

Town of Stoddard
Selectmen's Meeting
Monday, April 11, 2022
Town Hall – 7 PM

MINUTES

Pledge of Allegiance

Attendees include – Robert Fee – Chair, Christopher Madden – Selectmen, Stephen McGerty – Selectmen, Michelle Pong – Town Administrator, Vickie Williams – Secretary and Harry Power – Compliance Officer

Guests include – Joe Traniello, Noreen & Ray Durand, Terri LaRoche, Bob Maden, Steve Rockwell, Randy Weaver, Jason Kovarik and Douglas Summerton.

Appointments:

Harry Power – Compliance Officer

415 – 17 & 18 Rebecca Treat – inherited from father. She called Harry the property has 4 bedrooms the town has it on the property record as 2 would like town record to indicate there are 4 bedrooms. The Assessor can change it to 4. Harry will send a letter on the State requirements for septic. Harry will send letter to NHDES, septic needs to be upgraded. Will bring to 3 bedrooms if that is the load on the tank to fulfill the State requirements.

111-13 Kenneth Terrazzino Pd \$1,000.00 holding off on building permit for garage and deck til later in the year

117-25 Brendon Crosby & Aislinn Parkes Pd \$300.00 adding on to home not a bedroom. Will have dumpster on site.

Signed & Approved

422-4.1 Michael & Kristen Champney Pd \$500.00 Tearing down existing home, putting in double wide modular home. Dumpster required on site. Must be licensed now to pour concrete slab new State requirement.

Signed & Approved

422-12 Gordon Garnett Pd \$200.00 Cold storage building no heat or water.

Signed & Approved

Stephen – Harry question for you 2 weeks ago we signed a building permit for a new roof, Why?

Harry – The roof cost \$42,000.00 thought the Assessor should know about it, it increases the value of the house.

Stephen – But it is a repair – not necessary for a permit they are following the existing blueprint. Bob and Chris both agreed that this was the case.

Bob Motioned to return the building permit fee. Stephen Seconded. Motion Carried.

To Be Signed/Approved

1. A/R and/or P/R Manifest
2. Minutes of 3/28/2022
3. Non-Public Tax Exemptions

All Signed & Approved

Public Comment (Agenda Items Only)

NONE

Old Business:

Audit – in progress, almost complete for 2021

North Shore Road Repairs Plans – Add 3inch stone to bad spots, cover with 1.5 inch stone this year. Dave believes this will work for this year as temporary repair. Fix culverts next year and add funding to budget for more gravel. Added \$15,000.00 dollars to Highway budget for next year just for N Shore Rd. Also need to look at long term solution for next year budget meeting. Talk to an engineer.

Bob Maden – One of the real issues is a couple places have no real bottom to the road.

Michelle – The engineer will look at road to determine the long term repair needed.

Terri LaRoche – So \$15,000.00 dollars was added to the amount that was at the budget hearing?

Bob – Yes, that is correct.

New Business:

Contract for Lawn Care Service – 1 bid was sent in, after writing to all Lawn Services in the area from Keene to Hillsboro. Pathways Landscaping – Michael Shawver. The cost is already covered in the existing budget figures, no change necessary. \$5,883.00 to cover 2 spring/fall cleanups, biweekly mowing, and 2 mowings of the Ballfield at the School and Town Transfer Station.

Bob Motioned to Accept the bid. Chris Seconded. Motion Carried. Bob signed the Contract for the bid.

Discussion of Unassigned Funds –

Michelle – The 6.48% of the unassigned funds is not a real number the. If you take all the town is owed and subtract all the town budgets this is what is left over, what the Town brings in and what the Town pays out. The unassigned amount is what is not used. This includes different

revenues. Taxes not yet collected, what is owed to us from other governments not received. The unassigned balance is not spent.

Terri LaRoche – Do we have an official policy on unassigned funds?

Michelle – No, it is a good idea to put one in to place.

Terri LaRoche – Not that we have to do it the other ways Towns do it, but they are not keeping the same percentage that the DRA recommends, in my opinion there is latitude there on the percentage. Part of the confusion with everybody & myself, the Auditors calculate it on the Town portion. The DRA seems to be basing it on the total budget including the School. School has its own contingency plan. I really think there should be a policy in place for this.

