

TOWN OF WARNER

Board of Selectmen
Clyde Carson, Chairman
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Town Administrator
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May 11, 2021

Board of Selectmen

Tuesday, 7:00 PM,

APPROVED - Meeting Minutes

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

1. ROLL CALL/ATTENDANCE/PREAMBLE

At 7:05 p.m., Chairman Clyde Carson called the meeting to order and read this preamble:

PREAMBLE: "Good evening, I'm Clyde Carson and as Chairman of the Board of Selectmen, I find that due to the state of emergency declared by the governor as a result of COVID-19 pandemic, 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 body is authorized to meet electronically, and this meeting will be conducted electronically tonight via Zoom without a quorum of this body physically in the same location. I'd like to welcome any members of the public accessing this meeting remotely and remind that that, even though this meeting is being conducted remotely, the usual any rules of decorum apply. Please note that any votes taken at this meeting will be done via roll call, and that this is a work session."

ROLL CALL: Clyde Carson, Chairman, one other in residence; Jonathan Lord, alone; Sam Bower, two others in residence.

Also present: Tim Blagden of the Friends of the Concord-Lake Sunapee Rail Trail; Ed Mical; Martha Mical; Ken Cogswell; Daniel Swegert; Peter Flynn; Michael Biagiotti; Librarian Nancy Ladd; Town Clerk Michele Courser; Tax Collector Marianne Howlett; Administrative Assistant to the Board of Selectmen Judith Newman-Rogers; Town Administrator Diane Ricciardelli; and Recording Secretary Ray Carbone

2. APPOINTMENTS

a. Tim Blagden of the Concord-Lake Sunapee Rail Trail

- i. Requesting Recreation Easement from the end of the Bagley Bridge to end of (recently) purchased state land.

Carson introduced Blagden who presented a review of the work that the Friends of the Concord-Lake Sunapee Rail Trail has done so far, in their efforts to build a 34-mile scenic, family-friendly bike and

walking recreational trail along the old railroad beds that pass through Concord, Hopkinton, Warner, Sutton, Bradford and Newbury. They have completed several projects since they've begun, including three in Warner: the 8/10th-mile 'lollipop' trail adjacent to Bagley Field (including the wooden Bagley Bridge); the Joppa Road-Depot Road trail behind the Pillsbury Free Library; and a small portion in the Davisville area, adjacent to a longer trail in Hopkinton.

He reported that the City of Concord has recently purchased some land that will allow the trail construction to move forward at its end, and that Hopkinton applied last year, and is reapplying this year, for an RTP (Recreational Trail Program) grant to connect its library to Kearsarge Avenue, which would allow Warner hikers to more easily connect to the center of Contoocook village. There are also plans to provide more trail amenities, such as the railroad-wheel benches located in Bradford by Lake Todd.

Blagden is requesting that the Friends be allowed to extend the Bagley trail one-half mile easterly towards the village, to the area just shy of Interstate 89's exit 8. The Town has recently obtained the 9-acre lot from the State, and the Friends are asking for an easement to construct the extension. He said that the Friends' attorney is working on language for the easement, and it should be prepared for the Board's review soon.

Carson asked if the new leg is approved, would that connect the trail to Rte. 103 and Blagden said it would not. But he pointed out that because the property is now owned by the Town, the regulations governing trail construction will make the project much less expensive than what would have applied under the federal government's rules; because the project is adjacent to the interstate highway, federal regulations are enforced.

Blagden said the Friends are applying for a matching Recreational Trail Program (RTP) grant to fund the construction work. It would require the group to fund approximately \$20,000 for the match, but the funds could be both cash and in-kind work, such as brush clearing; volunteers who provide such work would be considered as providing work equivalent to an hourly wage of \$28. The deadline for the grant application is June 19 and results will be announced around October. Grant funds would be available early next year, and the Friends will have until the end of 2022 to complete the work.

Selectmen Lord and Bower said they supported the project. Carson made a motion to approve the easement that Blagden outlined. Lord seconded. ROLL CALL: Carson, yes; Lord, yes; Bower, yes. Motion passed unanimously. Carson told Blagden to get the completed easement to the Town as soon as possible and the Board members would sign it.

- i. Proposal for the Town to apply for a Recreational Trails Program Grant on behalf of the Friends of the Concord-Lake Sunapee Rail Trail.

Blagden said that the NH RTP program limits any entity from submitting more than two applications for the federal funds it distributes annually; it also sets a limit of \$80,000 on all funds awarded and requires a 20-percent match from the applying entity. Right now, the Friends have an application for \$50,000 for trail work in Concord, in conjunction with The NH Community Development Finance Authority (CDFA). In addition, there is a plan to construct a smaller trail in Hopkinton/Contoocook village that would link the area where the library and the senior citizens center are (and the municipal recreational fields) to the area where Colonial Market is located; the \$50,000 project will allow

students from the nearby school to safely get to the fields. The Town of Hopkinton has agreed to serve as applicant for the proposal so that the Friends can stay within the legal requirements of the grant application.

