

**Minutes of Meeting
CONWAY BOARD OF SELECTMEN
November 7, 2023**

The Selectmen's Meeting convened at 4:00 pm at Town Hall with the following present: Mary Carey Seavey, Carl Thibodeau, John Colbath, Steve Porter, Ryan Shepard, Town Manager John Eastman and Executive Assistant Krista Day.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Ms. Seavey led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Ms. Seavey noted that they would be adding the following:

8a. Notification of Demo Permit Application for 145 Mt. Street.

Mr. Colbath moved, seconded by Mr. Shepard, to approve the agenda as amended. The motion carried unanimously.

DISCUSSION OF ESSENTIAL NON-FOOD PANTRY

Welfare Director BJ Parker and Jen Perkins from Vaughan Community Services appeared before the Board.

They explained that they are looking to start an essential non-food pantry out of the current Vaughan Food Pantry.

They explained that specifically when it comes to the elderly population, there are a lot of items that are needed that many do not want to come forward to ask for.

Items will include things such as Depends, wipes, cleaning products, and hygiene products.

This will also be a way to get information out to that population.

Mr. Colbath noted that as the Chairman of the Board for Vaughan, this idea is supported highly needed.

Ms. Seavey noted that as a director for a non-profit serving the aging population, this is a great idea.

It was noted that this quick discussion was a way to bring awareness of the need for donations to the public.

There will be a list of needed items created soon.

Ms. Perkins noted that they would revisit this in about six months to see how it is going.

Ms. Seavey suggested a simple press release.

Mr. Colbath moved, seconded by Mr. Porter, to support the establishment of an essential non-food pantry in conjunction with Vaughan Community Services. The motion carried unanimously.

FEASIBILITY REPORT FOR POLICE DEPARTMENT

Chief Mattei and Doug Proctor from HL Turner Group appeared before the Board to review the feasibility findings in regards to the existing Police Station.

For their findings, please see the attached report.

The overall recommendation was to renovate the existing Police Department and build an addition which would cost approximately \$7.6 million.

There was mention that to add a lower level to the addition plans would be a little under \$1 million.

Mr. Colbath stated that he is very empathetic but also sympathetic to the tax payers.

Ms. Seavey stated that if you do a walk through at the PD, it does not take long to see that this project is essential to the safety of all.

Chief Mattei noted that as a Conway taxpayer the number is high, however, the cheapest time to do it is now; prices are not going anywhere but up.

He reviewed that there was work that needed to be done now but they had put it off to see what the results of the study were, so if they do not go forward with the renovation project, those things will need to be addressed.

It was stated that bond numbers had not been obtained yet as they were waiting for a tax rate.

Unfortunately, Chief has been unable to find any grants to help with this.

Mr. Colbath asked if alternative locations had been looked into.

It was stated that the bones of the existing Police Department are good so it would be more expensive to move anywhere else and start completely over.

Mr. Shepard asked how the work would expand the lifespan of the building.

Feasibility Committee member Steven Steiner noted that he has been in this Town for 13 years and the condition of the current Police Department is terrible,

Feasibility Committee member Mark Hounsell stated that he felt the study went as well as it could.

He added that it is costing a lot to keep the building up and there is also a cost to the workers.

He noted that the hurdle would be the bond costs.

Jim LeFebvre noted that he felt they should do the basement level as well so that they do not need to expand again in the future.

Chief Mattei noted that he had approached to the State which controls the courthouse next door to see if they wanted to come on board with the project and he was not met with a lot of reception.

Mr. Thibodeau agreed that they should consider the basement as well and suggested getting bond figures for both situations.

Mr. Eastman explained that whatever the Board and the public decide to do, they need to have a back up plan to be able to pay for the upgrades the building needs immediately if the bond does not pass.

Detective Sergeant Richard Theberge explained that there are new requirements coming in regards to IT in the next two years.

Mr. Porter moved, seconded by Mr. Shepard, to endorse the concept of the new/renovation of the Conway Police Station. The motion carried (4-0-1) with Mr. Thibodeau abstaining.

2024 BUDGET REVIEW

1. Overview of Proposed Budget

Mr. Eastman noted that their current budget figures are somewhat fluid as it will depend on what insurance plans the staff takes.

He complimented Ms. Golding for all of her work on health insurance options to help save the Town.

Currently the proposed budget is looking at an increase of 3.69%.

2. Executive

Mr. Eastman noted that the Executive Budget is down .34% mainly due to the removal of the 1/3 Administrative Assistant which will now be directly applied to an "Engineering" budget line.

3. Legal

Mr. Eastman explained that this year they would be budgeting for legal in each department.

For Executive, they would be budgeting \$28,000.

The reason for splitting the legal budget up for each department is so that department scan look to recoup some legal fees from applicants when applicable.

4. Police

Chief Mattei and Lt. Kelley-Scott appeared before the Board.

Chief noted that they were looking at a proposed increase of .8%.

5. Welfare

Welfare Director BJ Parker appeared before the Board to review her proposed budget.

