

Minutes
CONWAY SELECTBOARD
Town Hall, 5 Academy Hill Road
March 15, 2017, 5:30 p.m.

Select Board members present: John O'Rourke, Chair; Robert Baker, Clerk; Bob Armstrong

Others present: Tom Hutcheson, Town Administrator; Lisa Turowsky, Assistant to the TA; Joe Zinan, FCAT; Sheila Harrington, Finance Committee; Tom Donovan, Finance Committee; Alan Singer, Finance Committee; Roy Cohen, Finance Committee; Jim Bosman, Finance Committee; Dr. Lynn Carey, Superintendent of Schools; Patti Cavanaugh, Conway Grammar/Frontier Regional Director of Business Services; Kristen Gordon, Principal, Conway Grammar School; Darius Modestow, Frontier Regional Principal; Malcolm Corse; Janice Warner, Conway Grammar School Committee; Michele Novak, Resident; Rev. Candi Ashenden, UCC; Bill Leno, Resident; Robert Anderson, Resident; Lois Vight, Resident

John O'Rourke called the meeting to order at 5:30PM.

Old Business

Sign contract with Town Administrator

John O'Rourke checked to see if there was any further discussion. Seeing none:

- **On a motion from John O'Rourke to sign the contract with Tom Hutcheson, Town Administrator, beginning July 1, 2017, seconded by Robert Baker, the vote was unanimous in favor.**

Annual Town Meeting warrant – Tabled until arrival of members of Finance Committee

New Business

Tornado damage to United Congregational Church and Town's community preservation restriction

Rev. Candi Ashenden and congregants of UCC spoke about their efforts to have tornado damage to the church repaired, in light of the Community Preservation restriction. Since Town Counsel is on vacation it was not possible to get his opinion about effect of the restriction on efforts to either repair or replace the building. Church leaders have met with Community Preservation Committee and the Historical Commission but felt the issue of the restriction had to come back to the Select Board. The church has not gotten any concrete figures on cost of repair but it seems as if the bell tower has pulled away and the feeling is that the building may have to come down. There is an issue with checks from the insurance company being issued to the church and the Town. When Town Counsel returns the Town Administrator will know how to handle payment of any bills that the church has received. John O'Rourke said the Select Board will do whatever they can within the limits of the law/guidelines of the restriction to help the church recover. If the building has to come down, the church wants to replace it with something smaller. John O'Rourke advised the church to continue working with the insurance company. Tom Hutcheson asked what the insurance check was for; Rev. Ashenden will send him a copy of the letter from the insurance company.

Discussion: letter of support for Eversource – Tabled.

Eversource has requested a letter from the Town of Conway in support of a 28% rate hike. John O'Rourke stated that the Select Board can't agree to this rate hike and suggested tabling the request.

- **On a motion from John O'Rourke to table Eversource's request for letter of support, seconded by Robert Baker, the vote was unanimous in favor.**

6:00 P.M. JOINT MEETING WITH FINANCE COMMITTEE and CONWAY GRAMMAR SCHOOL COMMITTEE

School budgets

Dr. Lynn Carey began the school presentation by announcing that pre-K is expanding to five days a week, with after-school care available. There will be a full-day option for families.

Patti Cavanaugh and Lynn Carey spoke about Conway Grammar School's request for a 5% increase for FY 2018. Other than a slight decrease in amount requested for central office, all other costs including personnel and IT are expected to increase. Grant funding for two positions in the SPED area was lost, but the SPED population is growing. District is trying to build SPED capacity to keep students in-district, as this costs less than out-of-district placements. Conway Grammar School Principal Kristen Gordon and Superintendent Carey stressed that students who are found eligible receive SPED services from age 2.9 to age 22. There was a discussion about the number of instructional aides at Conway Grammar School, which is 15½ for FY 2018. In terms of staffing, there are no teachers/aides who are working at the Grammar School solely because of school choice. The school takes in more money than it spends for students who choice in. Personnel costs are dictated by state/federal requirements related to curriculum and services, and by the collective bargaining agreements that are in place. Bob Armstrong said he didn't know how he can support this budget at Town Meeting; Robert Baker and John O'Rourke agreed. John O'Rourke said on the Town's side the budget for all other departments would have to be decreased by 8% to level-fund if the school budget, which represents 60% of the Town's total budget, increases by 5%.

For Frontier Regional, a 3% increase has been requested. As with the Grammar School, students who choice in exceed those who choice out. Personnel costs increased because of step increases and previously negotiated increase of 2 ½%.

Tom Hutcheson requested that Patti Cavanaugh provide Assessment Information for Frontier Regional, as it wasn't included in the version of the proposed budget that was distributed at the meeting. Patti Cavanaugh distributed the Assessment Information before the meeting concluded. In light of the concerns of the Select Board and the Finance Committee, the school district representatives agreed to look for ways to reduce the proposed budget increases.

Town Administrator Update

Tom Hutcheson reported that he has been in touch with DCR about trees on Fournier property that were knocked down in the tornado. A claim has been filed with MIIA as this is Town land. There was damage to the walking trail near the school. Tom Hutcheson is working on getting the claim processed.

Documents and Other Exhibits Used at the Meeting:

Employment Agreement Between the Town of Conway and Thomas W. Hutcheson

Historic Preservation Restriction and Right of First Refusal dated 10/17/2012

Conway Grammar School FY 2018 School Committee Proposed Budget

Frontier Regional School District FY 2018 School Committee Proposed Budget – Version #3

Article 2 and other ATM Warrant Changes (rev. March 15, 2017)

Next Meeting

- *Scheduled for Tuesday, March 21 at 6:00 p.m. at the Town Office, 32 Main Street*

On a motion from John O'Rourke, seconded by Robert Baker, the meeting was adjourned at 8:20PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Baker, Clerk