



Town of Warner

Board of Selectmen

DRAFT - Meeting Minutes

October 27, 2020, 7:00 P.M.

No physical location for this meeting; it was conducted via Zoom.

PREAMBLE/WELCOME/ROLL CALL

At 7:03 p.m., Chairman Clyde Carson called the meeting to order and read this preamble:

“As Chair of the Board of Selectmen, I find that due to the state of emergency declared by the governor as a result of COVID-19, and in accordance with the governor’s emergency order number No. 12 pursuant to Executive Order #2020-04, I’m invoking the provisions of RSA 91-A: 2, III (b). I also find that this meeting is imperative to the continued operation of the Town of Warner government and services which are vital to public safety and confidence during this emergency. As such, this public body is authorized to meet electronically, and this meeting will be conducted electronically via Zoom without a quorum of this body physically present in the same location. I welcome members of the public and even though this meeting is being conducted remotely, the usual rules of decorum apply. Please note that any votes taken during this meeting will be taken via a roll call vote as required by the Right-To-Know law.

ROLL CALL: Clyde Carson, Chairman, alone; Jonathan Lord, alone; and Judy Newman-Rogers, alone.

Also present: Sam Bower; Richard Bixby; Ken Gogsnell; Martha Mical; Diane Ricciardelli, Town Administrator; Darcie Buskey, Deputy Town Clerk; and Ray Carbone, Recording Secretary.

I. Appointments

Chairman Carson reminded everyone that Newman-Rogers recently decided to accept a Town Hall position as Administrative Assistant to the Select Board. She has resigned her seat on the Select Board and the members have asked Sam Bower if he will serve in her stead on an interim basis. Bower has agreed, and will serve until

the Town elections in March 2021; at that time, there will be a space on the ballot for voters to choose a candidate to fill out the final year of Newman-Rogers' term.

Carson made a motion to express appreciation to Newman-Rogers for her work on the Select Board and to appoint Bower to serve in the open position until the elections in March 2021. Lord seconded. ROLL CALL: Carson, yes; Lord, yes; Newman-Rogers, yes. Motion passed unanimously.

Bower will be sworn in as the newest member of the Select Board before the next meeting.

II. New Business

1. Health Insurance

a. Review of 2021 Information Received

Ricciardelli said that she and Newman-Rogers met with a representative of Arcadia, an insurance broker. She reported that the company will compare rates and coverage to "get the best rate" for the Town at no charge; the company will also provide the necessary Human Resources service.

Ricciardelli noted that there are discussions going on in numerous New Hampshire towns about the costs of health insurance. One thought that's been shared is that it might not be worth it to change companies for a small financial advantage because changes in the process can be more troublesome than it's worth.

Newman-Rogers said Arcadia will also include coverage programs in the comparisons, so that employees will not be disadvantaged.

Carson noted that Warner, like many New Hampshire towns, is currently using Healthsource, which is offered by the NH Municipal Association. He suggested that both companies be invited to an upcoming Select Board meeting so the members can make comparisons. In addition, Town employees may be interested in attending the meeting. Ricciardelli said she would reach out to them and invite representatives of the two firms to the November 17 meeting.

2. Town Properties Review

Lord went through a list of Town-owned properties that could be considered for sale. In recent weeks, he has connected with St. Jean Auctioneers of Epping about having the company manage the sales.

- a. Map 1, Lot 3; 5X acres, assessed @ \$~~xx,xxx~~ – Not a buildable lot.
- b. Map 11, Lot 15, 33 acres, assessed @ \$37,290 – Carson said that he understands that someone who owns property that abuts this one is interested in purchasing this. "I believe it was logged heavily," he added.

- c. Map 12, lot 36 (Horne St.), .49 acres, assessed @ \$128,490. Carson said it's a nonconforming lot with a structure that's out of code and in need of a new septic system.
- d. Map 31, Lot 29, .03 acres, assessed @ \$58,120. Lord said this property was gifted to the Town, the site of the "old, old fire station." Carson said that the Town should look to other entities in the downtown area to see if there is any interest among them in this structure.
- e. Map 31, Lot 31, .66 acres, assessed @ \$280,000. Bower said this property, which he helped utilize for the cattle/horse programs for the Warner Fall Foliage Festival (WFFF) in the past, seems like it might be the most salable of the properties due to its location and accessibility. Carson said the Town may want to consider holding onto the property for the WFFF program, and Bower agreed that the annual event may bring in more revenue that way than through a sale.
- f. Map 19, Lot 37, 65 acres, assessed @ \$34,320. This property in the Couchtown neighborhood, is a buildable lot with road frontage.

Lord said that St. Jean advertises its properties widely in the area. The only negative about working with the company is that if a property is not sold, the Town would be billed \$500. Newman-Rogers pointed out that St. Jean does not set a minimum bid for sales but the company does all the necessary work. The buyer pays all fees and if a sale agreement is made but the sale does not materialize, the company and the Town split the deposit 50-50.

