

Board of Selectmen
Meeting Minutes
January 13, 2021

Present: James C. Bailey III, Chairman; John P. Stohrer, Selectman; David J. Rogers, Selectman; Laura Buono, Town Administrator.

In Attendance: Luke Levesque, Mary Morehouse-Rogers, Leigh Bosse, Joyce Bosse.

Chairman Bailey called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

1. OPEN SESSION

There was no public comment.

2. LUKE LEVESQUE RE: TRANSFER STATION UPDATE & 2021 PROPOSED BUDGET

Luke Levesque, Transfer Station Manager met with the Board to give them somewhat of a 2020 review of the facility as well as answer any questions they may have on the proposed 2021 budget. He started by informing the Selectmen that the facility processed 201 more tons of MSW (trash) in 2020 than in 2019. Selectman Rogers asked if the additional tonnage was contributed to the plastics being added. Mr. Levesque said the plastic was approximately 10 tons of that and there was a brief period that cardboard was added in as well due to COVID related issues however, the majority of the increase was trash. He said they also handled 832 tons of demolition material in 2020 as well. Mr. Levesque said that due to the amount of MSW coming in on some days, they had to close the demo area and use that trailer for the overflow. He said usually a trailer will last for a day and a half but they had one day in particular where they pulled out a full trailer and within 3 hours, the new trailer was also full. The facility processed 100 tons of cardboard and Mr. Levesque said at some point, we should look at replacing the baler with a larger unit. He said the one they have now was old when he came to work here and that was 20 years ago. The Solid Waste Advisory Board (SWAB) is gathering information on new units.

Mr. Levesque then brought up the brush pile and said they should make some decision with regard to whether or not we would like to limit the dumping of brush to residential loads only versus allowing commercial dumping. He said it now costs \$9,500 to have the pile chipped which is considerably higher than the \$6,000 we paid in 2019. Space limitations were discussed as whether to not allow commercial dumpers or implement a fee schedule for them. Ms. Buono said she was speaking to a commercial landscaper who asked about whether or not we would be able to save money if the leaves were separated out. Mr. Levesque said right now the only Biomass Plant which is taking the chips is in Berlin and they are catering to the forest industry now. The Board will discuss this further before the Spring so that if something is implemented they can give the public notice.

3. MODERATOR LEIGH BOSSE RE: TOWN MEETING

Town Moderator Leigh Bosse met with the Selectmen to discuss the format for Town Meeting which is scheduled for Tuesday, March 9th. Mr. Bosse said he would like to still hold the meeting in person and feels it can be done if we utilize both the Middle and High School. The discussion centered around having the daytime voting in one school and holding the evening meeting in the other with an area for

anyone who refuses or cannot wear a mask. It was noted that the School Board will be holding their Deliberative Session at the High School and providing break out rooms. The Selectmen agreed to the plan as presented and Mr. Bosse will run it by the School to make sure the space is available.

4. OTHER BUSINESS

Union Contracts – Ms. Buono reviewed both of the Employee Union Contract and the Police Union Contract with the Selectmen and pointed out the changes that will be brought before the voters in March if the Board approves them tonight. She said the negotiation sessions went fairly smoothly although there was quite a bit of difference that had to be made up on the Employee Union Contract before both sides could agree.

She said the Employee Union Contract has cost of living percentages of 1.75% for the first year and 2.5% for years two and three. Most of the employees in that union are at their top step so they no longer qualify for step increases which are typically 5% and are given every other year. There is also a change to the longevity which adds an additional \$150 to the 10 and 15 year categories and \$250 to the 20-year category. Ms. Buono said the estimated increases which will appear on the Warrant are 2021 - \$13,148.22; 2022 - \$15,530.86; 2023 - \$18,697.38. Chairman Bailey moved to approve the Employee Union Contract as presented. Motion was seconded by Selectman Rogers. A vote was taken. Motion passed unanimously.

The Police Union Contract carries a 2% cost of living for years 1 through 3 and longevity increases of \$250 for years 10 and 20. Ms. Buono said there is also an added component for physical fitness which follows the Cooper Fitness Standards and enables anyone who tests (given by a PSTC certified fitness examiner) 50% or more, extra days off. She said these are very high standards and they are not sure how many will wish to participate or pass testing however, they want to encourage physical fitness. Any days earned must be used in the year they are earned or they are lost. Ms. Buono said the estimated cost increases which will appear on the Warrant are 2021 - \$15,464.39; 2022 - \$15,174.56; 2023 - \$14,770.64. Chairman Bailey moved to approve the Employee Union Contract as presented. Motion was seconded by Selectman Stohrer. A vote was taken. Motion passed unanimously.

