



TOWN OF WARNER

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Board of Selectmen

DRAFT

Town Hall- Lower Meeting Room

Tuesday, April 12, 2022, 6:30 p.m.

I. Open Meeting/Roll Call

Chairman Sam Bower opened the meeting at 6:33 p.m. and recognized the presence of fellow member Clyde Carson. Board member Christine Frost was absent.

Also present: Anastasia Glavus; David Bates, Martha Mical, Select Board Administrative Assistant Judith Newman-Rogers; Town Administrator Diane Ricciardelli; and Recording Secretary Ray Carbone.

i. Appointment

a. Anastasia Glavus – Discuss Options for the Day of the Week to Hold Town Meeting

Anastasia Glavus addressed the Select Board about the idea of moving the annual Town Meeting from a Wednesday evening to a Saturday morning/afternoon. She said she understood that the Town has tried Saturdays in the past but later decided to move the meeting back to Wednesdays. She asked what it would take to have the Board reconsider that decision.

Selectman Carson said that there was a survey done some years ago, so the Board decided to try Saturday meetings, but the voter turnout was slightly less than what typically occurs on Wednesdays; the response was not strongly in favor of keeping it on Saturday. Martha Mical said that a sense-of-the-meeting vote held at the last Saturday meeting supported going back to Wednesdays.

Glavus said that there could be more support for a Saturday now. An online conversation she initiated on the "Let's Talk About Warner" Facebook page has garnered significant attention and some residents say it would be easier for younger families to participate in a Saturday

morning Town Meeting than a Wednesday evening one. In addition, there is a better chance for poor weather to impact a Wednesday night meeting, keeping turnout lower than normal.

David Bates pointed out that having a greater amount of participation from the younger families in Town could have other positive effects, i.e., it could encourage more young people to volunteer to serve on various Town boards and committees, as well in other volunteer community roles. He did not see much difference in the number of people who participated in the Saturday meetings, he said, since some Wednesday meetings have also had lighter-than-normal turnouts. Selectman Carson said that the only sure predictor of a strong turnout is to have a controversial issue on the Warrant.

Carson also said that one advantage of a Saturday meeting could be having high school students that could administer a babysitting service, allowing for parents to focus on the Town Meeting. But high school athletics could interfere with the babysitting programs, according to some residents, and Glavus said school sports already create challenges for parents who have youngsters playing basketball, etc. Bates noted that weeknight evening meetings create an obstacle for parents of younger children who have early bedtimes.

After some additional discussion, Carson suggested that the question of a Saturday meeting be put before residents in a "sense of the voters" ballot at the upcoming general election later this year. The Select Board still have the responsibility to make the final decision about when Town Meeting takes place, but the vote might prove helpful.

Select Board Administrative Assistant Newman-Rogers reported that the Town held its Town Meeting on Saturdays in 2018 and 2019; at the latter meeting, a motion was made from the floor to change the meeting back to Wednesday nights.

Chairman Bower agreed with Carson's idea and suggested that the Town put the question before voters as a non-binding measure at the upcoming general election.

II. Old Business

a. Process and Use of American Rescue Funds Act (ARPA)

Chairman Bower said that Board member Christine Frost has done much of the Board's work in overseeing how the Town has used (or is considering using) the ARPA funds. Without Frost in attendance, he suggested putting the issue aside tonight.

b. Simonds School – Request for Bartlett Funds - Research

Select Board Administrative Assistant Newman-Rogers found that when former resident Harriet Bartlett passed away in the late 19th century, she requested that when her School Street home is sold that the money from the sale be put into a fund for the Warner High School. However, when the trust was established, Warner had its own high school. Now,

Warner is part of the multi-town Kearsarge Regional School District and local students attend Kearsarge Regional High School in Sutton.

Newman-Rogers is now unclear about how the funds are supposed to be utilized under the Warner Town Trustees, so she's recently reached out to Kimberley Brown-Edelman, who is Chairman of the Trustees of Trust Funds to find out how the process works at this time and if it agrees with the stated goals of the Bartlett Fund.

