

Minutes
CONWAY SELECT BOARD
Town Office, 32 Main Street
May 15, 2017, 6:00 p.m.

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

Others present: Tom Hutcheson, Town Administrator; Lisa Turowsky, Assistant to the TA; Jan Warner, Treasurer; Beth Girshman, Resident/Appointee; Greg Rose, Resident; Joe Zinan, FCAT; Andy Castillo, Greenfield Recorder

John O'Rourke called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM

Minutes

- **On a motion from John O'Rourke to accept the minutes of May 4, 2017, seconded by Robert Baker, the vote was unanimous in favor.**
- **On a motion from John O'Rourke to accept the minutes of May 8, 2017, seconded by Robert Baker, the vote was unanimous in favor.**

Warrants

- **On a motion from John O'Rourke to approve the vendor warrant of \$165,090.56, the payroll warrant of \$99,431.95, and the payroll deduction warrant \$26,008.34, seconded by Robert Baker, the vote was unanimous in favor.**

Meetings Attended by Selectboard Members

John O'Rourke and Bob Armstrong attended a Board meeting of the Frontier Regional Community Television. John O'Rourke attended a meeting of the FRCOG Executive Committee.

Citizens' Concerns

None.

Old Business

Proposal to plant trees on Pumpkin Hollow common

No follow-up needed; Tom Hutcheson mentioned that Ruah Donnelly, Heidi Flanders, and Marjorie Held have been discussing the plans via e-mail.

Appoint Beth Girshman to the Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership Advisory Committee

Beth Girshman attended a meeting regarding the Partnership last week at the FRCOG and noticed there are a lot of moving parts to it. Beth Girshman stated she's happy to be the representative from Conway.

- **On a motion from John O'Rourke to appoint Beth Girshman to the Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership Advisory Committee for a term ending 6/30/17, seconded by Robert Baker, the vote was unanimous in favor.**

New Business –

Organization of the Select Board: Elect Chair and Clerk

- **On a motion from Bob Armstrong to nominate John O'Rourke as Chair of the Select Board, seconded by John O'Rourke; Bob Armstrong and John O'Rourke voted in favor; Robert Baker voted against.**
- **On a motion from Robert Baker to nominate Bob Armstrong as Clerk of the Select Board, seconded by John O'Rourke, the vote was unanimous in favor,**

Regional representatives, including FRCOG positions

- **On a motion from John O'Rourke to appoint to the Frontier Community Access Television, for a term ending 6/30/18, Bob Armstrong as representative from the Broadband Committee, seconded by Robert Baker, John O'Rourke and Bob Armstrong voted in favor, Bob Armstrong abstained.**
- **On a motion from Robert Baker to appoint to the Frontier Community Access Television, for a term ending 6/30/18, John O'Rourke as representative from the Select Board, seconded by Bob Armstrong, Robert Baker and Bob Armstrong voted in favor, John O'Rourke abstained.**

- **On a motion from Robert Baker to appoint John O'Rourke to the Franklin Regional Council of Governments, for a term ending 6/30/18, seconded by Bob Armstrong, Robert Baker and Bob Armstrong voted in favor, John O'Rourke abstained.**
- **On a motion from Robert Baker to appoint John O'Rourke to the Upper Pioneer Valley Veterans Services District, for a term ending 6/30/18, seconded by Bob Armstrong, Robert Baker and Bob Armstrong voted in favor, John O'Rourke abstained.**
- **On a motion from John O'Rourke to appoint Bob Armstrong to the Greater Franklin Regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Advisory Committee, for a term ending 6/30/18, seconded by Robert Baker, John O'Rourke and Robert Baker voted in favor, Bob Armstrong abstained.**
- **On a motion from John O'Rourke to appoint Robert Baker to the Franklin Regional Transit Authority, for a term ending 6/30/18, seconded by Bob Armstrong, John O'Rourke and Bob Armstrong voted in favor, Robert Baker abstained.**
- **On a motion from John O'Rourke to appoint Bob Armstrong to Massachusetts Citizens Against the Pipeline, for a term ending 6/30/18, seconded by Robert Baker, John O'Rourke and Robert Baker voted in favor, Bob Armstrong abstained.**

