



TOWN OF WARNER

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Select Board
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Select Board Approved Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, 6:30 pm June 7, 2022
Lower Meeting Room Warner Town Hall 5 East Main St

I. 6:30 pm Open the Meeting/Roll Call

Chairman Sam Bower opened the meeting at 6:30 p.m. and recognized the presence of Board member Christine Frost.

Also present: Director of the Department of Public Works (DPW) Tim Allen; Town Clerk Michele Courser; Police Chief Bill Chandler; Conservation Commission Chair Nancy Martin; Water District Supervisor Administrator Ray Martin; Planning Board Chair Ben Frost; Warner Historical Society representative Rebecca Courser; Lois Shea; Ken Cogswell; Martha Mical; Peter Flynn; Select Board Administrative Assistant Judith Newman-Rogers; Town Administrator Diane Ricciardelli; several Red Chimney Road Residents and Recording Secretary Ray Carbone.

Chair Sam Bower introduced audience member Lois Shea as newly selected Select Board member. He said Lois will be filling the seat vacated by Clyde Carson (who stepped down to fill the Finance Director position) until the March 2023 Town election.

II. Appointments

a. Boston Post Cane – Informational, Rebecca Courser

Representing the Warner Historical Society, Courser briefly explained the history of the Boston Post cane. The ebony canes (with gold heads) were given to communities throughout New England by the now-defunct Boston newspaper as a way to increase circulation in the region. The canes were to be presented to the Town's oldest resident. Many of the canes have disappeared over the years, but Warner's is still held safely by the Historical Society.

A ceremony awarding the cane to 96-year-old Phil Lord is planned for Saturday, June 25, at the United Church of Warner, where Phil and his wife Mary have attended for approximately 50 years. Lord is actually the oldest male resident; an older woman has declined to accept the cane due to health-related concerns.

Chairman Bower is planning to be in attendance.

a. Red Chimney Road Culvert Grant – Obstacle to Proceeding

Chairman Bower opened the discussion by talking about a project that the Town has been working on for some time. It involves \$200,000 in grant money that aims to protect a trout corridor and improve safety on Red Chimney Road. Bower then introduced DPW Director Tim Allen and asked him to provide some background.

Allen said he was approached several years ago by several State agencies - Department of Transportation (DOT), NH Fish & Game as well as the Basil W. Woods Jr. Chapter (Concord) of the nonprofit Trout Unlimited about an Aquatic Resource Mitigation Fund (AMRS) grant that would help pay for mitigation work after damage caused by construction work on Interstate 89. Allen worked with representatives of the DOT, the Town's Conservation Commission and the Warner River Local Advisory Board to come up with a three-step plan for the project.

The Town applied for and received grant money and decided to start at the most downstream point of the waterway. The Town needed two Right-Of-Way (ROW) easements to do the necessary construction and future maintenance from two property owners. The Town secured one easement, but has been unable to get the second easement from property owner Hastings Rigollet. Without that easement, the project cannot move forward and the Town will lose approximately \$200,000 in grant money.

Red Chimney Road resident Richard Colfer said he heard rumors that metal guardrails will be part of the project when the work is completed. Allen said that his goal is to complete the work the same way the already-completed portion of the project has been done, with wooden guardrails.

Another resident complained that the road is one of the most neglected in Warner. She said that it sounded like the proposed work would only increase water runoff onto her property.

Allen said he's aware of the neglect and has Red Chimney on his DPW plans for the next four years. But he said doing any significant roadwork before this culvert project is completed would be "putting the cart before the horse."

Allen said a lot of the proposed roadwork is dependent on funding, which this culvert grant money would help move forward. He said that his goal is to be on the top of Red Chimney Road (with all work completed below) within the next five years.

Frost suggested that the Red Chimney Road residents come to committee and board meetings when the Town begins crafting its annual budget in the fall, to make sure that their concerns are heard. She also pointed out that, while there are some projects that can be done by Allen's DPW regular road crew (such as the planned maintenance of the culverts), there are larger projects that need the input of designers and contractors, such as this culvert project. (The recent inflationary costs of materials is making delays increasingly expensive, she added.)

Frost said the Select Board has held a number of nonpublic sessions with Rigollet trying to resolve his concerns. She asked him if he had any questions.

Rigollet said he has not seen any documented statement that his property interests will be preserved. "I don't want guardrails in my driveway," he said.

Chair Bower said it might be possible to get an update from the DOT about options that could resolve Rigollet's concerns. Town Administrator Ricciardelli said she could have a reply from DOT by Thursday morning.

