



TOWN OF WARNER

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Select Board
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Diane Ricciardelli,
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Select Board Meeting - DRAFT - Tuesday, April 26, 2022, 6:00 pm

Town Hall- Lower Meeting Room- 5 East Main Street

I. Open Meeting/Roll Call

Chairman Sam Bower opened the meeting at 6:00 p.m. and recognized the presence of fellow members Clyde Carson and Christine Frost.

a. Non-public Session - Under RSA 91-A:3 II(b) - hiring a public employee

6:35 pm – back in the public meeting, also present: Department of Public Works (DPW) Director Tim Allen; Transfer Station Foreman Varick Proper; Jay and Jim St. Jean of St. Jean Auctioneers; Peter Flynn; Ken Cogswell; Select Board Administrative Assistant Judith Newman-Rogers; Town Administrator Diane Ricciardelli; and Recording Secretary Ray Carbone.

II Appointments

a. St. Jeans Auctioneers, Finalizing Sale of Town Owned Property Contract

Chairman Bower introduced Jay and Jim St. Jean of St. Jean Auctioneers who the Town has been working with regarding the sale at auction of several Town-owned properties. Jay St. Jean said that his company has done approximately 15 municipal auctions in the last six or eight months, selling everything from a single piece to as many as 16 properties at an auction. The auctions are typically held in the Town Hall on a Saturday morning at 10:00 a.m.

One issue that the Board of Selectmen needs to decide tonight is whether to sell the Warner properties as “reserved” (which allows the Town to consider each bid individually before acceptance) or “absolute” (which means that the sale is complete by the end of the proceedings). Most towns use the latter method.

The company will market and promote the auction with the goal of attracting as many bidders as possible, so that the properties can be quickly sold and put back on the Town’s tax rolls. Buyers pay a 10% premium, which covers St. Jean’s expenses. To promote the auction, the company will begin advertising on various local print media, including the *Concord Monitor* and the *Kearsarge Shopper*, approximately four weeks before the auction; it will also post the

relevant information on its website and send a notice to its private email list of 7,500 known investors. The company also provides a copy of its promotional to the Town, so that it can be used on its website, on the Pillsbury Free Library newsletter, etc. There is no extra cost for these services. Jim St. Jean said his company's approach has been successful for the last 15-to-20 years.

Selectman Carson said that there are several questions that the Board needs to resolve tonight if it hopes to sign a contract with St. Jean. After some brief remarks, the members agreed to hold the auction in the Town Hall and to use the "absolute" auction process, as St. Jean recommends.

Carson asked about getting an abnormally low bid that the Town would be obligated to accept. St. Jean said that the current market essentially precludes that from occurring. Carson also asked if the company looks, not only at delinquent taxes, but also at the assessed values of properties as it suggests opening bids. St. Jean said that most of the municipal properties that the company has sold recently have been sold for values that are either very close to or a little bit above the assessed values. The company also notices all abutters about the upcoming auction.

The Board discussed with St. Jean some of the particulars regarding the three properties to be sold: 1. Land locked acreage off Schoodac and Burnt Hill Roads; 2. Willey Lane; and, 3. Horne Road. St. Jean asked if all three properties will be available for viewing by interested bidders before the auction. The Board reviewed some relevant information and said that the properties would be made available; it agreed to provide opportunities for potential bidders to see the properties on a Friday, one or two weeks before the auction, from 1-3 p.m., as St. Jean suggested. A Town representative will be available and onsite at that time.

The Board scheduled auction for Saturday, June 25, at 10 a.m., in the Town Hall. St. Jean said that the auction will probably go fairly quickly, and that all relevant paperwork should be resolved, and the company off premises, before 12 noon.

St. Jean said his company would send relevant paperwork to the Town's attorney, Upton & Hatfield of Concord. Any legal issues should be resolved within the next 30-45 days.

Carson asked St. Jean about his company's policy requiring a certified check from a bidder. He said that some abutters may be among the highest bidders, and those people could be well known by local officials. St. Jean said he recommends against accepting a personal check, but it's a decision that would be up to the Board.

