

**TOWN OF LITTLETON
MONDAY, MARCH 25, 2024
BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING
5:00 PM
LITTLETON COMMUNITY CENTER, HEALD ROOM
120 MAIN STREET, LITTLETON NH 03561
MINUTES**

Present: Linda MacNeil, Chair; Roger Emerson, Vice Chair; Kerri Harrington, Member; Paul Smith, Interim Town Manager; Chief Chad Miller; Doug Damko, Public Works Director; Vicki Potter, Administrative Secretary; Mary Northrup, Supervisor of Checklist; Bill Latulip, LFD; Sarah Cloutier, Library of Trustees; Sarah MacIver, Library of Trustees; Megan Myers, Library of Trustees; Zack Dickinson, Zack D. Video; Robert MacNeil; Robert Blechl, Caledonian Record; Marie Slack; Lilo Rheinstein; Bruce Hadlock; Ron Bolt; Mark St. Hilaire; Rudy Gelsi; Helen Mrena; Heath Brewer; Paul Lehmann; Suzanne McAvoy; Kaylee & Chris Sweeney

Smith opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance at 5:00 pm. There was no one scheduled for the opening prayer, so Smith went to ask the Board to appoint their chairs.

Emerson made a motion to appoint MacNeil as the Chair. Harrington seconded the motion. All agreed. Motion passed 3-0.

MacNeil made the motion to appoint Emerson as the Vice Chair. Harrington seconded the motion. All agreed. Motion passed 3-0.

Appointments:

Administrative – Swearing in Oath of Office for the newly Elected Candidates – MacNeil swore in the newly elected candidates in the following order: Northrup – Supervisor of Checklist 6-year term; Myers – Library of Trustee 1-year term; Cloutier – Library of Trustee 3-year term and MacIver – Library of Trustee – 3-year term. Potter mentioned to everyone that Harrington was sworn in earlier in the week and that is why she was not sworn in at this meeting. Harrington congratulated everyone afterwards.

Administrative – Appointment of a BOS member as the Ex-Officio for the Planning Board – This appointment was tabled until the April 22nd BOS meeting when they perform all of the appointments or re-appointments for the rest of the boards and committees coming up on expired terms.

Approval of the Meeting Minutes:

Administrative – 3/11/2024 – BOS Meeting – **Emerson made the motion to approve the minutes. Harrington seconded the motion. All agreed. Motion passed 3-0.**

Administrative – 3/13/2024 - BOS Non-Public Work Session – **Emerson made the motion to approve the minutes. MacNeil seconded the motion. All agreed. Motion passed 3-0.**

Town Manager Updates:

Smith informed the Board that the Public Works crew ran into some mechanical troubles during the snow storm which delayed some of the snow removal but they would be doing it this night around 11 pm.

Smith let the BOS know that MRI (who is handling the hiring process for the new TM) has requested for one point of contact person. Smith's recommendation is that person to be Potter. She already has an established rapport with them and feels it would be best to let her continue to do so. No votes or motions were made by the board for this but they unanimously agreed to let Potter continue as point of contact.

Smith gave an update about the Eclipse meetings regarding the safety aspects of it with the influx of traffic that is expected. He stated that they will be holding one more meeting to finish things up. The expected route of near totality is near Moore Dam so they are working closely with Great River Hydro as well.

Also, regarding the eclipse, Smith explained that this particular eclipse experience is not expected to happen again for about 360-years. In light of this and the school closures, he is asking the Board to allow the non-essential employees to have the day off with pay, so they can enjoy the eclipse with their families and kids. **Emerson made the motion to allow all non-essential town employees the day off on April 8th in observance of the solar eclipse, with pay. Harrington seconded the motion. All agreed. Motion passed 3-0.** Blechl then asked about the

scheduled BOS meeting for that night and if they would still be holding it or not. After a brief discussion, the Board decided to move it to Tuesday, April 9th.