Martha Mical said that the trust fund money has always been spent at the Simonds School. Newman-Rogers said that may be the case, but only the interest is to be spent and it is unclear what the process has been; if it is correctly applying the trust's rules regarding the distribution of funds; the history documentation was unclear if the School Board or the Select Board handle the request and payout.

The most recent request from the Simonds School was for \$1,850 from the Bartlett Fund to pay for an ensemble to perform at the school's Cultural Day. There is more than enough interest in the fund to pay for the ensemble's appearance.

c. St. Jean Auctioneers – Contract for Town Property Auction

Chairman Bower noted that there are still some questions that the Board has to resolve regarding the upcoming auction of some Town-owned properties.

1. Where/When will the auction be held?

The Board agreed to comply with St. Jean's suggestion that the auction be held at Town Hall on a Saturday morning, late April, early May.

2. Does the Board want to establish a minimum bid on each property (back taxes that are due on it) or sell for the highest bid?

After a brief discussion, the Board agreed on simply accepting the highest bid. It will comply with the stated Board's goal to return the properties to the property tax roll as soon as possible.

3. Set a date for previewing the properties.

The Board agreed to allow St. Jean to set that date, sometime before the auction. (St. Jean has recommended that viewings be made available early on the day of the auction.)

4. Acquire access to the land locked property and delegate a member to be there.

The Board asked Town Hall staff to check into whether there is a right-of-way that will allow access to the properties.

5. Is any property in need of security during the preview or auction?

6. Can the structure on Horne St. be unlocked for the previewing?

Regarding the buildings on the Horne Road and the Willey Lane properties, the Town can gain access to the buildings.

7. Are there safety precautions to consider as well?

The Board needs to have a Town representative in the buildings at the time of previews.

Chairman Bower asked whether the Town has made an effort to insure that all the properties' abutters know about the auction. Carson said that the auction company handles that task. The Board also addressed the question of whether it has to accept an exceptionally low bid, if it's also the highest. Newman-Rogers said there are ways the Town can "back out" of a bid if it's unacceptably low, according to the contract with the auctioneer.

Chairman Bower noted that he was not at the Board's meeting where the contract with the auction company was signed. The final details should be resolved by the Board's next Work Session meeting on Thursday, April 21, at 7 p.m. in Town Hall

d. Term Expirations – Committees and Boards Appointments/Reappointments

Chairman Bower said he's still considering whether or not to continue to serve on the Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA). The Select Board is not required to have a member on the ZBA, but it would like to have a full Board appointed so, if no other residents volunteer, Bower may serve again.

Carson noted that there is also a need for people to serve on the Planning Board as well. Select Board Administrative Assistant Newman-Rogers said she's still reaching out to some and has not yet connected with everyone. Carson said that ZBA and the Planning Board are especially important.

e. Transfer Station Proposal - Rescheduled to 4/26/2022

The Board had hoped to move further on in its discussion with CMA Engineering about refurbishing the Transfer Station, but that meeting has had to be rescheduled to next week. Town Administrator Ricciardelli said that Transfer Station Foreman Varick Proper was able to get the current compactor fixed recently.

Chairman Bower noted that CMA, the engineering company that is proposing to oversee the renovation work, has indicated that it has little experience with a composting function, which

the Town is interested in initiating. But there are other organizations around the region that can help, and the two companies may be able to work together.

The next step is to have CMA appear at a Board meeting and begin addressing its proposed plans and ideas in a public forum where residents can ask questions about the project.

Chairman Bower asked that Foreman Proper and Director of Public Works (DPW) Director Tim Allen attend the meeting. At the end of that discussion, the Board hopes to sign an agreement with the company.

IV. New Business

a. Agreement for Payment in Lieu of Taxes – Town of Warner and Kearsarge Elderly Housing (KEH)

Carson noted that KEH has signed this agreement annually. Since the organization is tax-exempt, this is a way for it to reimburse the Town for some of the cost of some of the services it provides to KEH for its senior citizen residents in the North Road community.