Meeting schedule

- **On a motion from Robert Baker to change the schedule of the Select Board meeting from every week to bi-weekly, beginning May 30th, 2017, seconded by John O'Rourke, the vote was unanimous in favor.**

Renew membership in the Franklin County Sheriff's Office Regional Dog Kennel

The Animal Control Officer has recommended that the membership be renewed.

- **On a motion from Robert Baker to renew membership in Franklin County Sheriff's Office Regional Dog Kennel, seconded by Bob Armstrong, the vote was unanimous in favor.**

Letter of support for Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness grant application

Tom Hutcheson reminded the Select Board that this is a planning grant.

- **On a motion from John O'Rourke to approve signing the letter providing for partnering between Conway and Ashfield in MVP grant application, seconded by Bob Armstrong, the vote was unanimous in favor.**

[Cutting plan for Fournier Property and adjoining lot clean-up] TABLED

Tom Hutcheson will meet with Tree Warden and DCR representative later this week. The map has to be redrawn before the plan can be submitted.

Approve MOU with Mass. Office of Disabilities for Community Development Block Grant

Tom Hutcheson is working on a grant proposal; this MOU needs to be signed because Conway doesn't have anything in place currently.

- **On a motion from John O'Rourke to approve Memorandum of Understanding with Mass. Office of Disabilities for Community Development Block Grant, seconded by Robert Baker, the vote was unanimous in favor.**

Greg Rose here to discuss town's right of first refusal

Greg Rose was here to speak to the Select Board about the Town's right of first refusal with regard to potential sale of the Rose property; he wanted to see where the Town's interest might lie. John O'Rourke said that since the Town owns adjoining properties the Town might be interested how any sale of this property goes forward. Greg Rose asked whether he should go ahead and put it on the market? John O'Rourke said that's one way to do it; Town can talk to Town Counsel. Greg Rose doesn't want to put money into the property only to have the Town take the property and tear the building down. John O'Rourke said the sentiment of the board is they'd like to wait and see what happens. It would have to go to Town Meeting vote if the Town were going to move forward. Greg Rose noted that the assessed value was about \$220,000, and that he would be looking for something between that assessed value and \$300,00 which is what the property was valued at when ownership was last transferred. Robert Baker asked if Greg Rose would be interested in staying on the property for about a year after the Town took it over, assuming the Town did so. Greg Rose said yes. Greg Rose said that the sheep barn, at 3600 square feet, is a "heck of a building"; there is also a storage building on the property; the length of house/barn is 98'; he thinks the property might serve as a site for the highway garage. There's a new leach field, power to the barn and

house, and a driveway. Greg Rose presented a diagram showing how he envisions the replacement of the house with a new building and extension of the existing road in a loop around the building that would hook up with salt shed road. Greg Rose said he would be putting it on the market next spring.

Discussion: adoption of state law allowing changes to health care plan

Jan Warner came to discuss health care plan with the Select Board. HCGIT has stated that they can't continue to make up for the losses being incurred from claims by taking funds from reserves. Some other member communities believe it would be better to change co-pay amounts than to change deductibles; this doesn't cost the Town anything. Jan Warner said that before any changes to health insurance benefits can be propose or implemented, state law requires that the Select Board send a notice to the HCGIT stating its intent to adopt the state law and implement the process. Tom Hutcheson and Jan Warner would appreciate The Select Board setting a date for the meeting so the notice can be sent. Jan Warner noted that the initial letters must be sent by certified mail. Jan Warner recommended that the Select Board sign the letter of intent at its next meeting so that the process can be implemented this summer. Tom Hutcheson asked if there is a specific plan that HCGIT will propose; Jan Warner said there isn't. It was clarified that at the first meeting, the Select Board would only be voting to accept the authority to make a change. The Hampshire County Group Insurance Trust runs independently of the COG and has the best insurance plan in the state, said John O'Rourke, who proposed the Select Board vote at its next meeting. Robert Baker wanted Town Counsel to look at the law governing changes to health care plans. John O'Rourke noted that the law was set. The Select Board will review the law and regulation between now and its next meeting on Tuesday, May 30th.

