

Select Board Minutes

Date: July 23, 2024

Time: 5:30 PM

Location: Multipurpose Room

Next Meeting: August 13, 2024

Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

Minutes: Richard moved to approve the minutes from the July 9th meeting, Dina seconded the motion and it was voted unanimously.

Present Select Board Members: Richard Doughty, Lisa Miller, Dina Walker

Audience Attendees: David Rackliffe, Dan Demers, Colleen Stewart, Jean Biondo, and Ina Toth

AGENDA ITEMS:

Department Heads:

Public Works -- Dan Demers, Road Commissioner re-reported that they are putting material out on the roads as the weather permits. They are working on the Center Hill and Byron Roads.

On the Temple Road there is a beaver problem at a FEMA site. The beaver have plugged the culvert twice and they have cleaned it out both times. Dan will make contact with a Game Warden to see what can be done to remove the beavers.

The club cadet lawnmower is back in service.

Transfer Station – Richard Doughty said that Judy Marden made contact with Dan to let him know that Archies truck ran over the gate and has offered to repair it. Dan will look at it and follow up with Archies.

Richard also said that Judy reported a colony of rats at the Transfer Station. Dan has been trying to get rid of them with bate boxes but doesn't know how effective they are.

Old Business:

- Follow-up on MMA Risk Management Hazard assessment report.

Richard said that in October when the salt shed is closer to being empty of salt, they would take steps to get an engineer to evaluate the building to see how bad the concrete foundation has been deteriorated and make the necessary repairs.

Richard will make contact with MMA Risk Management to see if they can give us some names of engineers.

Removing brush around the garage on Mill Street – Richard said that it will be done at some point soon.

Replace metal trim cinder blocks at the Town Garage. Dan will take care of getting them repaired and sealed.

Richard explained that the SB need to address bleachers located at the Town garage and other items on the list that coverage is increasing. The coverage is for replacement not liability and the SB need to evaluate those items that have a cost increase and decided whether or not to remove them from replacement coverage. This will be placed on the agenda for August.

- Shoreland Zoning infraction - Status Update

Richard Doughty stated that he and Mike Stephenson (CEO) met with the landowner who the CEO believed violated the shoreland zoning ordinance. From their visit to the landowner's property and re-measurement, the CEO no longer believes that there was an infraction of the shoreland zoning ordinance by the landowner. Richard apologized to the landowner.

- Raymond Frank Donation - State Park Passes (Revisit)

Discussion: Previously voted, the SB, as the Raymond Frank Foundation indicted that they wanted the Town to use the \$5,000 given in lieu of real estate taxes for season passes for Town of Weld Residents (Payment in Lieu of Taxes "PILOT"). Dina contacted MM Legal and they said the SB does not have authority to use the money in this way without the vote at a Town Meeting. There will be a warrant article included at the Annual Town Meeting of 2025 with a policy for the program and work with the library to have passes available there as well. The Frank Foundation is intending to

contribute \$5,000 each year and this next year there may be enough money for all residents that want a pass may have one.

The check has been received by the Town and it will be held in a separate account until voted to accepted it at the 2025 Annual Meeting.

Richard noted that anyone over 65 you can go into the State Park free.

Resolved: Richard Doughty, Select Board member moved to proceed with the development of the policy and prepare an article to accept the Raymond Frank Foundation's PILOT of \$5000 for the 2025 town meeting. **Dina Walker, Select Board member seconded** motion and it was **unanimously passed** by the Select Board.

- Review / approval of employee policy.

The employee policy will be gone over completely at the next meeting.

New Business:

- Center Hill Cemetery - Plot Price

DISCUSSION: Last August the SB discussed the cost of plots in Center Hill Cemetery and Sean Minear, sexton was present and he felt the current price \$200 a plot and \$800 for a 4-plot lot is high for this area. MT View Cemetery plots are lower than CHC and Sean thought that could be the reason that plots were not being purchased at CHC. Richard said that he thought they left that meeting with Sean going over the entire policy and was coming back to a SB meeting with suggestions. That has not happened and recently someone has asked about purchasing a plot and Richard thought there was some reservation with the cost. The suggestion is that they amend the price schedule which now is \$200 per grave for a Weld resident or a Weld taxpayer and \$300 per grave for a non-resident. This schedule was put together in 2017 and Richard is one that signed it. He believed that the idea was that the Cemetery had just been expanded and they would be trying to recover some of the costs that there was an expansion at the Cemetery and with these rates the hope was that people would buy the plots at the present rate. Carol said that she thought there had been 4 or 5 lots purchased at this time. Sean suggested that they decrease the rates and he also indicated that the Mt. View Cemetery Board is contemplating increasing their rates to be in more line with CHC and be consistent across town.

There is a second part in the discussion on Cemeteries in the Policy. There is one section that both Richard and Sean thinks it is a bit confusing. It is under Section 5 - D interments (see below). It is suggesting that lot and grave be edited in the CHC Policy to plot and that would clarify things.

