

CONWAY SELECT BOARD  
Town Office, 32 Main Street  
January 23, 7:00 p.m.

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

Others present: Tom Hutcheson, Town Administrator; Lisa Turowsky, Assistant to the TA; Bruce Hunter, Franklin County Regional Housing & Redevelopment Authority; Dave Chichester, EMD; George Murphy of Conway; Mark Gollehon

John O'Rourke called the meeting to order at 7PM.

*Minutes*

Robert Baker asked for clarification on the request for a special article to "coat the parking lot behind the Town office." **The sentence should read, "This is a request for a special article to install hard pack in the parking lot behind the Town Office."**

- **On a motion from Robert Baker to approve the minutes of January 17<sup>th</sup> as amended, seconded by Bob Armstrong, the vote was unanimous in favor.**

*Warrants*

- **On a motion from John O'Rourke to sign the vendor warrant for \$128,480.79, the payroll warrant for \$103,360.06, and the payroll deduction warrant for \$26,856.98, seconded by Robert Baker, the vote was unanimous in favor.**

*Meetings Attended by Select Board Members*

FCAT Annual Meeting attended by Bob Armstrong; Conway is missing a representative on the FCAT Board.

MMA Meeting attended by Bob Armstrong and John O'Rourke, who was elected as the representative of the Select Boards of MMA's District 1, the four western counties of MA,

*New Business*

7:05 *Public Hearing on Community Development Block Grant – housing rehabilitation; related matters*

- **On a motion from John O'Rourke to open the public hearing, seconded by Robert Baker, the vote was unanimous in favor.**

Bruce Hunter from Franklin County Regional Housing & Redevelopment Authority (FCRHRA) discussed this year's application for a FY2017 Community Development Block Grant by the Towns of Leverett, Conway, Deerfield, and Sunderland, which is a competitive application. These four towns were grouped together by FCRHRA to make the application more competitive. A public hearing to present activity that will be included in the application will be held on February 7<sup>th</sup> @6:30PM at the Leverett Town Hall (snow date February 21 @7PM). The deadline for applications is March 10, 2017 for grants that would be implemented in August 2017. Money is available for lead inspection and abatement in low/moderate income-owner dwelling units, as well as to improve energy efficiency and bring homes up to code. If a family's income is 60% below median income they can apply through Community Action for loans, etc. while FCRHRA addresses efficiency and code issues. The program is a 0% deferred payment loan program for families who fall within income limits. 50% of the loan becomes due upon sale or transfer of the property and 1/15<sup>th</sup> of the remaining 50% is forgiven each full year after the date of closing until the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the loan. FCRHRA will meet with applicants in their communities if they can't make it to the FCRHRA office. There are no age requirements as long as household size and income limits are met. The total for Conway that will be applied for is \$240,000 for six units (\$40,000 per household.)

- **On a motion from John O'Rourke to put Conway on the application, seconded by Robert Baker, the vote was unanimous in favor.**
- **On a motion from John O'Rourke to close the public hearing, seconded by Robert Baker, the vote was unanimous in favor.**

*Appoint George Murphy as Assistant Emergency Management Director.* Dave Chichester recommended to the Select Board that they approve George Murphy as Assistant EMD, with the understanding that George Murphy take over when Dave Chichester retires at the end of the fiscal year.

- **On a motion from John O'Rourke that George Murphy be appointed as Assistant EMD for term ending 6/30/17, seconded by Robert Baker, the vote was unanimous in favor.**

*Appoint to the 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee: Michelle Harris, TJ Conroy, Marge Held, and Brice Hereford*

- **On a motion from John O'Rourke that Michelle Harris, TJ Conroy, Marge Held, and Brice Hereford be appointed to the 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee for a term ending 6/30/17, seconded by Robert Baker, the vote was unanimous in favor.**

### *Old Business*

#### *FY 2018 Budget*

Tom Hutcheson brought up desirability of doing some renovations of the Town Office building. There had been money set aside for bathroom renovations, window shades for front office, replacing some of the carpeting, and replacing the kitchenette, but the money is no longer available. Funds would have to be approved via a special article at Town Meeting. David Chichester suggested that an automatic light be installed for the front of the Town Office building.