Carson made a motion to accept and sign the agreement between the Town and Kearsarge Elderly Housing stipulating that the organization will make a payment to the Town of \$16,466.15 (in four quarterly payments of \$4,166.53) in lieu of property taxes to support the Town services that are utilized by the organization and its residents; Bower seconded. In a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

b. Notice from Tax Collector Marianne Howlett, Certifying the Date of Mailing Final Tax Bills for ^{SEP}2021, Original Property Tax Warrant Committed to Her.

Select Board Administrative Assistant Newman-Rogers said that this is simply a notification to the Board that the last of the property tax bills were sent out on the date indicated. No action by the Board is necessary.

c. Letters of Resignation – Cemetery Trustee; Energy Committee

The Board accepted letters of resignation from Don Wheeler, one of the Trustees of the Town Cemeteries, and Sue Hemmingway, a member of the Energy Committee. The Board thanked the two, saying that their service was valuable and appreciated.

V. Administrator's Report

Town Administrator Diane Ricciardelli said that she has spent time today with an inspector from the NH Department of Labor; the inspection is expected to continue on Thursday. The inspector is very complimentary of the Town's operations regarding labor issues, particularly the Joint Loss Management Committee's work. Some new procedures have been initiated by the State and the Select Board will get a new Procedural

Manual soon. Some minor safety issues were raised but overall the Town staff responsible for maintaining its buildings is doing very well, according to the Inspector.

Ricciarelli said that the Town has recently received correspondence from the offices of both Sen. Jeanne Shaheen and Rep. Annie Kuster regarding pending grant applications; they included the usual 10-day deadline. The Board previously selected a priority order that it wanted to use for the grants:

1. Sidewalk repair, \$800,000
2. Interstate 89/exit 7 area project – Concord- Lake Sunapee Rail Trail, \$80,000
3. Interstate 89/exit 9 area project – Concord- Lake Sunapee Rail Trail, \$1.2 million
4. Bridge over the Warner River connecting Depot Street and Riverside Park, \$500,000.
5. Schoodaac Road repairs, \$400,000
6. Poverty Plains Road repairs, \$365,000
7. Interstate 89/exit 7 area project – Concord- Lake Sunapee Rail Trail, \$80,000
8. Interstate 89/exit 7 area project – Concord- Lake Sunapee Rail Trail – Kiosk, \$15,000

Ricciardelli said that the State has requested that Warner submit a full grant application for its #2 project, “Interstate 89/exit 9 area project – Concord- Lake Sunapee Rail Trail, \$1.2 million.” The Town needs to communicate with the Friends of the Concord-Lake Sunapee Rail Trail to decide if it’s more appropriate for the application to be submitted by the Town or the “Friends.” Much of the material for the Rail Trail grant proposals were prepared with the assistance of resident Tim Blagden, who is president of the Friends organization; with that information available, the Town should be able to meet the application’s brief deadline.

Ricciardelli also noted all this grant money is unrelated to current taxes; it comes through the federal government from taxes that have already been paid. The total amount is earmarked for New Hampshire, so if Warner doesn’t get the funding, the money will go to another project in the State. Generally, the Granite State gets back approximately .98 annually for each dollar its residents send to the federal government, Ricciardelli said. Some states get much more returned for each dollar sent to Washington.

Ricciardelli said that she is still working on hiring a new finance person and hopes to have a recommendation prepared for the Board to consider in the next couple of weeks.

The Town recently considered securing debit/credit cards for various departments from the local Sugar River Bank branch. But recent research has indicated that this is not the best plan, Ricciardelli said, so the Town will revert its the former process, i.e., departments make purchases and submit invoices to the Finance Office.

Finally, Ricciardelli said that she is also working with Select Board Administrative Assistant Newman-Rogers on completing the paperwork and collecting

documentation for the Road Construction Project loan from Sugar River Bank. A Letter of Understanding is currently in draft form.

VI. Select Board Other Business

Carson reported that the Community Power Committee is looking at doing a survey of the community to gauge the Town's interest in the use of electrical power, renewable energy, etc. The results would guide the Committee in crafting a Community Power Proposal that should be completed for the Board's consideration some time in May.

