

Minutes
CONWAY SELECT BOARD
Town Office, 32 Main Street
April 24, 2017, 6:00 p.m.

Select Board members present: John Rourke, Robert Baker, Bob Armstrong

Others present: Tom Hutcheson, Town Administrator; Lisa Turowsky, Assistant to the TA; Ken Ouimette, Police Chief

John O'Rourke called the meeting to order at 6PM after establishing that only FCAT was recording the meeting.

Minutes

- **On a motion from John O'Rourke to accept the minutes of April 18, 2017, seconded by Robert Baker, the vote was unanimous in favor.**

Meetings Attended by Selectboard Members

Bob Armstrong went to Comcast clean-up at Camp Apex to talk to line workers about timeline for Conway to be fully wired. John O'Rourke attended FRCOG council meeting at which he heard presentations about emergency communication system; he attended meeting with Congressman McGovern concerning Community Development Block Grants.

Citizens' Concerns

None.

Old Business

Letter of support for Greenfield grant for study regarding regional dispatch

Letter from Greenfield Police Chief in favor of regionalization. Chief Ouimette gave his opinion about consolidation. No obligation if Town signs on to support the study. It would be beneficial to police departments to have dispatch out of one central spot. But if towns were to be assessed for the service the police departments would not be in favor. John O'Rourke stated that doing a study would be acceptable but the dispatch service should remain under the state's auspices. State would not want to relinquish control over physical building, said Chief Ouimette. Robert Baker said fire chiefs were concerned that adding Greenfield-Montague to the present dispatch center would require hiring more help and the space the dispatch center currently occupies would not be sufficient. Robert Baker would support the survey with the stipulation that the dispatch remain at Shelburne Falls State Police barracks, as opposed to moving it to Greenfield. Bob Armstrong stated that the oversight committee was adamantly opposed to the regionalization of dispatch system and asked whether doing the survey benefits Conway. Chief Ouimette said he didn't know that there would be any benefit, but he didn't see the state saying they'd put it into a building they don't own. Tom Hutcheson distributed a letter that Police Chief in Greenfield sent to Town Administrators. Robert Baker asked if we've seen the grant proposal that is referenced in this letter; Tom Hutcheson said we haven't seen the grant proposal. Bob Armstrong said he didn't see any reason not to do the study. Tom Hutcheson stated that the oversight committee's assumption is that the study would support moving the dispatch out of present location. The intent of the study is to clarify what the options are. Tom Hutcheson also noted that when he talked to Sheriff Donelan, the suggestion came from the state to do the study. Addition of Montague and Greenfield would crush the dispatch center if they were added without increasing staffing.

- **On a motion from John O'Rourke to sign letter in support of the feasibility study, seconded by Robert Armstrong, the vote was unanimous in favor.**

Long-range financial plan: discussion of draft document

Tom Hutcheson directed attention to pp.77-88 of the document. Financial Policies section has a lot of things in it, many are very general but are meant to instruct people reading the document without binding the Town too much. Budget guidelines are common-sense. The goal of the reserve policy is for stabilization funds and free cash to make up no more than 10% of the budget. Conway's budget is just above 10% now. John O'Rourke said the plan is goal-oriented, not restrictive. Specific proposals in pp. 77-88 go through OPEB and internal finance policies. Tom Hutcheson pointed out that the Town already has these policies. Tom Hutcheson is sending a reminder to Finance and Capital Improvements Planning Committees to comment on these pages. Long-range capital improvements plan should identify acquisitions and

projects. Tom Hutcheson would expect the committee to formally accept this plan, then Tom Hutcheson will report to DOR and Town would get credit under Community Compact. Tom Hutcheson reminded members of the Selectboard to get comments to Joe Markarian as quickly as possible so there's time to get any changes to committees who are involved.

New Business – Sign letter recognizing Alexandra Williams's five years of service as Ambulance Department employee. Tabled.