The company does a PowerPoint presentation before the auction, so it will gain entrance to the Town Hall on the day of the event at 8:30 a.m. and it provides all its necessary equipment for the presentation.

The Board thanked the St. Jean's for their help.

b. Steve Reddy, "Reed's North", Outside Seating

Steve Reddy was not in attendance.

c. Transfer Station Proposal

Chairman Bower recognized DPW Director Tim Allen and Transfer Station Foreman Varick Proper. The purpose of this meeting is to consider a proposal submitted by CMA Engineering to update the Town's Transfer Station.

DPW Director Allen said his impression at this time is to move forward with the proposal. He recognized that there are still some unanswered questions about the project but he said that his understanding is that the company will give the project more attention once the Town has signed the company's proposal contract.

Chairman Bower said that he's "good with CMA," and is ready to move forward with the understanding that its representatives would primarily work with Allen and Proper.

Allen said he, like others in Town, "don't like spending money" when the Town can avoid it, but there are issues related to the idea of updating the 33-year-old Transfer Station that neither he nor Proper know specifically how to address. "We need someone to tell us," he said, so "we know what fits this Town."

Proper suggested that committing this \$28,000 to working with CMA on refurbishing the Transfer Station will "make a statement to the Town" that the Board is seriously looking at "where we need to go from here" regarding the facility. Chairman Bower said that the Board wants CMA to come back to it with several recommendations, from a modest one to a most complete version.

Carson said that one idea the Board has considered is developing a community composting facility on the property. While CMA doesn't appear to have expertise in that specific area, it does appear to be open to working with another firm to incorporate the functions. Carson, said that NH Department of Environmental Services (DES) has recently updated its municipal composting regulations to allow for more products, including meats, under certain circumstances.

Frost noted that CMA amended its original proposal to add \$3,000 to include a composting element. Chairman Bower said that the extra money would simply provide a basic plan, i.e., how much space would be needed, where might it be located, a system for dropping off materials, etc. Carson also said that the Town might eventually develop a regional composting proposal incorporated on the Transfer Station property, which could serve several local communities.

After some additional conversation, Frost made a motion to accept the proposal from CMA Engineering regarding a planned refurbishment of the Town's Transfer Station, including the composting element, for \$28,000. Carson seconded. In a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Bower asked if there were any other related issues that needed to be addressed. DPW Director Allen said that a contract would be forthcoming from CMA to the Board. Carson asked if the company could come back to the Board to further discuss the composting idea. Chairman Bower expressed an interest in visiting the Transfer Station site when the CMA representatives are there in the near future.

Proper asked the Board if it wants to consider reinstating (and reviewing) the Transfer Station's fee structure. The Board agreed to look at its next meeting on Tuesday, May 10.

Regarding the recent problems with the current compactor, both Allen and Proper said that they've had some challenges getting a new box for the Transfer Station's compactor. After a brief discussion, Carson made a motion to give Proper permission to look at some other vendors; Bower seconded.

Allen and Proper suggested reaching out to the vendor one more time before moving on to another option; it's been more than two months since the Board approved the purchase. Frost said she didn't think the Board should make that motion, but Carson said that since the original motion has a price attached, a motion could serve as an impetus for action from a newer vendor.

Proper said he could come back to the Board if there is need for further action regarding price. Chairman Bower said he would favor leaving the issue with Proper at this time with the understanding that he can always come back to the Board for more support.

II. Old Business

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

Chairman Bower reminded the Board that, before moving ahead with any more decisions regarding the federal ARPA money, it had previously agreed to reach out to the various Town departments; the goal here is to provide each department with the opportunity to request ARPA funding for specific projects. The Town would prioritize those projects, Bower said, because the federal paperwork for government-related projects is much easier than what's required for non-government projects.