Blagden said then there is the Warner project discussed earlier by Interstate 89's exit 8, which is estimated to cost \$77,758 to complete. Blagden is asking the Town to serve as the applicant for this project and, in return, the Friends would commit to providing all the matching grant amount, i.e., \$19,489. He said he would write the grant request and submit it for the Town's review.

The Selectmen voiced their support for the plan.

Administrative Assistant Judy Newman-Rogers asked exactly how the grant funds would be managed and distributed. A general discussion among Town employees, Blagden and the Board ensued, but no clear resolution was reached. Blagden said he would speak to the Friend's attorney as well the NH Municipal Association for advice; he also suggested that the Town and the Friends sign an agreement before the grant application is pursued ensuring the Town's liability is limited. Chairman Carson asked the employees and Blagden to continue to investigate exactly how to manage the funds and asked Blagden to come back to the Board in two weeks, when it holds its next meeting, to resolve the issue. At that time, the Selectmen can properly approve the proposal.

3. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Michele Courser, Town Clerk, Capital Reserve Funds approved at Town Meeting.

Courser explained that these two items follow the annual Town Meeting every year.

- i. Appropriations to CRF's by December 15.

Courser said there is \$625,500 that needs to be transferred to capital reserve funds by Dec. 15.

- ii. Transfer of Surplus to Contingency Fund.

In addition, \$10,000 needs to be transferred from unassigned fund (balance) to the Contingency Fund.

Chairman Carson made the motion to transfer \$625,500 to capital reserve funds by Dec. 15. Lord seconded. ROLL CALL: Carson, yes; Lord, yes; Bower, yes. Motion passed unanimously.

Lord made the motion to move \$10,000 from the general fund to the Contingency Fund. unanimously.

Motion made by Lord; seconded by Carson. ROLL CALL: Carson, yes; Lord, yes; Bower, yes. Motion passed unanimously.

- b. Marianne Howlett, Tax Collector

- i. Affidavit for Execution of Real Estate Tax Lien for Levy of 2020

Howlett said the document is the money the Board would approve to purchase the tax liens, a simple bookkeeping process that occurs annually, and documents the Town's ownership of liens. The checks are issued at the beginning of July, another bookkeeping process.

Lord made a motion to approve a payment of, \$98,138 for the 2020 tax lien properties; Bower, seconded. ROLL CALL: Carson, yes; Lord, yes; Bower, yes. Motion passed unanimously.

Howlett pointed out that there is a separate list of older properties that are taxes delinquent, and the Board may want to consider soon how to move forward on them before the formal decision takes place on May 24. Carson suggested that the Board meet in a nonpublic work session to discuss those issues on Monday, May 17, at 7 p.m., and the other Board members agreed.

c. Lynn Clark, Warner Historical Society Director

Clark was not in attendance, but Administrative Assistant to the Selectmen Judy Newman-Rogers, explained on her behalf that the Society would again like to do a public reading of the famed Frederick Douglas speech in front of Town Hall on Monday, July 5.

Carson made a motion to approve the plan and Bower seconded. ROLL CALL: Carson, yes; Lord, yes; Bower, yes. Motion passed unanimously.

d. NH Department of Transportation Notice

Tuesday, May 18, 7 p.m., Public Meeting Presentation of Route 127 Bridge Project.

Town Administrator Diane Ricciardelli said the DOT will explain the plan to replace the bridge. Carson said improvements have long been needed in the area to make traffic flow smoother. In addition, many residents will likely want to know how long the bridge is out and how detours around the area will operate.

4. OLD/CONTINUED BUSINESS

a. Community Action Program (CAP) – Draft Lease for CAP Review.

Chairman Carson reminded the Board that it had asked Ricciardelli to update the CAP lease proposal. She said she had sent it on to CAP for its review.

b. Potential Town Properties for Auction.

- i. Conservation Commission reviewed at its May 5th meeting.
- ii. Planning Board scheduled to review at its June 7th meeting.

Lord said he was not able to attend the Conservation Commission meeting, but he should be able to attend the Planning Board meeting next month. Carson confirmed that the Commission did review the properties.

5. OTHER SELECTMEN BUSINESS

a. Agricultural Commission

- i. Membership: Planning Board and Conservation Commission Representatives and Members at Large.

Carson noted that the new Commission was approved by voters at the annual Town Meeting. The Board is responsible for appointing members, including one from the Select Board, one from the Planning Board and one from the Conservation Commission. In addition, three-to-five at-large members. Carson suggested that Bower serve on the Agricultural Commission.

Ricciardelli said that some residents have asked about what requirements would be used when evaluating perspective members. Carson said the State RSAs say that members should either be farmers or involved in the agricultural supply chain, i.e., people with ties to the farming community.

Carson made a motion that Bower serve as the Select Board's representative; Lord seconded. ROLL CALL: Carson, yes; Lord, yes; Bower, yes. Motion passed unanimously.

Getting a sense of the Board's thinking, Carson said he would reach out to the Conservation Commission and the Planning Board to ask them to suggest members to the new Agricultural Commission.