Robert Baker said that Alexandra Williams doesn't live in Conway now and has not been working as an EMT

Items Not Anticipated 48 Hours in Advance of the Meeting *None.*

Town Administrator Update

Committees

The Parks, Recreation, and Trails Committee notes that the new ball field still has some new drainage issues, especially around the first base line and the backstop. I'll be meeting with John Heffernan and Ron Sweet on Thursday to see how much work needs to be done—will probably include removal of a couple of inches of soil along the first base side and near backstop, and then re-seeding.

The Housing Committee is looking at all Town land and seeing what issues there are in terms of potential senior housing. This includes looking for more information on all the reasons the Highway garage location was set for where it is instead of in the other lot behind the grammar school.

For the 250th Committee, Marjorie Held is proposing planting a disease-resistant chestnut tree on the Pumpkin Hollow common; she notes there is historical precedent. I spoke with her about a number of details, and she has it planned out very well, including speaking with residents about it. She will write up some historical background regarding an earlier chestnut tree there as well.

Departments

I filed a reserve fund transfer request for \$12,474 with the Finance Committee for overtime and other expenses related to the tornado. We probably don't need to charge anything else to the deficit account. There will be some tree clearing in the months to come in back of the grammar school, but we have no idea of the cost yet (probably \$5,000 for the front part; the back part depends on the restrictions we get from Natural Heritage, plus we'll need a forester consultant).

Also, relating to tornado damage, I am in correspondence with the Natural Heritage Program about the tree removal behind the school. There is some concern about the front part of the property as well as definite concern about rare plants in the back section that was damaged, but I'm seeing what we need to do to move forward.

Town Meeting

I'm sure you have all noticed that the Town Report and warrant were mailed last week. I'd like to commend Lisa Turowsky for her work on the Town Report, which is really her production. Due to the very tight timeline, we will again ask committees to submit reports for the current fiscal year in July, and offer a chance to update them.

I believe that I have clarified with Jason Silverman that the concern about the right-to-farm article was that it was formatted for the warrant. Previous versions, internal to the Agriculture Commission, had different edit marks. The version in the warrant is the final, clean version from the Commission and would be all new language for the by-laws, so it is all underlined, as per the convention in the warrant (and state requirements).

Concerns of the Selectmen

Malcom Corse of 250th Committee asked Robert Baker to ask the Select Board what their preference is for the parade (marching vs. riding in car.) Robert Baker might have access to an antique car for the parade, and will try to get it lined up.

Mail

FRCOG Annual Report was sent to Select Board.

Silverthorne Theater Co. and 250th Anniversary Committee announced a theater performance on June 9th. Dress rehearsal will be on Thursday, June 8th; Town officials have been invited.
Eversource meeting on Wednesday, April 26, at Greenfield High School to discuss proposed rate increase
Clean Sweep bulky waste recycling day at three nearby locations (Buckland, Northfield, Whately)
Frontier Regional High School invited Selectboard to graduation on Friday, June 2nd at 7:00 p.m.
Greater Shelburne Falls Business Assoc. Spring Breakfast May 5th 7:30-9:00 a.m. at Berkshire East
Franklin County Regional Dog Shelter 5th Anniversary Celebration in Turners Falls, April 30th 11 a.m. to 2:00p.m.
FRCOG Annual Report on services that Conway has used this year
Selectman's Assoc. May 24th regional meeting at MMA offices in Boston

Announcements

Bob Armstrong got final maps from Comcast today. Conway has gotten tremendous coverage.

Documents and Other Exhibits Used at the Meeting

Letter of Support for Feasibility Study for Regional Emergency Communications Center (Greenfield Police Dept.)

Long-range financial plan (FRCOG/Joe Markarian)

Comcast's Conway Map Plant Area

Greater Shelburne Falls Area Business Assoc. Spring Breakfast flyer

Frontier Regional School invitation to graduation

5th Anniversary Celebration and Open House, Franklin County Regional Dog Shelter flyer

Bulky Waste Recycling Day May 6th 9:00 a.m. to noon flyer

Next meeting scheduled for Tuesday, April 25, 2017 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 6:52 PM.**

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Baker, Clerk