded the board that their role is to represent the town. He suggests they rescind their decision and have town meeting take care of it in March. This is a terrible message to send town employees, at a flip of a switch employees are not safe.

Student Shyanne Sheehan is very sad that Parker's job has been taken away. He made her feel welcomed from the day she moved to Tamworth.

▪ NEW BUSINESS:

- Town Office Building
 - Custodial will be increase by \$40.00
- Town Administration
 - The town report line will be reduced to \$1,500. The books will be stapled and not coiled bound.
- Assessing
 - The \$25,000 from CIP was removed. The 20% revaluation costs are included in the assessing line.
- Data Processing
 - Still waiting on costs for licensing.
- The Recreation Department will remain as is, with a full salary of 40 hours per week. Town Administrator to investigate removing land line at the recreation building.
- The board briefly discussed a COLA raise for employees of 1.6%.

Selectman Farnum made a motion to include a 1.6% COLA raise to all full and part time employees. The motion was seconded by Chairman Poirier and passed (3-1 Streeter).

- Art Mason agreed to work with Eversource to have the streetlights changed to LED lights.

▪ SIGNATURE FILE:

- Chairman Poirier made a motion to approve and sign the Selectmen's minutes for December 12, 17, & 19, 2019. The motion was seconded by Selectman Mason and passed (4-0).
- Chairman Poirier made a motion to approve and sign the Selectmen's minutes for January 2, 2020. The motion was seconded by Selectman Mason and passed (3-0-1 Poirier).
- Chairman Poirier made a motion to approve and sign the Selectmen's non-public minutes of December 12, 2019. The motion was seconded by Selectman Farnum and passed (4-0).

- Chairman Poirier made a motion to approve and sign the Selectmen's non-public minutes of January 2, 2020. The motion was seconded by Selectman Mason and passed (3-0-1 Poirier).
- Chairman Poirier made a motion to approve and sign the (3) accounts payable manifest dated January 9, 2020 in the amounts of \$309,230.52 for 2020 expenses, \$16,247.85 for 2019 expenses and \$43.23. The motion was seconded by Selectman Mason and passed (4-0).
- Chairman Poirier made a motion to approve and a sign payroll manifest dated January 16, 2020 in the amount of \$32,522.29 and \$169.56 void and reissue a lost payroll check dated January 9, 2020. The motion was seconded by Selectman Mason and passed (4-0).
- Selectman Farnum made a motion to approve and sign the Signature page of the ambulance contract and the addendum. The motion was seconded by Chairman Poirier and passed (4-0).
- Chairman Poirier made a motion to approve and sign the Timber Tax Levy for map 411-29 in the amount of \$3,664.69. The motion was seconded by Selectman Mason as passed (4-0).
- Chairman Poirier made a motion to approve and sign the NH DRA – Auditor Option and Schedule – RSA 41:31-b. The motion was seconded by Selectman Mason and passed (4-0).
- Chairman Poirier made a motion to approve and sign an Application for Current Use and a Forest Stewardship Plan for map 411-030-000. The motion was seconded by Selectman Mason and passed (4-0).
- Chairman Poirier made a motion to approve and sign (2) Notices of Intent to Cut for map 407-63 and map 414-77. The motion was seconded by Selectman Mason and passed (4-0).
- SELECTMEN'S UPDATE:
 - Selectman Mason reported a Sewer Commission meeting on January 15, 2020 at 6pm to set their budget. After reaching out to NH DRA and NHMA she stated that a Federal EIN# should be obtained so the Sewer Commission will be a separate entity from the town. The Commissioners will pay the bills, stipends, collect fees under that EIN.

Selectman Farnum made a motion to obtain a Federal EIN #. The motion was seconded by Chairman Poirier and passed (4-0).

 - Selectman Farnum attended the ambulance contact meeting on January 6, 2020. He attended a LRPC recycling meeting at the library. The town may need to purchase equipment for the transfer station to make a saleable product.
- OLD BUSINESS:
 - Social Media & Event Policies
 - Job descriptions
 - BOS Rules of Procedure
 - Land Donation
- PUBLIC COMMENT:
 - Reporter Daymond Steer asked what happens to the funds and recreation programs with the recent change in the director's position. Selectman Farnum says the money will stay in the budget for Town meeting. Chairman Poirier stated no programs have been cut and the need for the director to work more hours may change as the season changes.
 - Art Mason asked the board if they had considered putting an article on the warrant to have an elected budget committee. Town Administrator McWhirter will look up the RSA that governs an elected budget committee.
- NON-PUBLIC PER RSA 91-A:3, II (a)

- Motion made by Chairman Poirier at 8:50 pm to enter a non-public session under RSA 91 A: 3 II (a). Motion seconded by Selectman Mason and passed by roll call vote. Poirier Y, Farnum Y, Mason Y & Streeter Y.
- Motion made by Chairman Poirier to reopen the regular session at 9:15 pm. Motion seconded by Selectman Mason and passed unanimously.
- ADJOURNMENT: At 9:15pm, Chairman Poirier made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Selectman Mason and passed.

Submitted respectfully,

Darlene McWhirter
Town Administrator

Approved by the Board of Selectmen

Daniel J. Poirier

Rebecca Mason

Aaron Ricker

Melanie Streeter

William W. Farnum