Selectmen’s Meeting Minutes

August 3rd, 2021

Roster: Selectmen: Raymond Poulin, Tina Poulin, Wayne Rundlett

Town Manager: Stacie Rundlett, Brian Rundlett, Kip Poulin, Garrett Oswald, Gary Agren, Chris Williams

1. Raymond called the meeting to order at 6:29 pm

2. The Board reviewed the minutes from the previous meeting, Raymond asked for a correction regarding his response to a 5-member board to reflect what he said, being that he had no preference and that we would have a hard time filling those positions. Stacie noted the correction and would change the minutes to reflect that. Wayne motioned to approve the minutes as written with the correction Raymond discussed, Raymond 2nd and all were in favor.

3. Old Business- Stacie clarified with the Board that there have been discussions on different ways to utilize the ARPA funds. She reviewed that at the last meeting it was stated that the only way to utilize the funds had been for just additional essential worker pay. She reminded the Board that even before the last meeting they were talking about a few things other than additional pay, such as recouping money for the extra cleaning costs. Stacie also clarified that at the last meeting Raymond stated that former Selectperson Andrea Reichert had given Stacie the choice to stay open or close during the State of Emergency, she did not recall it to be that way. After not finding anything like that in the minutes from last year, Stacie reached out to Andrea and Andrea stated that they (the Board) had asked Stacie to come up with a plan that she was comfortable with. Which is what Stacie did. Stacie reminded the Board that some town offices did close, but New Portland did not and she wanted to make sure that was clarified. Stacie also updated the Board that the electrical work had been completed on the overhead door for the Sand Salt Shed. Raymond stated that he reached out to Jonathan Jordan about the man door for the Sand Salt Shed and it was due to be in on Wednesday. Raymond stated that if it did in fact come in, he would install the door on Friday on his day off. There was a brief discussion on the project and finally finishing it.

Raymond also shared his thoughts on utilizing the ARPA funds. He stated that a few people and he thought that they could use some of those funds to pave the parking lot which would be considered infrastructure and to help elevate the cost to the tax payers. He also thought that some of the funds could be used to install an additional dry hydrant for the Fire Department. Stacie stated that she was pleased that the Board was working hard to come up with other ideas and hopefully once the town receives the funds there will be more clarifications on the approved projects. Tina shared that she had some discussions with someone and they thought that as long as it wasn’t something that wasn’t already allocated in the budget and it was to benefit for the infrastructure that it would be used for that. Stacie stressed she was hopeful for more clarification and didn’t want the town to spend funds somewhere that they would find out later was not approved by the Federal Government. Tina inquired if there was a list started yet with all of the suggestions. Raymond and Stacie stated that not at this time. Stacie also stated that she requested from the State a number of items that were available for free. Kip helped her determine what items for sanitation and protection and she was now just waiting to hear back about those items. Stacie also updated the Board about the rapid renewal program for residents to process re-registrations online. The office staff was just waiting for training to take place and then the link would be posted on the town’s website so that the public could access this program right from there. Garrett spoke to the Board stating that it was encouraging to hear the discussions on different ways to spend the ARPA funding. He also spoke to the Board about how he felt maybe the funds could also be used help residents who might be in a situation where they may be evicted from their home. The discussion continued on if this became an option the Board would need to come up with a protocol and procedure on how to process requests for funding, due to possible eviction. Stacie stressed that all of 2020 there was only 3 requests for general assistance and none as of this year. Other than more residents utilizing the People Who Care Food Cupboard she was not aware of any situations of someone losing their housing. Raymond thought that the town was on the right path.

4. Items by the Public

 a. Chris Williams addressed the Board regarding his notice of violation for Junkyard. He updated the work that he had done and wanted to know if the Board felt his work was enough. He also stated that over a year ago he was at a meeting and brought other properties to the Boards attention and he felt that the conditions of those properties had not been addressed. There was a discussion regarding how he felt he wasn’t properly notified, he showed the Board information regarding his mailing address, and didn’t understand why the certified mailing had not been sent to his correct mailing address. Raymond noted that Chris was not the only one that had received a notification. And because they understood he felt he wasn’t properly notified they gave him an extension. Chris stated that he was going to still continue working on cleaning up the property, and wanted to know if the Board was okay with that. Raymond stated that it looked good and that he noticed most of the stuff was gone. Raymond also inquired about the other property that received a notice at 48 River Rd and that they would need to give a more specifics on exactly what needed to be done. The Board members would look into that and let Stacie know what needs to be done to meet their satisfaction. It was noted that another property that received a notice on Rte. 27 appeared to have cleaned up the property. Tian asked what the repercussions were if the demands were not met. Stacie stated that after a notice was sent with a date for specifics to be done, and if they were not met by that date a daily fine would be imposed on the landowner. There were no other items by the Public.

5. Department Heads

a. Gary discussed with the Board of Selectmen work that has been done and projects that will be completed this season. He had 1 complaint about the Wire Bridge Road being wider, Gary informed the individual that the work being done was within the town’s right of way. Gary updated the Board on culverts that were purchased from Frank Martin Son, Inc. out of Madison. Gary discussed with the Board that Fine Line Paving will be coming to complete work that needed to be done on the Freeman Ridge Rd. Gary also stressed to the Board that they all should be working on a plan for upkeep for the paved roads. Stacie asked Gary if at budget time we could get a ballpark figure to work with for proposed paving necessary. Keeping in mind that this would just be a ballpark figure because prices change over a period of time. And this plan would just be for roads that are already paved.

b. Kip briefed the Board that year to date the Fire Department had 40 calls. He discussed with the Board that Tanker 1 pump had been overhauled and seemed to be working properly. They are still waiting on parts for the Forestry truck for repairs.

6. Items by the Town Manager

a. The Board reviewed and signed payroll, A/P warrants

7. Items by the Board of Selectmen

 a. Raymond shared that Keith Mudgett had submitted a formal letter of resignation as the Animal Control Officer. There was a discussion regarding advertising this position.

 b. Raymond opened a quote for paving part of the grounds behind the Fire Station. There was no decision made on the matter.

c. The Board reviewed and signed the 2021 Tax Commitment paperwork

Stacie updated the Board that Audra the assessor was out this week for training and that there wasn’t much coming in regarding the taxes or complaints. The mil rate did decrease from 23 mil in 2020 to 21.3 mil for 2021. Stacie also noted that Audra had done a lot of work and that the town was at 100% for valuation and that the full amount of the exemptions would be applied to those residents who claimed a Homestead Exemption. Tina inquired what kind of work Audra did to get to that, Stacie stated that would be a question for the assessor.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:15pm

*These minutes were approved by the Board at the August 16th meeting. smr*