Dina volunteered to obtain information regarding cemetery policies and plot pricing regulations on municipalities for the next meeting. The SB agreed to table discussion of pricing adjustment and relevant issues of cemetery plots for next meeting.

D. Number of Interments in Single Grave: No interment of two or more bodies shall be made in one grave, except in the case of a parent and child, or two infants, buried in one casket simultaneously. Further variation may be in the case of cremations within family lots subject to the placing of markers and upon prior approval of the Town. For clarification: Only one full burial (vault) shall be allowed on a single lot and up to four (4) cremations shall be allowed on a single lot.

Dina thought this was great and they should be picking it back up with the discussion at the last meeting about Sinnette Cemetery Maintenance, as well. The ownership and maintenance of Cemeteries are two separate things. The maintenance of Cemeteries is up to the town and are generally located on town property. Dina spoke with Casey (Mt Blue State Park Supervisor) and it was her understanding the maintenance of Sinnette Cemetery was up to the Town and if that is the case then the Town needs some kind of documentation as to the owner of the property where Sinnette Cemetery is located. It is the understanding that Sinnette Cemetery is located on the property of the State of Maine. Dina felt that the Sinnette Cemetery should be included in the Center Hill Policy.

Dina said the October 2 and 3 is the MMA Annual Convention held in Augusta and one of the topics that they are going to be talking about is on Cemetery Maintenance if people interested'

Dina said she would volunteer to spearhead the new draft of the CHC Policy if the Select Board wished to revise the policy. Richard said that he did not see an urgency in the policy but there is for the rates and purchase of the lots.

Dina volunteered to obtain information regarding cemetery policies and plot pricing regulations on municipalities for the next meeting.

As we have found out. the SB does not always have the authority to make those changes without a legislative vote. Richard does think that the SB does have the authority to make those changes in the price of the plots, but Dina can certainly check on it.

DECISION: The SB agreed to table discussion of pricing adjustment and relevant issues of cemetery plots for next meeting.

- L&M Gravel Contract - Final Review

DISCUSSION: Richard reported that the signed contract terms called for 50% of the cost upon signing the contract and the other 50% when they delivered the material. They were very quick in the delivery of the material and they made contact with us to come by and pick up a check after they made their final delivery. Richard said that we did some scrabbling to see if we had the cash and asked them when they came down that we wanted them to bring an invoice with them because we wanted to get re-imbursed from FEMA and need confirmation of the deliveries. Richard also asked them for a record of the deliveries and tabulation of all of the deliveries that they had made so that we could confirm that we received all of the product. They did bring the trip sheets with them which there were several hundred with a sticky note on them and hash marks that indicated the yards so Richard spent that afternoon tabulating them by putting in the trip sheet number, date of delivery, number of yards that was written on the trip sheet, so we would have a summary of documentation. They did not bring an invoice and said that they would send one but he has not seen one yet. We had 6" minus stone and 1,000 yards and they brought 976 yards which is 1 load short of the crushing stone. The 6" minus gravel, they were pretty much on target which is 1,996 yards and was supposed to be 2,000 yards so that is close enough. The 1.5" minus gravel their total showed that they were 2 loads short but there was 1 load that came Thursday afternoon and they emailed a trip sheet for so we are 1 load short. Richard wanted to talk to Dan and the Board and what he would like to do is send them tally sheet with a nice note and ask them for 1 load of the 6" minus crushed rock and 1 load of the 1.5" minus gravel and if they have documentation that they have delivered those missing loads to send it to us, deliver the 2 loads that we are short or give us a credit for the missing material and a copy of the invoice.

RESOLVED: Dina Walker Select Board Member moved that the Board authorize Richard to contact LM Gravel and Sand INC to complete their

contract as specified. **Lisa Miller seconded the motion and it was passed unanimously.**

- RSU 9 Allocation - Explanation of Cost Increases

DISCUSSION: Richard reported that he has tried to understand the allocation from RSU 9 and it has gone up 50% in the last 5 years and our cost per student is \$20,000. He is not suggesting that we do anything different but he wants to get a handle on why the increase is so much.

Richard had a meeting with the Director of Finance and she did provide him with information. The Town of Weld is classified as a minimum receiver. The State does some calculations and there are towns in the district whose tax valuation is very high in comparison with the number of students, then there is a calculation they go through with a minimal amount that the Town has to provide based on student population whether than based on tax valuation. For most school districts in the State, if a Town represents 10% of the total districts tax valuation, they pay 10% of the cost but if there is one town in a district that has a very high tax valuation in comparison to the number of students, they can calculate the minimum requirement to that Town based on the percentage of the students that come from that Town. The Town of Weld's student population represents about one and a half percent of the total of school population. Our tax value represents about 9% of the total tax valuation of the district, so Weld is classified as one of these minimum receivers, with the allocation based on the % of total student population rather than the % of total tax valuation. Towns eligible to be classified as a minimum receiver, do not have their allocation reduced by a portion of the State contribution to overall education costs.

