

Minutes of the Selectmen's Meeting April 8, 2019

Members Present: Lynn Sweet, Chairman and Scott Young
In attendance: Rob Tozier, Ken Rogers, Steve and Gloria Reinfurt

The Selectmen's Meeting was called to order at 5:30PM.

The Selectmen reviewed and approved payment of bills and payroll. Board members read and approved minutes from the March 26, 2019 Selectmen's Meeting and 911 Public Hearing. Notices of pay rate were signed.

The status of the new building at the Recycling Center was discussed. The electrical equipment has been transferred to the new building. The Selectmen's Office will notify the company with whom we had originally contracted to do the work on the new building, Leavitt Electrical Contractors, to inform them we no longer need their services and request the return of the Town's deposit on the approved contract. The problem at the Recycling Center with running multiple compactors at the same time continues. It has been suggested that heavier wire and/or a larger transformer might provide some remedy. The Selectmen's Office will ask the electrician, when he coordinates his work with Eversource, to also ask about that. A solution to darkening the area at night was discussed and will be put into place.

KRT representatives, Ken Rodgers and Rob Tozier, discussed the status of their yearly assessing work in Strafford. The field work for new construction and resultant data entry is complete. The 2018 cyclical are in progress, reviewing properties on tax maps 7 through 12; work is expected to be completed in June. Following the 2018 cyclical, properties with recent sales will be visited and then 2019 cyclical. The group discussed the recent equalization ratio which is 80.5% overall, 70.5% for water access properties. Representatives from KRT will review the all the strata in the assessment and make some recommendations for adjusting the tables in one or more strata. They will present several possibilities for the scope of work to be done.

An example of the type of information requesting a simple fire/police/ambulance log which could be made available to residents was noted and briefly discussed. The example will be passed along to Fire Chief Scott Whitehouse and Police Chief Mike Richard.

Several names were discussed for the renaming of "Old Whig Hill Road". No decisions were made.

The Selectmen discussed possible health risks as a result of a burned and "abandoned" property on Deer Lane. They will pursue that avenue, working with Fire Chief/Health Officer Scott Whitehouse.

Steve and Gloria Reinfurt were in attendance to discuss an application currently before the Planning Board which involves a proposed wedding venue on Parker Mountain Road. They presented a written summary of their concerns to all in attendance. They commended the owners' renovation of the property and had originally supported plans for hosting small parties. They outlined some of their concerns which include an inadequate and unsafe parking situation, violations of the noise

ordinance, possible interference with wetlands (also citing an aging dam on the SW corner of the pond) and local private property rights. They had previously discussed the life/safety issues with Fire Chief Scott Whitehouse and felt he had a good grasp of the situation and corrections that need to be implemented. They voiced concern with what they see as lack of transparency on the part of the owner, as this has been going on for some time.

With regard to the noise, the Mr. Young pointed out that the Police Department cannot enforce the noise ordinance unless they receive a complaint.

Of equal concern to them were two larger issues. The first was preserving the rural character of the Town. They feel the Town needs a clear description of “rural atmosphere” and how Strafford incorporates commercial enterprises into that rural atmosphere. Strategic planning is necessary so we do not become a “venue community”. They pointed out that UNH has some well thought out information, giving real instances in structuring a master plan. The Reinfurts expressed concern that once permission is granted for this commercial enterprise, it could morph into an entirely different and larger enterprise, say, for example, if the property is sold. The Board pointed out that any change in use would necessitate another variance and possibly Planning Board review.

The Selectmen made some suggestions and thanked them for their concern; they urged them to contact the office if they have further questions.

The plan will be reviewed again at the Planning Board Meeting on the first Thursday in May. It also awaits review by the Zoning Board of Appeals, approvals from NHDOT and the Strafford Fire Department in compliance with NH RSAs.

There being no further business to bring before the Board, it was moved by Mr. Scott and seconded by Ms. Sweet to adjourn the meeting. By unanimous vote, the meeting adjourned at 7:31PM.