Frost committed herself to drafting a single-page "request form" that the department heads could use for their requests, but she admitted she hadn't yet completed the project; an earlier draft had been shared among the Board members, she said, and it wouldn't take much to finish the form. Town Administrator Diane Ricciardelli noted that the cost of some DPW projects that are already approved have gone "through the roof" lately because of the recent spike in material costs.

Chairman Bower questioned whether the Board should move its planned Work Session with the department heads from Thursday, May 5 to Thursday, May 12, and the other members agreed. The Board will plan to make its final decisions at its regular meeting, the following Tuesday, May 24.

b. Simonds School – Request for Bartlett Funds – Research

Select Board Administrative Assistant Judith Newman-Rogers said that the status of this account is still unclear at this time. After some general discussion, Carson suggested that Newman-Rogers reach out to former Trustee of the Trust Fund Dale Trombley to see if she can provide some background information about how the Bartlett Fund works.

c. Committees and Boards Appointments/Reappointments

- i. Jan Gugliotti, Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA)

Carson made a motion to appoint Gugliotti to a three-year term as an alternate member to the ZBA; Frost seconded. In a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

- ii. Doug Allen, Conservation Commission

Chairman Bower made a motion to re-appoint Allen to a three-year term as an alternate member to the Conservation Commission; Frost seconded. In a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

- iii. Lucinda McQueen to Conservation Commission

Chairman Bower made a motion to appoint McQueen to a three-year term as a member to the Conservation Commission; Frost seconded. In a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

IV. New Business

a. Letter of Resignation – Planning Board Member-- Romeo Dubruil

Chairman Bower announced the receipt of a letter of resignation from Planning Board member Romeo Dubruil. He accepted it on the Board's behalf and thanked Dubruil for his service. Carson noted the Planning Board currently has no alternates.

b. Gear Up Homeschoolers, Rent Relief Request, \$400

Chairman Bower said the Town has received a request from the local Gear Up Homeschoolers program requesting rent relief for the space that it uses in the Warner Community Center (WCC, aka "Old Graded School"). He said he favors granting the request.

Carson said he's a supporter of the program but there is a new School Choice law that might provide funds to the homeschoolers. If Warner residents are getting that money, it could help pay for the program's rent.

Frost noted that the Gear Up program was one of the few that uses the WCC on a regular basis that didn't appear before the Board at a recent general information session about plans to upgrade and/renovate the WCC building and its surrounding property. She suggested that Elizabeth Labbe, who has represented the group at previous Town functions, be invited to a Board meeting to discuss both issues.

Bower and Carson agreed that Labbe be invited to the Board's next meeting.

VI. [SEP] Public Comment [SEP]

A resident asked about the idea of incorporating a new composting function into the revamped Transfer Station. He wondered if it would significantly impact the cost for local property owners using the facility.

Board members noted that studies have shown that as much as 40% of the trash that now goes into the compacter is compostable, so redirecting those materials could result in a significant cost saving in the Town's disposal charges.

Chairman Bower noted that there is also the possibility of selling composted materials, and Frost said if the Warner facility becomes a regional one (servicing other local communities), that would likely create an additional revenue stream.

Frost said that the switch that most homeowners would make, separating compostable refuse from other kinds of trash, is relatively minor. Many residents already separate recyclables. The Board said that there would need to be significantly more research with CMA Engineering before a local composting facility would be instituted.

VII. Administrator's Report

Town Administrator Diane Ricciardelli began by thanking the staff at Pellettieri Associates, the local landscaping/design firm, for their help making improvements to the exterior of the Town Hall building last week, adding plants and trimming the large pine tree.

Ricciardelli is working with Municipal Resources, Inc. (MRI), to finalize the convergence of the Town's financial system to the new system. She said she would be doing the latest Accounts Payable run tomorrow.

Ricciardelli told the Board that the Town has received an email from Robert Garretson about the Warner/Henniker perambulation, which confirms the Town's borders. He's discovered some issues and asked for a meeting with some of the Board members at the site in question, on an upcoming Saturday or Sunday at the members' convenience.