Michelle – Will be put on the Agenda in the future to work on Unassigned Fund Policy.

Budget/Warrant Articles

1. To see if the Town will vote the sum of \$500.00 for the purpose of funding CVTC Services for Transportation.

Bob Motioned to recommend the Article. Stephen Seconded. Motion Carried.

2. Approve General Operating Budget from Budget Hearing \$619,716.00. Taking \$7,500 from hiring of Bookkeeper. Adding \$2,808.00 for Assessor Training. Removing \$200.00 from Vital Statics. Adding \$15,000.00 to the Highway budget for North Shore Road.

Chris Motioned to recommend the Article. Bob Seconded. Motion Carried.

Public Comment (Non-Agenda Items Only)

Douglas Summerton – There is a house close to the store, a lot of Mass plates. The kids are registered in school. Been here a couple years why hasn't the police dept. requested they have their vehicles registered here?

Michelle – This has been checked into in the past 6 months.

Douglas Summerton – When I moved into town with 3 vehicles. I registered 2 here. Agricultural truck still registered in Conn. Got a rash from the Police Chief to have it registered even though he did not confront me himself. If the kids are registered in School can we not find that out?

Michelle – We are not allowed to ask that question.

Steve Rockwell – If is my understanding that if you still own property in Mass and have property in NH. The law in NH is very specific if you still own property in Mass you are allowed to have your vehicles registered there even if living in NH.

This has been a question for over a year.

Joe Traniello – Isn't the landlord paying taxes on the property? So the taxes are being paid for the kids to go to school here.

Randy Weaver –

Has 2 purchase orders for the Fire Dept.

1. Purchase of uniforms – goes \$341.00 dollars over line item, but not over the total budget for the Fire Dept.
2. Purchase for host testing – 3 year term.

Signed & Approved

Randy gave out blueprints of Rescue Truck

Given new Warden Appointment Form

Signed & Approved

Randy will send in official notification of leaving Fire Dept.

Jason Kovarik – In regards to the unassigned funds. When the School gives back money where does the money go back to the DRA?

Michelle – It is not paid out, we just do not have to pay out the unassigned amount for the School.

Jason Kovarik – Where does that show up in the budget? Things should be presented differently. A lot of I don't know. Does not register as reassuring that answers are not readily available.

Michelle – As far as the line item and where things are places that is the responsibility of the Treasurer. The School calculates their rate, we are given a form from the School already filled out.

Jason Kovarik – Seems your not being transparent, should be a better way to explain things.

Bob – I asked this be handed out What the Treasurers Responsibilities are. We don't know of things about the bottom line, regardless of what people think the Treasurer is responsible for giving us those figures. Since October of 2021, this board has asked for a monthly balance sheet from the Treasurer. What we have spent and not spent. We have not received that. I also asked the Treasurer to come here today. We are all level employees Selectmen, Treasurer, Town Clerk and Tax Collector. We can only request things from them, we can not order them to do so. I requested the Treasurer come today. Her official response was she did not want to be abraded because she did not like what was being put out on facebook. I can not force her to come here to speak to you. Nor can I force her to go to training or force her to do anything when she feels what she is doing is correct. We have requested a Bookkeeper for next year to give us a monthly balance to have this information available. The next step Plan B is to appoint a Treasurer so we can take the necessary action when needed.

Terri LaRoche – Who is her boss now?

Bob – The Taxpayers you elected her into office.

Terri LaRoche – I thought you had the ability to ask for her books? If you asked is she not obligated then to give the books to you? Do you not have recourse if refused? Isn't that a material duty of her job?

Michelle – We can not remove her for that reason. There has to be malicious intent. To remove her she has to be committing a crime or legally insane.

Terri LaRoche – It seems to me that is a Material Error on her part.

Bob – We can accept a motion from the public to have a formal investigation if that is what you want us to do as the enforcing body? But the motion for investigation has to come from the public.

Terri LaRoche – Don't think there has been anything criminal, I guess I need a better definition of Material Error.

Terri LaRoche – Is there a cap for unassigned funds?

Michelle – That is the policy we discussed putting on the Agenda to have one made.