### *Town Administrator Update*

#### **Committees and Boards**

In Select Board news, Bob Armstrong forwarded an e-mail questionnaire regarding the municipal use of federal funds, which had originated in Congressman McGovern's office. Money from the state's Transportation Improvement Program (which is prioritized regionally) and Chapter 70 funds for schools include Federal funding passed through the State, and any Community Development Block Grant or FEMA hazard mitigation money the Town has gotten or will get, would be Federal.

At last Thursday evening's joint meeting of the Planning Board and the Housing Committee there was considerable controversy regarding the Housing Committee's proposal to explore the Sheehan property on Maple Street for twelve units of senior housing. The Select Board has been copied on two letters. The Housing Committee is meeting next on Tuesday, Jan 24th to officially approve the last change from the sellers (a request to restore the land after the perc tests, avoid the garden, and state that all the Town's contingencies are at no cost to the seller). They expect to be ready for the Select Board to sign this amended addendum on January 30<sup>th</sup>.

#### **Departments**

The Franklin Regional Retirement Board, at its regular meeting on Wednesday, February 22, 2017 at 8:00 am, in the meeting room in Suite 311 at 278 Main Street, Greenfield, will deliberate voting a 3% cost-of-living allowance (C.O.L.A.), to eligible retirees of this system. In the past, the board has voted the C.O.L.A., but this year, because of limits set by law, the board must do so at a public meeting, and must notify the towns 30 days in advance of the meeting. The Town Treasurer will attend the meeting.

Tom Hutcheson spoke with the interim Town Administrator in Deerfield, Wendy Foxmyn, at the MMA conference, who urged the Town of Conway to make a formal grant agreement with FCAT to clarify how funding and contributions happen. Doug Finn had been working on this from FCAT's point of view, and was based on Comcast money flowing through the Town first, and paying for FCAT's invoices. (This was partly because the Town can use the funds for its website as well.) Nonetheless, with thousands of dollars flowing, it could be a good idea to have a formal agreement. The last time Tom Hutcheson brought this up, Select Board members wanted to check in with the FCAT Board's perspective. Tom Hutcheson will work with the Chair to see whether and when this matter should be on the Select Board's agenda.

#### **Other**

On Monday, January 30<sup>th</sup> Senator Adam Hinds (D) will be available to meet constituents between 3:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m. in Williamsburg, in the Town Hall Auditorium, located at 141 Main Street, Haydenville to answer questions, take constituent casework inquiries, solicit public comment, and learn about attendees' policy priorities and concerns. District staff member Jon Gould, splitting his time between Pittsfield and Williamsburg, will be available to meet with

constituents on Wednesday, February 8<sup>th</sup> from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Conway Town Office Building, 32 Main Street, Conway.

*Citizens' Concerns*

The road north of Conway leading to Buckland is in very bad repair. Bob Armstrong talked to Andrea Llamas, who said they're in the process of re-doing many roads. Engineering has been done.

David Chichester related concerns about last week's Planning Board meeting. Planning Board would like to post agenda on the Town website to improve communication with citizens. Letters from citizens related to the work of the Housing Committee to secure land for senior housing will be discussed at next week's meeting with the Select Board and the Housing Committee.

*Concerns of the Selectmen*

None.

*Mail*

Letters from residents opposed to the senior housing project being based on Maple Street, were acknowledged.

*Announcements*

None.

*Documents and Other Exhibits Used at the Meeting*

*Next Meeting*

Scheduled for Monday, January 30, 2017 at 6:00 p.m. at Town Hall General Purpose Room, 5 Academy Hill Road

**On a motion from John O'Rourke, seconded by Robert Baker, the meeting was adjourned at 7:50PM.**

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Baker, Clerk