Carson suggested that the standard volunteer interest form be used as a first step in the evaluation process over the coming two weeks. He also suggested that the positions be posted on the Town website and in the Pillsbury Free Library's newsletter. In addition, hard copies should be left out in the box in Town Hall.

Michael Biagiotti suggested that the at-large seats be filled with active Warner farmers.

6. TOWN ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

Administrator Ricciardelli reported on the following:

- i. Eversource Easement agreement.,

The 25-year agreement, which pays the Town \$5,000 is completed. It will be available for Board members to sign and have notarized tomorrow. Administrative Assistant to the Selectmen Newman-Rogers is a notary, so it can be done in the Selectman's office.

- ii. The NH Department of Environmental Services (DES) Aquatic Resources Mitigation (ARMS) Fund Grant (for culvert work in Warner).

The Board needs to authorize Department of Public Works Director Tim Allen to be able to sign any documents that are required to process the grant. Carson made the motion and Lord seconded. ROLL CALL: Carson, yes; Lord, yes; Bower, yes. Motion passed unanimously. Ricciardelli said she would also have that paperwork in the Select Board's office tomorrow.

- iii. Other Grants

Ricciardelli said that she is working on several other grant proposal requests that should be submitted to Sen. Jeanne Shaheen's office by May 21. The proposals, as well as supporting documents, should be ready soon.

iv. Webinar

Only Selectman Lord was able to attend a webinar that Ricciardelli and others hoped to participate in this week. She said it would be available again later in the week.

v. Contractor Work

The installation of the Town Hall Sprinkler System is scheduled to begin soon. The contractor is available to begin work as soon as the supplies are here. In addition, the new shelving system requested by Town Clerk Courser is scheduled to arrive on May 17. Unfortunately, the new phone system is still in-process; Ricciardelli said she is still looking into some pricing issues.

vi. Future Meeting Technology

The Zoom technology that will allow Town boards to hold meetings both in person and remotely is under consideration. Ricciardelli said that some of the general ARMS grant that the Town will be receiving could be used for the costs. Carson asked Lord if he would be willing to chair a committee to oversee the process; Lord said Ricciardelli and Town Webmaster Dan Watts are qualified to oversee the project and he didn't see a need for a group. Lord said he would stay in touch with the pair to keep track of the process.

Librarian Nancy Ladd asked if the system could be available for the Library Board of Trustees. Carson said he hoped it would be. She added that some librarians around New Hampshire are talking about using some of the new funds to procure a hearing loop system, which is an assisted listening system. She suggested the Town may want to consider that.

Carson asked that this project be kept on the Board's agenda for future meetings.

7. PUBLIC COMMENT

Martha Mical asked if the \$5,000 Eversource money would be added onto customers' bills. Ricciardelli said it would not be.

Mical also asked when the Board is considering returning to open meetings. Ricciardelli said that Town employees are putting together plans for how it can be done when that's possible. Carson said the Town is keeping track of recommendations related to the coronavirus pandemic and it will evaluate exactly how the process would work for public meetings. One thing that the Town has seen is greater participation from residents since the electronic (Zoom) process has become available.

Carson said that the applicable grant funds should be available soon.

8. CONSENT AGENDA

Selectmen Bower made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda, below, which was previously signed by the Board of Selectmen:

1. Intent to Cut: Map 18 Lot 37
2. Warrant for the Tax Collector for Land Use Change Tax: Map 06 Lot 57, \$470.00
3. Warrant for the Tax Collector for Yield Tax Levy:

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|----------------|------------|
| Map 06 Lot 029 | \$2,443.65 |
| Map 13 Lot 006 | \$1,508.94 |
4. Permit to Build:

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| Map 10 Lot 023 |
| Map 35 Lot 001 |
| Map 07 Lot 058 |
| Map 14 Lot 005-2 |
| Map 15 Lot 032-2 |

Lord seconded the motion. ROLL CALL: Carson, yes; Lord, yes; Bower, yes. Motion passed unanimously.

9. MINUTES

Selectmen Lord made a motion to approve the minutes of the following Board meetings: March 23, 2021; March 30, 2021; April 6, 2021; and April 13, 2021.

Carson seconded the motion. ROLL CALL: Carson, yes; Lord, yes; Bower, yes. Motion passed unanimously.

10. MANIFEST

Selectman Lord made a motion to authorize the Selectmen to approve previously signed manifest, listed below, and order the Treasurer to sign:

- Payroll check numbers 6715-6726 in the amount of \$37,760.69 (This includes 21 direct deposits).
- Accounts Payable check numbers 58639-58681 in the amount of \$165,871.06.
- Automatic withdrawals in the amount of \$28,468.47 for payroll taxes.

Carson seconded the motion. ROLL CALL: Carson, yes; Lord, yes; Bower, yes. Motions passed unanimously.

11. ADJOURNMENT OF PUBLIC PORTION

Chairman Carson announced that the Board has a Non-public session. Without objection, he adjourned the public portion of the meeting at 8:47 p.m.