After some additional time spent discussing the best way to address Rigollet's concerns, he stated, "I'm not going to sign an easement."

Frost indicated that it would then be best for the Town to look into a "fallback plan" for the project. Ricciardelli said she would have to check with DOT and, again, she may be able to get a reply by Thursday.

Chair Bower said he was still willing to continue to try to resolve Rigollet's concerns. "It sounds like there are some frustrated folks on that side of Town," he said. He said the Town could lose a \$200,000 grant and that's a significant amount of money.

The Board agreed to meet once more with Rigollet in a nonpublic session.

Select Board member Frost thanked the Red Chimney Road residents for attending the meeting and for the respectful tone of the discussion.

c. Nancy Martin, Conservation Commission

i. Fund Withdrawal

Conservation Commission Chair Nancy Martin asked the Board to approve the Commission's request to withdraw \$35,000 from the Conservation Fund; the money would pay for the appraisal and the Town's contribution to create a conservation easement for the Blue Moon Berry Farm property, Waldron Hill Road.

The money approved at Town Meeting includes \$25,000 to keep the Conservation Fund from dropping close to \$0; that would allow the Commission to have some leeway to address other interesting properties that may come to its attention this year.

**Frost made a motion to approve the request; Bower seconded.
In a voice vote, the Board unanimously approved the motion.**

III. Old Business

a. June 25 Auction of Town Owned Properties - Status

- i. Auctioneer Promoting Event Multiple Ways
- ii. Pre-view Date - Sat, June 18

The Board held a brief discussion about the upcoming auction. Town officials said that St. Jean Auctioneers of Epping is handling all of the details.

b. Select Board Member Candidates - Status

Chair Bower again acknowledged the presence of Lois Shea and thanked her for volunteering to serve on the Board.

c. Housing Committee – Creation and Oversight Authority

Chair Bower talked about discussions the Board had some months ago about establishing a Housing Subcommittee that would study issues related to affordable housing in Warner. However, recently the Board decided to consider asking the Planning Board to establish and manage the Housing Committee, since most of its finding would likely fall under that group’s jurisdiction. Bower introduced Planning Board Chair Ben Frost and asked him to outline the idea.

Ben Frost said that the Planning Board met the previous night and had an initial discussion; some members were missing but there was a quorum. He said some members expressed reservations about the committee idea, and that he planned to come back to the group’s August meeting with an outline of how the new Committee might work, what its goals would be, etc.

Ben Frost noted that, as part of Gov. Sununu’s “Invest NH” \$100 million housing initiative, there is a \$5 million grant program that towns can use to fund studies related to housing. Under that, Warner could likely hire a housing expert to work with the Housing Committee for two years as it looks into affordable housing issues; that work could include a review of portions of the Master Plan as well as proposed revisions to zoning ordinances, etc. “It would be a pretty involved process,” he said.

The Board requested that Ben Frost keep them up-to-date on the process.

d. Warner Community Center - Boys and Girls Club Lease Update

Chair Bower said that the Central New Hampshire Boys and Girls Club is close to signing a lease to use space in the Warner Community Center (WCC) to begin operating a childcare center in the fall. Bower said he’s meeting with Club representatives next Monday to work out the final details.

Select Board member Frost expressed thanks to the Economic Development Advisory Committee and Chair Charlie Albano for working to get this done. “It’s extremely exciting for the Town,” she added.

Bower said that the Club and the Town still have to agree on a rental figure.

IV. New Business

a. Wage Scale – Remove Steps, Keep Grade Low and High

Town Administrator Diane Ricciardelli explained to the Board that the Town pays employees according to a Grade and Step scale. But after the Board approved a Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) for all employees effective January 2022 with a July 2% wage pool for departments possible for merit increases after performance reviews, the Steps were found to

be unworkable. Working with Finance Director Clyde Carson, she proposed that the Board stay with the Grade system, but remove the Steps from the Town's Wage Scale.

Select Board member Frost asked if employees were aware of the proposed change. Ricciardelli said they would know when their annual increases are enacted in July. Frost said that she preferred that the change be announced beforehand, i.e., that a notice regarding the new system be sent out to everyone. Ricciardelli said she would map out the specifics of the new system and bring it to the Board's next meeting.

Chair Bower suggested that employees be invited to that meeting where they could address any questions to the Board.

b. Request to Fly Pride Flag on June 25

Ricciardelli said the Town received two requests to fly a "Pride" flag at Town Hall on June 25, which is being recognized as National Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Pride Day.

