

## Minutes of the Selectmen's Meeting September 21, 2021

Members present: Scott Young, Chairman, Brian Monahan and Lynn Sweet

In attendance: George Fisher, David Copeland, Fire Chief Scott Whitehouse, Cecil Abels and friend Amanda, and Chris Kofer

Appointments: 6:00 Fire Chief Scott Whitehouse

6:30 Cecil Abels

The business portion of the Selectmen's Meeting was called to order at 5:30. The Selectmen reviewed and approved payroll and payment of bills. Minutes from the August 24th meeting were read and approved. A Yield Tax Warrant was reviewed and signed. Correspondence pertaining to the creation of "fair maps" and "gerrymandered maps". They will investigate the question in more depth before addressing the matter.

### APPOINTMENTS

**6:00** - Fire Chief Scott Whitehouse who was in attendance to discuss 2 matters with Board members.

- Chief Whitehouse is applying for a grant from NH Department of Safety/Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (NH DOD/HSEM). The grant is for the purpose of updating the Town's Emergency Operations Plan. The grant is a 50/50 grant with both the Town's and the grant's responsibility each being \$4000. After a brief discussion Ms. Sweet motioned that the Selectmen accept the terms of the Emergency Management Performance Grant as presented in the amount of \$4000. to update Strafford's Emergency Operations Plan, acknowledging that the total cost of the project will be \$8000., in which the town will be responsible for a 50% match, (\$4000.). Mr. Monahan seconded the motion. A vote was taken:

Scott Young – Aye, Brian Monahan – Aye, Lynn Sweet - Aye

The Board members signed and initialed the grant application paperwork.

- Chief Whitehouse's second item of business was his concern for sale of NH State School at Laconia. The sale of the property would significantly financially impact the Lakes Region Mutual Fire Aid Association, which in the Chief's opinion, was the finest dispatch center in the region. The sale would negatively impact the 35 towns currently served by Lakes Region and ultimately lead to the ruin of Lakes Region Mutual Fire Aid Association. Due to a standing lease agreement, the sale could not take place for 18 months. Currently, the Chief has contacted our State reps and senator who have become involved. Chief Whitehouse has drafted a letter to the Governor and Executive Council; Board members added their signatures in support of the Chief's request. The Selectmen also suggested that a letter signed by all chiefs in the 35 member towns might be helpful.
- In response to a question pertaining to no particular property, Chief Whitehouse explained the process of conducting a controlled burn.

**6:30** - Cecil Abels was in attendance to discuss with Board members resolution to obtaining building permits on his property. The history of the situation was discussed at length; a formal legal agreement had been reached. Mr. Abels stated that he was no longer pursuing a commercial enterprise, and therefore the commercial setbacks of which he was in violation no longer pertained. His structures, though unpermitted, were within the residential setbacks; he was seeking to be compliant by obtaining building permits. In the future, he would be holding gatherings of friends for the purpose of playing music, but it would not (and he believed never was) a commercial operation. Board members told Mr. Abels that they would discuss the matter privately, and perhaps with the Planning Board, before ruling on the matter.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

The Selectmen discussed the procedure for recording and maintaining Planning Board and Zoning Board of Adjustment minutes.

The 2021 Statistical Revaluation will be completed by the end of September. Both formal and informal hearings have been held and adjustments to preliminary valuations have been made accordingly. Taxpayers should receive notifications of the results of the hearings by mail before the end of September. KRT will deliver the final results of the Revaluation to the Town and the State.

The Selectmen's Office continues to research possibilities for the use of the ARPA funding.

The Selectmen will not be moving forward at this particular time with the sale of Town owned properties.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

The Selectmen reviewed a written complaint concerning some current construction on Second Crown Point Road. Building Inspector David Copeland was present to discuss the permitting and inspections of the project. He stated that the structure met setbacks and was well built and that he is looking at this as a permanent structure, not a tree house. It will not be permitted to have plumbing and is not to be used as a dwelling. Mr. Copeland will continue to monitor the progress and use.

The purchase of a mobile electronic sign to notify residents of upcoming Town events and meetings was discussed. The Selectmen believe it could be very helpful in getting information out to residents as it could be placed in different locations around Town. Compliance with the Town's Sign Ordinance was discussed; a variance may need to be obtained if the Board moves forward with the project.

Representatives from Hill Library will be asked to attend an October Selectmen's meeting to discuss plans for the Community Garden and general library operations.

George Fisher was in attendance to discuss the construction on his property on Lakeview Drive. Some concerns about the construction were raised by an abutting property owner. Building Inspector David Copeland was on hand to assist with background information and to share the documentation he had received. The lot is a small non-conforming lot; Mr. Fisher obtained a certified plot plan before the house was demolished; the Building Inspector was in receipt of that at the time the "demo" permit was issued. Mr. Fisher subsequently applied for a permit to construct a new seasonal dwelling using the same footprint; a septic plan for a seasonal dwelling was approved. Excavation began and the foundation has been recently poured; the plot plan was recertified after the walls were poured. The neighbor's concerns seem to be related to the footprint of the new structure, which he maintains is larger than the previous structure. He also mentions a previously unresolved boundary dispute between a former owner and himself, but neither felt that it was relevant since the new structure maintains the same footprint as the previous structure. Another concern was contamination of the neighbor's well by Mr. Fisher's septic system; however the septic system is outside of the neighbor's 75 foot well radius. After some discussion, the Selectmen were unanimous in their decision not to intervene in this situation unless the neighbor brings forth a survey to support his assertions. It is possible that over the years the fact that Lakeview Drive has changed its course may be leading to some confusion.

Being no further business to address it was motioned, seconded and voted in the affirmative to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 7:35PM.