Town Report Printing – Ms. Buono brought forward Town Report printing quotes from two printers, Premier and R.C. Brayshaw. Ms. Buono said last year the plan was to go with perfect binding since there are typically about a box of books that ends up being disposed of even though we have adjusted the amount we order down. With the wire binding, the books have to be disassembled in order for them to be recycled. She said the perfect binding is the same as was done when the reports were a smaller size. The pricing came in at \$1,702.10 for Premiere and \$1,405.00 for R.C. Brayshaw which is the printer she recommends going with. The Board agreed with having Brayshaw's handle the report as they have in the past.

Board of Land and Tax Appeal (BTLA) – Ms. Buono reported that last Wednesday she and the Town's Assessor, Mr. Marazoff, attended BTLA Hearings of the four property owners on Pierce Lake who filed abatements for their 2017 property taxes. Due to cancellations and then COVID last year, this was the first opportunity the BTLA had to schedule the hearings. Ms. Buono said Mr. Marazoff did a very good job of representing the Town during the hearings. She said the taxpayers continued to argue the methodology that was used for the values rather than strongly showing that the values were incorrect and she said Mr. Marazoff submitted a request for dismissal based on that. Ms. Buono said the ruling should be received in 30 – 45 days.

Vacation Time Cash Out – Ms. Buono brought up vacation time cash outs (we currently allow one week a year) with regard to a Department Head who is over the limit of time allowed to accrue. She said that due to COVID vacations were cancelled and this employee would like to be able to cash out a second week during the year as is proposed in the employee union contract. The Board said they will make a decision after Town Meeting.

Planning Board – Chairman Baily said the Planning Board is still reviewing the application for a RV Park and the Town of Washington is conducting a traffic study with regard to it. He said the abutters have testified. He also said that the owners of the property located at 27 West Main Street are interested in putting a breakfast and lunch restaurant at that location.

Historic District Commission – Selectman Stohrer said Deanna Neal was sworn in as a member of the Commission and that Jay Emmert is up for reappointment this year so he will be checking with him to see if he wishes to remain on the Commission. He said he will be approaching the Planning Board to ask them if they will be placing a representative on as well.

Kemp Park Committee – Selectman Rogers said there is nothing major to report. They are still in the process of getting quotes for repairs needed on the Hansen House and the Cider House which they anticipate to be in the \$45,000 - \$50,000 range. He said as part of the 250th Celebration they would like to have a barbeque event at the Park in September. They are also still waiting to hear about the Mason's funding for a bandstand to be built at the park. Chairman Bailey asked about fundraising for these projects. Selectman Rogers said they are looking into a couple of avenues right now as part of their research.

5. LONG TERM PROJECTS

Manahan Boat Dock – Chairman Bailey said the permit was approved by DES and we're just waiting for it to be received so that it can be filed with the Registry of Deeds.

Woods Woolen Mills – Ms. Buono said we're still waiting to hear about EPA funding of the cleanup project at the site and will hopefully hear something within the next couple of weeks.

6. MANIFEST MOTION

Chairman Bailey moved to authorize the Selectmen to sign manifests and order the Treasurer to sign Payroll Check numbers 16376 - 16429 a/k/a Vouchers 53, 1 & 2 in the amount of \$280,927.45 (includes 231 direct deposit stubs) and Accounts Payable Check number 024431– 024560 a/k/a Voucher 44, 1, 2, 3 in the amount of \$3,065,518.38. Motion was seconded by Selectman Stohrer. A vote was taken. Motion passed unanimously.

** A/P Checks include payments to HDSD in the amount of \$2,599,821.36

7. CONSENT AGENDA

Chairman Bailey moved to approve the Consent Agenda for January 13, 2021. Motion was seconded by Selectman Rogers. A vote was taken. Motion passed unanimously.

- Veterans' Tax Credits – Map 15 Lot 27; Map 24 Lot 41; Map 17 Lot 229; Map 9 Lot 165-1
- Intents to Cut – Map 6 Lot 3 Dean Hill Road

- Property Tax Interest Abatement – Map 1 Lot 39 (Internal Error) \$82.00

8. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Chairman Bailey moved to approve the Selectmen's Meeting Minutes of December 23, 2020. Motion was seconded by Selectman Stohrer. A vote was taken. Motion passed unanimously.

9. **ADJOURNMENT**

Chairman Bailey moved to adjourn at 7:45 p.m. Motion was seconded by Selectman Rogers. A vote was taken. Motion passed unanimously.

A true record.

Laura Buono
Town Administrator

Approved by:
Hillsborough Board of Selectmen

Date: _____

James C. Bailey III, Selectman

John P. Stohrer, Selectman

David J. Rogers, Selectman