Ricciardelli said that the NH Department of Labor has completed its inspection of all Town buildings and found no major problems. However, there are some minor issues with the Fire and Police stations, and the WCC. Chairman Bower explained that there are some "small, simple" issues at the WCC that need to be addressed, related to lighting, exit signs, etc. He will meet with Ricciardelli soon to review those.

One thing that needs to be done, Ricciardelli said, is adding Eyewash Stations in any buildings that are cleaned by staff, rather than professional cleaners; Warner buildings are cleaned by staff members. The Labor Department will issue a report to the Town soon, and follow that up with spot-checks of the buildings, she added.

VIII. Select Board Other Business

Carson said he's recently connected with Michael Tabory, Deputy Director of the Community Action Program (CAP) of Belknap and Merrimack Counties, about the Head Start program that CAP has been operating in the WCC for several years. Tabory said the organization has still not made a final decision about whether it will restart the program in the fall, but it should be able to provide an answer to the Board next week. Carson added that in the event that the program does not continue, the Board has been discussing the idea of renting the current Head Start space to the Boys and Girls Club of Central New Hampshire for a new childcare program.

Chairman Bower also said it might be a good idea to look at the possibility of making improvements to the second floor of the WCC while the Town is considering other improvements to the structure; some local businesses have expressed support for a new childcare facility in Town and they might be willing to help fund a renovation project that would make an improved space suitable for the proposed Boys and Girls Club childcare program. That would allow the Head Start program to remain in its current space. Bower also suggested that the Board look into doing another walk-around of the WCC with Chris Emond, CEO of the Boys & Girls Club. But he added that it might be better to simply wait until there's a final decision from CAP about its Head Start plans.

Tabory told Carson that even if the Select Board decides to rent its former WCC space to the Boys and Girls Club, CAP might still keep the local Head Start program in Warner by finding an alternative space to rent.

Carson asked Chairman Bower whether Amelia Gardner, the farm manager with Farmsteads New England, is still planning to visit with the Board at its next meeting; there is a tentative plan to develop some space behind the building into a kind of community garden where residents can learn to grow and harvest produce (both onsite and at their homes); some locally-produced vegetables and fruit could be utilized by clients utilizing the Warner Connects Food Pantry in the WCC.

Bower said he is expecting Gardner to be at the next meeting in May.

IX. Consent Agenda

Chair Bower: Motion to Approve as signed by the Warner Select Board:

1. Notice of Intent to Cut for:
 - a. Map 02 Lot 002, 003
 - b. Map 07 Lot 064

2. Notice of Intent to Excavate for:
 - a. Map 03 Lot 084, 10A
 - b. Map 03 Lot 059
 - c. Map 07 Lot 060

- 3. Yield Tax Levy Warrant:
 - a. Map 18 Lot 040-2 \$1,291.66
 - b. Map 07 Lot 039 \$4,362.20

- 4. Gravel Tax Levy Warrant:
 - a. Map 07 Lot 060 \$ 0.00
 - b. Map 07 Lot 064 \$197.82

- 5. Corrections to the Certification of Yield Taxes Assessed:
 - a. Map 20 Lot 020 \$ 90.59
 - b. Map 13 Lot 001 \$ 308.69
 - c. Map 18 Lot 037 \$ 576.65
 - d. Map 12 Lot 53,55,56 \$ 2,204.24
 - e. Map 02 Lot 010 \$ 2,914.75
 - f. Map 06 Lot 029 \$ 2,971.83
 - g. Map 18 Lot 001 \$157,828.48

Carson seconded.

In a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

X. Manifest

None.

XI. Meeting Minutes

None

XII. LPublic CommentL

None.

XIII. Non-Public Session - 91-A:3 II(b) - hiring a public employee

Selectman Bower made a motion to go into non-public session at 8:20 p.m.
 ROLL CALL: Bower, yes; Carson, yes; Frost, yes. Motion passed unanimously.

The Board returned to the public meeting at 9:11 p.m.

Without objection, Chairman Bower adjourned the meeting at 9:12 p.m.