Smith let the Board know that he received the final contract draft for the new Support Staff bargaining unit and it required all of their signatures. He asked them to do that before leaving the meeting tonight. Once they have signed, it will be given to the union representatives for their signatures as well. When that is completed, the contract will be given to all parties required to get one.

New Business:

Administrative – Transfer HR/Finance Funds to separate accounts – Smith explained to the Board that per Town Counsel's advice and a conversation with Emerson (then BOS Chair) that HR and Finance should be separated. Due to the confidentiality of personnel information. They are in the process of doing this now but in order to finish it up, they need the Board's permission to separate the funds into two separate accounts in the general fund. **Emerson made the motion to transfer \$41,790.56 from 01-4150 Finance HR/Personnel (to cover wages and benefits to the HR Administrator) and to transfer \$18,897.00 from 01-4155 HR/Personnel to 01-4150 Finance Department (to cover Checkmate Payroll costs.) Total transfer amounts to equal \$60,687.56. Harrington seconded the motion. All agreed. Motion passed 3-0.**

Department of Public Works – Waste Water Treatment Plant – Facilities update & authorize Phase 1 Project – Damko started by reminding the BOS that the Town had been contracted with Hoyle and Tanner to do the repairs at the WWTP since August 2022. They are at the 60% mark in the staged plans. He went over the three phases that need to be done. They are as follows:

Phase 1 – \$300,000 (Sewer Fund reserve) – Site Improvements & Expanded Chemical Treatment. The Sewer Fund had a reserve balance of \$378,000 based on an analysis of 2023 budget reports. This project has three components. First, an expanded chemical treatment system to meet the 2020 NPDES permit effluent limit for copper is a priority need. The permit has October 2024 as the deadline to meet the more stringent copper effluent limit. Second, eliminate the temporary office building (\$800/mo. rental) and perform improvements to the main control building consisting of new HVAC, electrical and communication links to restore functioning of the original office space within the building. Third, replacement of the manual access gate with an automated gate to track visitors and allow audible emergency access vehicle functioning.

Phase 2 – \$1.93M (ARPA-CWSRF loan) – Secondary Clarifiers rehabilitation

This project is the priority rehabilitation need for the plant and HTA is currently working on more accurate costing as they move to the 90% stage of the Facilities Plan. HTA indicated that additional funding may be necessary and they will be advising the town on other funding sources that they are familiar with. This project is anticipated to start in the 2025-2026 timeframe.

Phase 3 – \$500,000 – Septage Receiving Upgrade

This project was a planned 2024 warrant article that was delayed to be a 2025 warrant. The Phase 1 project is going to open up the site location planned to have the septage receiving station. The Phase 2 project may be done concurrently with this Phase 3 project

Emerson made the motion to authorize \$300,000 for the Phase 1 project from available fund balance of the sewer fund. Harrington seconded the motion. All agreed. Motion passed 3-0.

Department of Public Works – Town Fee Schedule – Sewer Users – Industrial Discharge Permits – Revision to Appendix I Violation Procedures & Penalties Schedule – Damko reminded the Board that they approved the revised version of the sewer use ordinance (chapter 13) on January 9, 2023 to be in state compliance. During the process of implementing the program, one thing they found that was overlooked during the development was the aspect of non-responsiveness of a business to submitting as application or the non-responsiveness of signing the IDP. In light of this oversight, Damko is asking the board to approve a revision to the appendix I violation procedures & penalties schedule that adds "failure to complete permit process" to the list of primary areas of violation. The paragraph to added would read "failure to complete permit process (class I and II) within 90 days of initial contact by the Town will result in a written notice per violation procedures. If no response is received within 30 days, then there will be a \$250 penalty fee per day until the permit is signed or submitted" **Emerson made the motion to approve the revised wording to the sewer use ordinance (chapter 13) as written. MacNeil seconded the motion. All agreed. Motion passed 3-0.**

Administrative – General Fund Budget Update – Smith did a quick update reiterating that the general fund budget totals still have not been uploaded into the system yet. That will be done April 1st. For right now, the spending trend is still on track and nothing out of the ordinary has happened. He will start with the regular updates next month.

