Town of Stoddard

**Selectmen’s Meeting**

January 8, 2024

Town Hall – 7:00 PM

**DRAFT MINUTES**

Attendees include: Chris Madden – Chair, Robert Fee – Selectmen, Terri LaRoche – Selectmen, Michelle Pong – Town Administrator, Vickie Williams – Secretary and Harry Power – Compliance Officer

Guests include: Richard Nicoletti, Angel Nicoletti, Noreen & Ray Durand, Joe Traniello, Kathy Ellis, Stevenson, Carol Clarke, Randy Emerson, Anne Emerson, Geri Bailey, Mark Baily, Ruth Ward, Bob Maden, Patty Maden, David Ferner, Betty Ferner, Bob Englund, Rita Englund, Patrica E Putnam, Nick Nicoletti, Roy Healy, Joyce Healy, Margo Santoro, Paula Flemming, Don Flemming, Bob Winterbottom, Ken Henninger, Jill Fish, Don Carlisle, Rex Rodanas, Jim Medlock, Mike Blandschun and Brenne Kiecvel.

**Meeting called to order 7:00 PM**

Pledge of Allegiance

250TH PROCLAMATION – Dave Furnier

Celebration to kick off the 250th Anniversary of the Town of Stoddard during the year. There will be various events, hikes and concerts in all 3 center of Town. John Taggart one of the 1st settlers made the proclamation from petition of the residents of Monadnock # 7 to encourage others to become settlers and name it Stoddard on April 14, 1773.

Proclamation read out by Chris Madden, Chair of the Selectboard.

\*10 Minute recess for refreshments from the 250th committee.

**Meeting recalled to order @ 7:30 PM.**

PUBLIC FORUM – STODDARD POLICING OPTIONS

All Options and Costs:

State Police - $0 – only emergency coverage

Cheshire County - Part Time - $64,000.00

 Full Time - $127,000.00

Stoddard (Alone) – Part Time - $71,000.00

 Full Time - $176,190.00

Shared with the Town of Nelson - $167,046.00 and Salary $85,000.00

The Town of Nelson has offered to join the Town of Stoddard in shared costs of a full – time police officer for both Towns.

Stoddard would pay 60% of the cost – we have more area and population than Nelson.

Both Towns need a police officer.

Nelson is looking at a year trial.

Nelson can have its own officer but believes the best way is to share the costs with Stoddard.

Nelson would save the Town from having to find an officer. Nelson already has an officer that is willing to go full-time and cover both Towns and is a local officer.

If we do enter into a contract with Nelson, the town would make sure there was a caveat that an agreement would be worked out within six months. Contract would cover patrol of both towns for 30 – 40 hours a week.

After Midnight coverage would be the State Police as it is now.

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC:

Can Stoddard go it alone in 2024 and work on a merger with Nelson during the year, and have the Sheriff cover for that year?

Believe we should have our own town officer.

Can Stoddard sponsor an officer through the Academy? We could, but does not mean the officer would stay in Stoddard if offered better pay elsewhere.

Want a police presence that is familiar to the community.

**Chris Madden called for a yes and no vote from the public present at the meeting to join with the Town of Nelson. The vote was yes.**

**Chris Motioned to take the vote to Town Meeting in May with the Selectboard Recommendation that Stoddard joins with Nelson to form a Police Force. Terri Seconded. Motion Carried.**

**\*\* This still has to be taken to Town Vote in May to be voted at Town Meeting\*\***

Compliance Officer – Harry Power

No Building Permits tonight

113-67 – Shedd Hill Road – Junk yard condition – visited 12/30/2023, 40 – 45 % of the work cleaned up. Visited 1/6/2024, 60 % of the work cleaned up. There is a scheduled Court Date for February 2, 2024.

424-8 – Aten Road – Treehouse – Sent certified letter to owners. They have not received the letter.

Jalbert – sent in $50.00, will send in another $50.00 for payment of violation.

TO BE SIGNED/APPROVED

1. A/R and/or P/R Manifest
2. Minutes
3. Timber Tax Warrant
4. Notice of Intent to Cut
5. Application for use of Town Hall

**Chris Motioned to Accept the Minutes of December 27, 2023. Terri Seconded. Motion Carried.**

**Chris Motioned to Sign Jennifer Merrill certification for Fire Dept. Terri Seconded. Motion Carried.**

NEW BUSINESS

Stoddard Food Shelf Warrant Article – Can the petition be waived for a warrant article on this issue? Will set the Warrant Article for $5,200.00.

**Bob Motioned to waive the need for a petition to be signed. Chris Seconded. Motion Carried.**

Police Chief Retirement – David Vaillencourt retiring.

**Chris Motioned to Accept with Regrets David Vaillencourt’s resignation as Police Chief of Stoddard. Bob Seconded. Motion Carried.**

Animal Control Officer & Deputy Resignation –

**Bob Motioned to Accept the resignation of Margo Santoro – Animal Officer and David Santoro – Deputy. Chris Seconded. Motion Carried.**

Parking Issues – All Employees should limit parking to the residents on the side of the Town Hall Building with the Handicapped parking.

**Terri Motioned All Employees should park in the back parking lot of the Town Hall and Gould House. Bob Seconded. Motion Carried.**

Town Clerk – Firewall needs to be updated to work with the State Computer System at a cost of $2,466.00.

**Chris Motioned to Accept the bid of $2,466.00 for the Firewall to work with the State Computer System for the Town Clerks Office. Bob Seconded. Motion Carried.**

BUDGETS:

Police – Fixed Costs for the Police Building, Equipment, and Maintenance

Animal Control Officer – Stoddard Only (All towns have their own officer) $7,300.00

ZBA - $11,825.00 – increased based on the 16 appeals they heard this year

Lake Host - $19,800.00 – went up for water testing

Cemetery - $17,590.00 - $10,000.00 for mowing/cleaning of cemeteries. Mowing company would be responsible for any damage to the stones during the course of their work. Increase internment fees? Raise the price of the plots?

Treasurer - $7,020.00 – Looks at expenses and signs checks. Person inputting the information should not be signing the checks. Treasurer should make sure the month balances. A Deputy Treasurer is included in the payroll line item.

Health Officer - $2,000.00 – Health Officer does not want a salary. Should they get a stipend? The Board has no problem paying a stipend. They have to have a skill set to accomplish this job.

$2,600.00 line item for stipend for volunteer services to Town

$3,700.00 for volunteer appreciation fund line item added

Solid Waste Disposal – Contract for $271,900.00

MISC CORRESPONDENCE

Received notification for hearing on LBF/Walker/Pollock hearing

**Chris Motioned to Adjourn the Public Meeting @ 10:02 PM. Bob Seconded. Motion Carried.**

Submitted

Vickie Williams

Secretary

Chris Madden \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Robert Fee \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Terri LaRoche \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_