Lord said there are more properties that could be salable. He plans to connect with the Conservation Commission to be sure that none of the properties he's considering are protected or under consideration for preservation. Finally, he said he would email the list of properties discussed (minus Map 31, Lot 29) to the company for its evaluations, and then invite a representative to meet with the Select Board at its November 10 meeting.

III. Old Business/Projects

a. Budget Committee. Carson asked Lord to review some questions sent to the Select Board from the Budget Committee. One was related to the Town newsletter. It had been suggested that fewer are printed and electronic distribution be emphasized. Carson said that reducing the postal distribution can actually cost more than serving every post office box, and that a wider distribution of hard copies allows people who may not be as consistently tuned into Town events to learn about what's happening in Town hall.

b. Trustee of the Cemetery Trust Fund. Ricciardelli noted that this department's proposed 2021 budget was one of the few the Select Board had not yet reviewed. Fortunately, Ken Cogswell, one of the trustees, was present and told the Select Board that the budget will be the same as the one

presented for 2020. He added that he is hoping to have more work done on gravestone preservation moving forward.

c. Community Action Program of Merrimack & Belknap Counties (CAP) /Warner Community Center (WCA)/Main Street Warner, Inc. Carson reported on the ongoing transition since Erin Reed and Sue **XXX**, who have operated the local CAP office in the Warner Community Center (AKA "Old Graded School"), for some time have resigned for that organization. The women want to continue and expand their work under the authority of Main Street Warner, Inc., the local nonprofit organization.

Carson said that representatives of all three groups have been in discussions with the Town in recent weeks about moving forward in a cooperative transition. As part of that, CAP would like to return to the space on the first floor that it originally rented. If that space is available for an office operation, CAP could continue its Fuel and Electrical Assistance Program there.

CAP will transfer its **USDA Rural (??)** license over to the Main Street Warner and Erin and Lori will operate the food pantry out of the second floor space in the WCA. Carson said that the women want to continue expanding their work into projects like a wood bank (for wood stoves) and clothing distribution.

Carson asked if the first floor office in the WCC would be available for the CAP office. He added there may be some work needed to improve the handicap-accessibility ramp.

One more issue that needs to be considered is insurance coverage for Erin and Lori, Carson said. They were covered by CAP and Main Street Warner has already agreed to cover them, but there needs to be a clear understanding about the level of coverage and the costs. Ricciardelli said she would make sure that information was shared.

Lord asked if Main Street Warner was prepared to pay the Town rent for the space it will use in the WCC, and Carson said it is. The details are still to be worked out.

d. Old Fire Station Building. Lord asked about the status of the old building on Main Street. Carson pointed out that both he and Lord have been in discussion with Olde Window Restorers, the company renting the space and that has expressed interest in purchasing the building. Carson said the Select Board should discuss the issue in a nonpublic session later tonight.

e. Mink Hills Recreation Committee. Carson said that the new group held its first meeting last night. The group talked about its many diverse concerns and agreed upon a scope for its study. It will meet again in two weeks.

- g. Economic Development Advisory Committee (EDAC) Lord addressed the committee and agreed with Carson that the Select Board should meet with Charlie Albano, chairman of the EDAC. Carson suggested inviting Albano to one of the November meetings.

- h. "Old Graded School." Ricciardelli asked the Selectmen to clarify how the WCC should be identified – Warner Community Center, Old Graded School, or what. Carson made a motion that at the Board of Selectmen's meetings, the structure would be called the Warner Community Center because that seems to be best for grant requests; Rogers-Newman seconded. ROLL CALL: Carson, yes; Lord, yes; Newman-Rogers, yes. Motion passed unanimously.

IV. MANIFEST

Newman-Rogers made a motion to authorized the Board of Selectmen to approve previously signed manifests and order the Treasurer to sign:

- Payroll checks #6504-6514 in the amount of \$33,958.48 (this includes 20 direct deposits;
- Account Payable checks #58021-58056 in the amount of \$55,730.97;
- Automatic withdrawals in the amount of \$26,941.06 for payroll tax and NH Retirement.

Lord seconded. ROLL CALL: Carson, yes; Lord, yes; Newman-Rogers, yes. Motion passed unanimously.

V. CONCLUSION/ADJOURN

Newman-Rogers suggested the Board schedule the public hearing on the capital reserve fund request. Carson suggested it be held the November 24 meeting.

Carson moved to close the public portion of the meeting at 8:44 p.m. and moved into nonpublic under RSA 91-A:3ii(d) Acquisition or Sale of Property; Lord, seconded. Carson, yes; Lord, yes; Newman-Rogers, yes. Motion passed unanimously.