After a brief discussion, **Chair Bower made a motion to approve the request. Frost seconded, with the proviso that the minutes show that concerns were raised at the meeting about the possibility the action resulting in the Town being inundated with requests to fly other flags.**

In a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

c. Warner Village Water Precinct - Invoice for Redevelopment of Well #1

i. Reduce ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act Fund) Request Amount – \$21,265

Water District Commission Ray Martin told the Board that the cost of the work the District has done came in "a lot lower" than what was estimated. The previous request was for \$75,000 but that figure is lowered to \$21,265.

Select Board member Frost made a motion to approve the request. Bower seconded. In a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

d. Mower/Tractor for Department of Public Works (DPW)

Select Board member Frost noted that the May 12, 2022 Board minutes contains a list of items that would be eligible for ARPA funds, including a "Tractor/Mower." These are two different items, she said, and the Board has already approved the Mower purchase. She said the minutes need to be corrected.

In addition, Town Administrator Diane Ricciardelli recently noted that there are still APRA funds that could be used for the Tractor purchase.

Frost made a motion to approve spending \$33,523 for the purchase of a tractor for the DPW; Bower seconded, adding that the purchase would be made from Knoxland Equipment in Warner.

In a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

e. Appointment to Pillsbury Free Library Board of Trustees

Chair Bower said the Library has recommended Thomas Heise be appointed as a Board of Trustees Alternative member. Chair made that motion; Frost seconded. In a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

V. Administrator's Report

Town Administrator Ricciardelli said the Board has already addressed all the issues in her report.

VI. Select Board Other Business

Select Board member Frost said plans for a special opening of the Skateboard Park on June 25 had to be pushed back due to a delay in shipping the equipment. The new date in July will be announced shortly.

A potluck fundraising for the Parks and Recreation Commission is scheduled for July 10. In addition, a concert at Riverside Park is scheduled for Aug. 20, 5-8 p.m., will raise funds for the Warner Food Pantry.

VII. Public Comment

DPW Director Tim Allen said that a utility company has contacted him about storing approximately 45 utility poles on Town property. He said he didn't have room on DPW property but it was suggested that the poles could be stored, approximately 15 at a time, on property behind the shed at the Transfer Station. They would be stored on a truck and there would be no interference with Transfer Station operations.

Martha Mical said there could be insurance issues related to the storage. Town Administrator Ricciardelli said she could check with Primax, the Town's insurance company, about the issue; the utility company could be asked to provide a binder.

Chairman Bower said that as long as the insurance issue is resolved, there should be no problems associated with storing the poles temporarily.

VIII. Consent Agenda

Select Board member Frost made a motion to approve, as signed by the Warner Select Board:

1. Request to the Trustees of Trust Funds to pay to the Town of Warner from The Bridge Capital Reserve Fund:
 - a. \$ 3,365.50 for payment to *Moser Engineering* for Red Chimney Road/Ballard Brook Crossing Easement work.

2. Veteran Tax Credit, \$500.00, Map 11 Lot 050

3. Building Permits:
 - a. Map 14 L0t 029-1-8
 - b. Mao 34 Lot 013
 - c. Map 15 Lot 025
 - d. Map 12 Lot 47

IX. Manifest

Select Board member Frost made a motion to approve Manifest dated June 7, 2022, and order the Treasurer to sign:

- Accounts Payable checks number 6043 through 6051, date 5/26/2022, in the amount \$332,226.93, which includes a payment of \$306,476 to the Kearsarge Regional School District.
- Payroll transfer check number 6052, dated 6/1/2022, in the amount of \$40,722.22.
- Payroll check numbers 7188 through 7198, dated 6/2/2022, with a net check and direct deposits totaling \$40,722.22.
- Account Payable check number 6053, dated 6/23/2022, in the amount of \$2,687.96.
- Account Payable check numbers 6054 through 6092, dated 6/7/2022, in the amount of \$37,131.10.

Bower seconded.

In a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

X. Meeting Minutes: 04/14, 04/26, 5/10, 5/12, 5/24, all 2022

Select Board member Frost made a motion to approve the Board's minutes from April 14, April 26, and May 10, 2022 (as amended, above). Bower seconded.

In a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

XI. Non-Public Session - Under RSA 91-A:3 II.a Personal (If needed)

Chairman Bower made a motion to go into a Non-Public Session under RSA 91-A:3 II – Personal; Frost seconded.

ROLL CALL: Bower, yes; Frost, yes. The motion passed unanimously.

XII. Adjourn

The Board adjourned the Public Session of the meeting at 9:05 p.m.