Carson also said he met with Planning Board Chairman Ben Frost and resident Barbara Marty regarding the Board's proposed Housing Committee, i.e., its mission, who would serve on the Committee, etc. Carson said there are apparently grants that will be available this summer that could allow the Committee to hire a housing expert to help with its work.

Chairman Bower said he attended a meeting last week with Christopher Emond, the CEO of the Concord Boys and Girls Club; the club has been in discussions with the Board and others in Town about possibly opening a childcare center in the Warner Community Center (WCC) if the current Head Start program is discontinued by the Community Action Program (CAP) of Belknap and Merrimack Counties. The meeting, which took place at the WCC, was chiefly a walk around the property to address what space-related challenges might be involved with installing the childcare program; representatives of other nonprofit organizations already renting space in the WCC participated.

Carson said he's again trying to get some feedback from CAP about whether it has yet decided on whether it will terminate its local Head Start program; CAP has indicated that it won't be able to announce a decision until late Spring, but the Board has been anxious to learn, so it can know the Boys and Girls Club if it can move forward with planning a childcare program for the Fall.

Town Administrator Ricciardelli said she was contacted by representatives of Pellettieri Associates, the local landscape architectural company, about providing plantings around the Town Hall building. It's a volunteer effort and the goal is to have it done by April 22, which is Earth Day.

IV. Public Comment-

Chairman Bower opened a discussion about the idea of a community garden behind the WCC. He invited the Board to visit the property on Thursday, 10:30 a.m. to view the property; Neil Nevins, a member of the Economic Development Advisory Committee (EDAC), will be leading the discussion.

Chairman Bower, who serves on the Agricultural Commission, said that he is hoping that the community garden will grow to support the Warner Connects Food Pantry, which operates in the WCC. In addition, the garden can participate in a "Tray It Forward" program that would

provide clients with a tray of seedlings as well as educational resources to teach people how to cultivate the plants.

V. Consent Agenda

Carson made a motion to approve the following as signed by the Select Board:

1. Notice of Intent to Cut for:
 - a. Map 20 Lot 20
 - b. Map 31 Lot 48
 - c. Map 33 Lot 18
 - d. Map 07 Lot 60
 - e. Map 10 Lot 49
2. Building Permits:
 - a. Map 03 Lot 094
 - b. Map 31 Lot 017 Electrical-1
 - c. Map 17 Lot 012-1

*Update to 3/29/22 Consent Agenda: Map 03 Lot 094 **Electrical***
3. Notice of Intent to Tax Real Property on Land of Another:
 - a. Map 03 Lot 24
 - b. Map 10 Lot 69
 - c. Map 18 Lot 15
 - d. Map 14 Lot 36-1
 - e. Map 15 Lot 43
 - f. Map 10 Lot 66
 - g. Map 08 Lot 06
 - h. Map 03 Lot 58
4. Payroll Change Form:
 - a. Newly Elected Supervisor of the Checklist
 - b. New Hire, Highway, Truck Driver/Laborer, Grade 5 Step 18
5. Request to the Trustees of Trust Funds to pay to the Town of Warner from The Parks & Recreation Capital Reserve Fund:
 - a. \$ 1,820.00 for Payment to Quimby Construction, repairs to the Snack Shack
 - b. \$54,222.88 for Payment to American Ramp Co, 50% down payment of Riverside Skate Park.
6. Certification of Yield Taxes Assessed:

a. Map 20 Lot 020	\$ 92.02
b. Map 13 Lot 001	\$ 494.77
c. Map 18 Lot 037	\$ 832.84
d. Map 12 Lot 53,55,56	\$ 2,179.35
e. Map 02 Lot 010	\$ 2,996.20
f. Map 06 Lot 029	\$ 3,890.90
g. Map 18 Lot 001	\$165,988.59

Chairman Bower seconded the motion. In a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

VI. Manifest

None.

VII. Meeting Minutes

Action postponed, but draft minutes are posted on Town website.

VIII.  Adjourn 

With no other business to come before the Board, and without objection Chairman Bower adjourned the meeting at 7:57 p.m.