Dividing the final allocation of each town in the district by the State valuation leads to a mill rate or \$ assessed per \$1,000 valuation. The resulting mill rate for Weld is significantly less than for the other towns in the district.

The bottom line is that Weld pays significantly more per student than any town in the district, but each individual taxpayer in Weld pays less per \$1,000 of valuation than taxpayers in all other town in the district. The increases in the Weld allocation over recent years, results from an increase in the % of the total district student population that is represented by Weld students.

- Schedule for Commitment of 2024 Taxes

Delayed – RSU will send up the figure tomorrow and they will sign the assessments at their School Board Meeting tonight. After going over figures that the finance director had given to Richard, they did not match so he will make contact with her tomorrow to see what the discrepancy is.

- Maine Municipal Bond Bank Bridge Maintenance

DISCUSSION: Bridge maintenance – The Town has executed the contract for the replacement of the Kennedy to include fabricated concrete decks.

Lise Bofinger and Colleen Stewart have been joining weekly webinars on Grants. On January 1st we did not have funds to pay for the bridge so it was thought that perhaps we could apply for a Federal Grant.

Colleen had seen where it stated that to be eligible for a grant the project had to cost 3.25 million, so they thought if they combined all 3 bridges together perhaps that would work, but all 3 bridges combined do not add up to that much, which is good.

Richard Doughty, Lise Bofinger, and Colleen Stewart had a Zoom meeting this afternoon to ask questions about a Federal Grant for the bridges. Our project alone is not eligible for a grant, so the Kennedy Bridge is off the table for that grant. If we could bundle a single project with other Towns and/or the County that came up to 3.25 million then a grant could be approved. Richard thought it had to be done by the same contractor, but Lise did not think it did. If a grant was approved any money already spent would not be re-imbursed but we could use it as the local match of 20% of the cost. The amount due at the time it is finished is about \$238,000 and could be used towards the 20% match but none of the cost will be re-imbursed. We have paid to date \$19,000 that includes the engineering cost and the 5% down payment.

There is \$20,000 that has been dedicated to the Kennedy Bridge left in LRAP that can be used, so there is \$200,000 needed. At the Special Town Meeting the voters approved for the Board to seek a municipal bond or a loan to finish the project. The grant was discussed and the Town approved to apply for a grant and if there was not one available, they could borrow the money through a bond or a municipal loan for the Kennedy Bridge. There are deadlines coming up to apply for a municipal bond but the information was not available. Colleen has also contacted Androscoggin

Bank for a loan of \$210,000 and is waiting to hear back on the cost associated with a bank loan. Richard said that he believed that the interest rate through the Bond Bank will be less than the bank, however the bond council would be between \$2,500 to \$5,000. Richard said in order to get the money through the Bond Bank we would proceed fairly quickly to have the money when the project is finished. If there is a 3% difference in interest with the bank that the Maine Bond Bank would be the best way but we would need to get our attorneys involved. Dina said that our legal counsel is first on the list as bond counsel so she would make contact with him to see what the process is and get the info sent out to everyone. Dina will confirm his bond counsel's rate as well.

Dina said that when we first spoke with Calderwood that one of bridges was recommended to be built to state specifications. If we had built all three bridges at the same time, would they have come up to the 3.25 million?

Richard said the two combined \$890 to \$1,275 million. The West brook bridge cost estimate was just over \$1 million and Calderwood said that if the was done to MDOT specifications the State would pay 50% of that cost.

Lise Bofinger said they did say that the cost of the bridge would go up if a grant was going to be used because of environmental inspections, it has to be American steel and everything has to be at a higher standard.

Richard said the real issue now is where we get our funds and we need to kick into high gear. We are getting quotes through banks that we have done business before for buying equipment.

If we go through the Federal Grant the application is due by October and if the town bundled with other Towns that the applications are due by August. The earliest that the money could be awarded is January and you may not get the money until October. Lise said it sounded like you get the money up front and if you team up with another town there would be another agency that would be on that could be DOT to oversee the grants and Colleen would not have to do all the work and keeping the records.

DECISION: The Selectboard will discuss the various options for municipal loans, the process, and bond counsel rates at the next SB meeting.

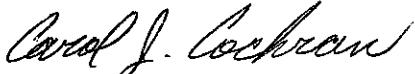
- Contributions for the Weld Fire and Weld Recreation

RESOLVED: Lisa Miller Select Board member moved to accept the contributions for Weld Fire in the amount of \$5,022 27 and for Weld Recreation in the amount of \$518 Weld Recreation on the same dates from 6/27 to 7/1. **Dina Walker seconded the motion was a unanimously vote by the Select Board.**

RESOLVED: Dina Walker Select Board member moved the meeting and Lisa Miller seconded the motion and it was passed unanimously by the Select Board. Members.

Adjourned at 6:45pm

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Carol J. Cochran".

Carol J. Cochran, Town Clerk