She explained that currently with the lack of housing, it affects her ability to help clients.

She noted that there are three things that affect her budget include saving, spending and recovery of funds.

She stated that Conway currently has the highest poverty rate in NH and the lowest wages compared to other NH countries.

VOTE ON RENTAL LICENSING FOR 3 OR MORE UNITS

Ms. Seavey reiterated that this was not a public hearing but was just a time for Mr. DegliAngeli to present the information in written form as he had been asked to.

He noted that they now included information about the appeals process.

Mr. DegliAngeli wanted to also not that in the New Year they would be coming to the Board to consider adopting a program to issue business licenses for commercial properties as they are having issues with new businesses not getting certificates of occupancy.

Mr. Thibodeau wanted to allow those who were in attendance to comment on the rental proposal.

Ms. Seavey stated that she would not be opening the meeting to public comment at this time.

Mr. Colbath moved, seconded by Mr. Porter, to approve the Town's plan with rental licensing for 3 or more units as presented. The motion carried (3-0-2) with Mr. Thibodeau and Mr. Porter abstaining.

DISCUSSION AND VOTE ON STATE OWNED LAND 215-108

Mr. DegliAngeli explained that the State is proposing to sell 4 lots by Memorial Hospital; Map/Lots 215-108, 215-58, 215-57 and 215-56.

He explained that they had met with hospital staff and NHHFA and the consensus is that the best option would be for the Town to decline to purchase the land and allow NHHFA and Memorial Hospital to work a plan with the State for purchase of these lots.

Mr. Colbath moved, seconded by Mr. Porter, to purchase Map/Lots 215-108, 215-58, 215-57 and 215-56 from the State of New Hampshire. The motion failed unanimously.

Mr. Thibodeau moved, seconded by Mr. Porter, to include in the letter to NH DOT that if NHHFA and the State are unable to find the development of Map/Lots 215-108, 215-58, 215-57 and 215-56 feasible, the Town of Conway would like to reserve the option to potentially purchase these lots at that time. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. DegliAngeli thanked the New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority and Stephen LaBonte from NH DOT.

NOTIFICATION OF DEMO PERMIT APPLICATION FOR 145 Mt. Street.

The Board was notified of an application for a demo permit submitted for 145 Mt. Street.

REVIEW OF RECEIPTS

The receipts were available for review.

SIGNING OF DOCUMENTS

- a. CD57-P Real Estate Transfer Tax Declaration of Consideration and PA-34 Inventory of Property Transfer for Royal View Subdivision Roads

Mr. Colbath moved, seconded by Mr. Shepard, to sign the document listed above. The motion carried unanimously.

CONSIDERATION OF BILLS

- a. AP Manifest dated 11/9/2023

Mr. Colbath moved, seconded by Mr. Shepard, to sign the AP Manifest dated 11/9/2023. The motion carried unanimously.

RATIFICATION OF DOCUMENTS SIGNED OUT OF SESSION

- a. AP Manifest dated 11/2/2023
- b. Payroll dated 11/2/2023

Mr. Colbath moved, seconded by Mr. Shepard, to ratify the documents signed out of session listed above in a. and b. The motion carried unanimously.

REVIEW AND CONSIDERATION OF SPECIAL EVENT APPLICATION(S)

(none)

CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES

- a. Regular and Non-Public Minutes from 10/24/23

Mr. Colbath moved, seconded by Mr. Thibodeau, to adopt the regular and non-public minutes from 10/24/23 as written. The motion carried (4-0-1) with Mr. Shepard abstaining.

TOWN MANAGER REPORT

Mr. Colbath moved, seconded by Mr. Porter, to sign the amendment to the assessing contract to include up to \$24,000 from the overlay for the tax abatement process. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Eastman explained that he would like the Board's permission to create a committee to look into burial options for Conway.

Mr. Porter moved, seconded by Mr. Colbath, to direct Mr. Eastman to pursue the matter of forming a committee to look into cemetery options with Mr. Shepard serving as the Selectmen's Representative and Mr. Colbath as the alternate. The motion carried unanimously.

BOARD REPORTS AND COMMENTS

Mr. Shepard explained that there would be a public meeting next Tuesday regarding the Cranmore Shores Association and it would be open to the public.

Mr. Colbath noted that the ZBA would be meeting the next week and that the Economic Council met this morning.

He added that they would be giving the lifetime achievement award to Ed Bergeron.

There are also two lots going up for sale by the Economic Council.

Ms. Seavey read a Valley Vision report by Bill Edmunds.

PUBLIC COMMENTS AND MEDIA QUESTIONS

Daymond Steer from the Conway Daily Sun asked if the changes to the rental proposal for 3+ units was substantial enough to need to have another public hearing.

It was reviewed that the requirement for two public hearings was a policy by the Selectmen and they had already held two.

Mr. Colbath stated that any substantial changes will come back to the Board in the future.

ADJOURN

At 6:37 pm, Mr. Colbath moved, seconded by Mr. Thibodeau, to adjourn. The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Krista Day
Executive Secretary