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

Town Administrator Update

Committees

I have been working with Julie Petty to streamline Parks, Recreation, and Trails operations. She is suggesting having the Committee invite sports coordinators who are not necessarily part of the Committee, keeping committee membership as oversight and allowing sports coordinators to work without the restrictions of committee membership (counted for quorum, ethics test, overseeing programs, etc.). I'm checking with STAM on how other towns do this but see no problem in using this template for now.

I'm working with Tom McCarthy on the grant for self-evaluation and a transition plan for ADA compliance, to complement the MOU with the State—they'll want it as well, so we might as well get a jump on it, especially with the possibility of a planning grant. Tom knows of people who can do the evaluation and transition plan. It's a tight timeline—applications should be in by June 5, and the work completed by June 30.

I am planning to attend the Mass DOT capital plan meeting at the FRCOG offices next week and comment, if possible, on the need in rural Massachusetts for additional resources, as we have less money in absolute terms, while still being likely to have a greater number of, say, bridges, per capita than eastern towns and cities. So every new bridge is a need on par with a new Highway garage, in terms of borrowing, and we can afford only one such item every few years. Your input on additional points and arguments would be most welcome.

Departments

Treasurer: Our 900 line item (employee benefits) has just gone into the red, due to health insurance and Medicare costs. I've notified Jim Bosman that we'll need a Finance Committee meeting around the end of June to transfer between \$4-5,000 from the reserve fund (for this item—other budget lines look good at this point). We could also transfer money between accounts, but the reserve fund has plenty of money and just needs Finance Committee approval, rather than both Finance Committee and Select Board sign-off, and the fund is already identified, which makes it simpler.

Other

The state has lifted the drought warnings for the entire state. There is officially no more drought: "...the Secretary of EOEEA has determined that water level indices are within normal ranges across the Commonwealth and that drought conditions no longer exist. The Secretary of EOEEA made this determination on the basis of recommendations to him from the Drought Management Task Force that is co-chaired by EOEEA and MEMA. Nonetheless, public officials continue to urge the public to monitor indoor and outdoor water usage and adopt and practice water conservation measures."

Concerns of the Selectmen

Robert Baker brought up the issue of work that's being done on bridge on North Poland Road. Tom Hutcheson said the Highway Superintendent is exploring whether it could be repaired for less than it would cost to replace.

Mail

Assessors released money from overlay surplus. Tom Hutcheson mentioned receipt of a thank-you note from the Dzogchen Community from Community Preservation for roof repair at the Old Grammar School building.

Announcements

None.

Documents and Other Exhibits Used at the Meeting

Franklin County Sheriff's Office Regional Dog Control & Adoption Center Memorandum of Agreement, invoice, and letter re: renewal of membership

Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership April 2017 Update from FRCOG

Sample Request from HCGIT for Towns to Allow Changes to Health Care Plans

Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs Grant Announcement re: MVP FY17

Letter of Support for MVP

MOU with Mass. Office of Disabilities re: CDBG

Owner-prepared diagram of possible uses for the property at 40 Fournier Road

Next meeting scheduled for Tuesday, May 30, 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 6:55PM.**
- **On a motion to enter into Executive Session under Reason #6, to consider the value of real property if the chair declares that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the Town, John O'Rourke voted in favor, Robert Baker voted in favor, and Bob Armstrong voted in favor.**

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Baker, Clerk