Board of Selectmen Topics:

Emerson thanked Damko for all of his efforts during this time with the Town of Littleton and wished him luck with this new position with the State of Michigan.

MacNeil reminded the Board that at the last meeting Gendreau stated 2024 is the 20th anniversary of the covered bridge. MacNeil wants to continue discussions about putting together some sort of celebration for it but would like some information pertaining to it, such as the completion date, who designed and built it, etc. It was mentioned that it was designed by a local citizen, Glen Lavoie. Smith asked Damko if he still had the information that he gathered on it and if so, could he get it to the Board.

MacNeil asked if there have been any new information or updates regarding the vehicle obstructions over the sidewalks on Mill Street. Smith said they are still monitoring but depending on the outcome, it may not be an easy fix and it could cost some money to correct it if it comes to that point.

Emerson mentioned that they needed to address the opening prayer portion of the meetings. MacNeil stated that she believes it is the consensus of this Board and the public that they would like to discontinue the prayer, however, she would like to propose to do a moment of silence instead. **Harrington made the motion to discontinue prayer but to hold a moment of silence. Emerson seconded the motion. All agreed. Motion passed 3-0.**

Public Comment: (Those in attendance will have the opportunity for public comment of three (3) minutes or less)

Bolt asked the Board if they had full confidence in the voting machines, especially after a brief malfunction with one of the machines at Town Meeting. He also asked why the “unofficial” and the “official” voting results still matched after that happened. He wanted reassurance that they were accurate. He also questioned if Article #48 and #49 were legally binding or not. The Board let him know that they will get the answers he is asking for and will get back to him. Rheinstein said that if they are not binding then she would like to know why they are not. Gelsi feels this wasn't the first time that the voting machines has failed. He stated he has paperwork from Concord saying they always cause problems. He also feels the selectmen need to keep an open line of communication with the taxpayers regarding voting results.

Gelsi also stated again that he feels MacNeil should not be allowed to sit on both the BOS and LWL's Board. MacNeil stated that Eddy Moore held both positions for years and did a good job, so she asked Gelsi why she cannot. Harrington then read a portion of RSA 669:7 (Incompatibility of Offices) and it does NOT state that MacNeil cannot sit on both boards.

Rheinstein thanked the BOS for discontinuing the prayers at the meeting and she thanked Department of Public Works for keeping the roads passable during the storm, especially after hearing they had mechanical issues.

Hadlock stated that if someone does not like a warrant article, then they need to submit a new one. He also feels that a lot of the articles put on the warrant are not legal. He also thinks that people should go back and look at an Article from 1949 that limits what the Board can do.

Myers asked what the Town is going to do about the no overnight camping ordinance. Smith stated that he spoke with legal counsel and the Town is obligated to enforce it. The ordinance is just a fine at this time. There is a lawsuit currently in the US Supreme Court. Depending on how that turns out, it may deem it unconstitutional.

Lehmann asked that the town and all of its departments be conscience of budget and to keep their spending down. MacNeil and Emerson stated the departments do their best and the budget has been between 4-6% under budget the last couple of years.

Slack asked if any resolutions have been made with the town line dispute between Littleton and Bethlehem yet. Smith stated that he is waiting to hear back from Bethlehem to set up a meeting to discuss the options the surveyor submitted to both of them. They are hoping to have that done soon.

Hadlock stated that the PILOT programs for Great River Hydro and for Littleton Regional Hospital are coming up on expirations soon. He feels that the Town should set up committees to help with the negotiations before any contracts are signed with any of them.

Harrington made the motion to adjourn. Emerson seconded the motion. All agreed. Motion passed 3-0. Meeting closed at 6:16 pm.