Stephen – The board was not aware that Jim was actually balancing the books for the Auditors for Pat.

Michelle – Bob Maden has offered to help maintain the Town website.

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Bob Maden – To go back to the unassigned funds as being part of Granite Lake Assoc. I do know that it can take a long time to get those figures from the State.

Jason Kovarik – I now have a better understanding of the unassigned funds.

Bob Maden – Back to the website. The information is out of date. Will work on getting meetings posted.

Bob – I only learned of this by walking in on the previous Administrator balancing the books for the Treasurer. Told him didn't think it was part of his job. Said he was an accountant by trade and was balancing them for the Treasurer. Asked how long he had been doing that. He stated since he started here.

Terri LaRoche – I know we can't do anything this year, but can we not make it an Article that the Treasurer submit a monthly report?

Bob – We are working on getting a monthly report once the books are balanced.

Jason Kovarik – Realize you are aware and in the process of fixing this. So Thank You. It is a process. I do see the steps you are taking and it is appreciated.

Terri LaRoche – Shame on the last Administrator for not explaining the complete problem.

Randy Weaver – Been in town for 30 years, I will tell you that this Selectboard is one of the most transparent that we have had in the last 30 years.

Steve Rockwell – You know I run the food bank here in Stoddard. You have asked before if you could help with money or anything? I have said no. Talking to counterparts in Gilsum and Marlow. Some money was given to towns for covid and they gave money to their foodbanks. Why did the Town not do that.

Michelle – At the time we got the grant the Food Bank did not exist. We did buy a lot of non perishable items that the town bought and was handing out from the Gould House. The easiest way to get money for the Foodbank from the Town is in a Warrant Article at Town meeting. I can also check to see how much of the covid money is left and see if we can give some of that.

Steve Rockwell – So we can have Tiny Tum mies write a letter to the town to ask for funds?

Michelle – Yes and then would be written as a Warrant Article

Terri LaRoche – Read the minutes from last week about the Dump Stickers. Should look into the rental properties needs.

Joe Traniello – Needs to fine tune the 8 rules that need to be followed.

Noreen Durand – My taxes allows me to go to the Town for those stickers. I own 5 properties, should be allowed 10 stickers. I want to go back to the last meeting. I asked for the 10 dump stickers. The point was I went several times and asked for those dump stickers and never got them. When registering car though Karen told me 4 times my car was registered when it was not. This is why she gets attitude from me.

Ray Durand – This is how it went down. We asked her for dump stickers 4 times through January and February. We were signaled out in my mind not to receive them when being handed out to other people. When I walked in the door of the Town Clerks office Karen turned to her worker and told her to handle me, then walked out. I own 5 properties but only wanted 6 stickers. Karen coming back into the office turned around and said that's why we don't like you coming in here, you always come in with an attitude and looking for a fight. I only had an attitude because of her attitude. Does the Selectmen appoint the Clerk?

Chris – No it is an elected position.

Ray – I would like to see that as a Warrant Article to appoint that position. In my opinion she is incompetent, does not like to be confronted with her mistakes. She has made several. We were traveling out of state, and were assured our car was registered when it was not. Who do we complain to?

Chris – She is an elected official. You can complain to the Attorney General of the State

Noreen Durand – This is why I want it in the minutes, so people know she is incompetent.

Stephen – The fire department needs the well company to come back in to fix the water pressure. Was looked at last year.

Stephen – Juniper Hill – Propane truck went off the road there. The fuel trucks are exempt from load restrictions.

Chris Motioned to adjourn Public Meeting. Stephen Seconded. Motion Carried.

Bob Motioned to go into Non-Public RSA91-A:3, II(c). Stephen Seconded. Motion Carried.

Bob Motioned to return to Public Meeting. Chris Seconded. Motion Carried.

Bob Motioned to seal Non-Public RSA91-A:3, II(c). Chris Seconded. Motion Carried.

Chris motioned to adjourn Public Meeting 8:45 PM. Bob Seconded. Motion Carried.

Meeting adjourned 8:45 PM

Submitted

Vickie Williams – Secretary

Robert Fee_____

Christopher Madden_____

Stephen McGerty_____