

Minutes of the Selectmen's Meeting May 18, 2021

Members present: Scott Young, Chairman, Brian Monahan, and Lynn Sweet
In attendance: Building Inspector David Copeland, Fire Chief Scott Whitehouse

No appointments were scheduled.

The business portion of the Selectmen's Meeting was called to order at 5:20PM.

Payroll and payment of bills were reviewed and approved. Yield Tax Certifications and Warrants were reviewed and approved. The Selectmen reviewed Fire Chief Scott Whitehouse's quarterly report of the activity of the Fire and Rescue Department. An abatement for credit was reviewed and signed. Minutes from the May 4th Selectmen's Meeting were reviewed and approved.

Old Business

Due to the lack of availability of lifeguards and swim instructor for Bow Lake beach, the Selectmen unanimously decided to have no summer beach program. Neighboring towns are in a similar situation. The Town will provide portable toilets and mow the dam as usual. Signage indicating "NO LIFEGUARD ON DUTY - SWIM AT YOUR OWN RISK". Signage reminding visitors that the beach is a "CARRY IN – CARRY OUT" facility will also be posted.

DuBois and King has assigned a new engineer to work with the Town on the Barn Door Gap bridge project. He has connected with Road Agent Greg Messenger and NHDES.

David Copeland was in attendance to discuss with the Selectmen the issuance of a building permit to a property off Drakes Hill Road. Mr. Copeland read the conditions of the permit, and the Selectmen approved the issuance of the permit; the conditions met with Fire Chief Whitehouse's approval as well.

At 6:00 the meeting in the Selectmen's Office was adjourned to be reconvened in the Conference Room with the Selectmen joined by members of the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Adjustment.

In attendance at the **Tri Board Meeting**: Scott Young (Board of Selectmen Chairman), Brian Monahan and Lynn Sweet, Herman Groth, Jen Czysz, Natalie Moles, Jean Ewen, Charlie Burnham, Phil Auger (acting Planning Board Chairman), Tim Reed, Terry Hyland, Don Clifford, Don Coker, Ashley Rowe (Zoning Board Chairman), Alison Brisson, David Copeland (Building Inspector), Dan Howard (Ass't. Building Inspector), Police Chief Mike Richard, Fire Chief Scott Whitehouse, Road Agent Greg Messenger, Matt Messenger

The meeting was called to order 6:03 by Selectman Chairman Scott Young. Jen Czysz and Natalie Moles from Strafford Regional Planning Commission were introduced to the assembled group. SRPC will be assisting with future Planning and Zoning matters. Other attendees were asked to briefly introduce themselves.

Selectmen Young set forth some goals and guidelines for the evening's meeting, stating that it was the Selectmen's hope that this could be a productive meeting in helping all 3 boards serve each other and the Town more effectively. The roles and duties of all 3 boards were briefly reviewed. Planning Board member Phil Auger representing Planning Board shared that the role of the Planning Board is to react to applications, primarily subdivisions, to review subdivision regulations and zoning regulations, and where necessary to amend or adopt new ones. Zoning Board Chairman Ashley Rowe stated that the role of ZBA is to adjudicate requests for relief from current zoning regulations. The role of the Board of Selectmen is to oversee various departments and day to day operations of the Town.

The first item on the agenda was "communication". Mr. Young asked for ideas that might foster and encourage better communication between boards and with residents. It was generally agreed that communication is an area where boards need and want to improve; quite a bit of time was spent discussing the topic. Some successful instances all 3 boards working together on zoning issues were shared, along with some situations where lack of communication caused problems and even ill feelings. The appropriate role of the use of social media in the 21st Century for boards to announce upcoming meetings, proposed zoning changes, and/or opinions on zoning matters was discussed; no policy decisions were made. It was pointed out that Town Clerk Terri Marsh is able to post announcements for the Town; no comments may be made to those posts. It was generally agreed that there is a need for more routine, frequent and inclusive intra-board/intra-departmental communication.

To that end, quarterly tri-board meetings will be held as a step in achieving the goal of better communication; the next one scheduled is for August 10th at 6:00 in the Town Hall Conference Room. Each board could provide items for the agenda and it may also be an opportunity for training.

The knowledge and expertise of department heads - Fire, Police, Road and Building - was stressed. Encouragement was given to include department heads in all emails, work sessions, and meetings. It was suggested that the boards approach department heads to see if there is anything they would like to work on. It was suggested that department heads might provide written comments prior to a first meeting; even "no comment" would be helpful.

The Selectmen reminded everyone of the need and availability for training and education. Training sessions may be held at the Town Hall with help from NHMA and SRPC.

The future role of Strafford Regional Planning Commission was discussed. Ms. Czysz, Ms. Moles will accept and review applications. They will prepare letters of notification and decisions, attend Planning Board meetings, meet with applicants by appointment and as needed, and make procedural suggestions about motions and decisions. They will work with the ZBA in a similar fashion, on an as needed basis.

A question was raised about meeting minutes. Some details pertaining to minutes have yet to be settled. Both Planning and Zoning Boards will have a notetaker; motions and decisions will be documented. Recording the meetings may be an option, but necessary recording equipment will need to be acquired. It is possible that an outside party can transcribe the recordings. Transcription software was suggested; minutes would need to be condensed from the word for word transcription. Livestream video was also suggested, but again, necessary

equipment will need to be acquired. The Selectmen assured the group that they will make the requested equipment available. It was also suggested that the Town purchase a large flat screen, to be used in lieu of the easel; it would be helpful in making presentations.

Future matters for the Boards to consider were discussed.

- The Selectmen pointed out that in the near future we should be looking at the Town's Master Plan; the Planning Board is already thinking along those lines. This could be discussed at future quarterly meetings.
- Some clarification on the handling of "ruins". The Planning Board is also considering this.
- Mr. Copeland suggested that the fence ordinance be given some more specific language.
- It was recommended that these Boards consider how we address shipping containers, canvas garages, and other "temporary" structures.
- More specific Notices of Decisions and enforcement of ordinances is a matter for consideration.
- Teaching on the definition of Class VI roads and information presented to property owners would be helpful.
- Non-conforming lots would be an excellent multi-board topic to consider.
- Training for all board members was discussed and encouraged

It was suggested that a data base of recent cases before each board (the last 6 months to 1 year) would be helpful in informing future decisions. The data base would briefly outline situations that had come before the boards and decisions made relative to those cases.

With no further business to discuss it was moved, seconded and voted in the affirmative to adjourn the Tri-Board Meeting. The meeting adjourned at 7:08.

The Selectmen's Meeting in their office reconvened at 7:14, with Fire Chief Scott Whitehouse also in attendance.

Scott Whitehouse was in attendance to inform the Selectmen of a recent situation where Lee Raceway needed an ambulance crew, and the Chief took Strafford's second ambulance to the Lee Raceway. This was something of an emergency situation, but he was requesting permission to do this in the future should they need a backup. The Deerfield Fair is another opportunity for Mutual Aid now that Strafford has a second ambulance. The Selectmen suggested he review how the Police Department sets up their mutual aid agreements and move forward in a similar manner.

With no further business to discuss it was moved, seconded and voted in the affirmative to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 7:25.