Wolfeboro Board of Selectmen

Public Meeting Minutes-Unapproved

COVID-19 Meeting- GoToMeeting

December 2, 2020

**Board Members present:** Chairman Brad Harriman, Paul O’Brien, Dave Senecal, Dave

Bowers, and Linda Murray

**Staff present:** Town Manager Jim Pineo, Parks and Recreation Director Christine Collins, Public Works Director Dave Ford, Finance Director Kathryn Carpentier, Tim Greene, Town Auditor, Secretary Michele Chamberlain, Secretary Amy Capone Muccio and Recording Secretary Christine Doherty

Chairman Harriman opened the GoToMeeting at 6:30 PM.

Chairman Harriman read the following Preamble into the record:

**MEETING PREAMBLE DURING COVID-19 EMERGENCY**

*Good Evening, as Chairman of the Wolfeboro Board of Selectmen, I am declaring that an emergency exists and I am invoking the provisions of RSA 91-A:2, III (b). Federal, state, and local officials have determined that gatherings of 10 or more people pose a substantial risk to our community in its continuing efforts to combat the spread of COVID-19. In concurring with their determination, I also find that this meeting is imperative to the continued operation of town government and services, which are vital to public safety and confidence during this emergency. As such, this meeting will be conducted without a quorum of this body physically present in the same location.*

*At this time, I also welcome members of the public accessing this meeting remotely. Even though this meeting is being conducted in a unique manner under unusual circumstances, the usual rules of conduct and decorum apply. Any person found to be disrupting this meeting will be asked to cease the disruption. Should the disruptive behavior continue thereafter, that person will be removed from this meeting.*

*Please note that all votes that are taken during this meeting shall be done by Roll Call vote.*

*Let’s start the meeting by taking a Roll Call attendance. When each member states their*

*name please state whether there is anyone in the room with you during this meeting, which*

*is required under the Right-to-Know law.*

**The Board Members gave a Roll call vote, Paul O’Brien – present and alone in his house,**

**Dave Senecal - present and alone in his office in his house, Linda Murray– present and**

**alone in a room in her house, Brad Harriman – present and alone in a room in his house**

**and Dave Bowers – present and alone in a room in his house.**

**Non-Public Session RSA 91-A:3, II a**

Mr. Pineo stated a non-public session is needed to discuss employment and acquisition of property. Mr. Pineo also discussed a packet that was received relating to the tax rate to add to the Agenda.

**Consideration of Minutes**

Chairman Harriman asked for approval from the Board of the November 4, 2020 ToGoMeeting Budget Minutes.

**It was moved by Jim Pineo and seconded by Paul O’Brien to accept the minutes of November 4, 2020 as amended. Roll call vote Brad Harriman – yes, Linda Murray – yes, Dave Bowers – yes, Dave Senecal – yes, and Paul O’Brien - yes. Being none opposed, the motion passed.**

Chairman Harriman asked for approval from the Board of the November 9, 2020 ToGoMeeting Minutes.

**It was moved by Dave Senecal and seconded by Paul O’Brien to accept the minutes of November 9, 2020 as written. Roll call vote Linda Murray – yes, Dave Bowers – yes, Dave Senecal – yes, Brad Harriman – yes, and Paul O’Brien - yes. Being none opposed, the motion passed.**

Chairman Harriman asked for approval from the Board of the November 18, 2020 ToGoMeeting Budget Minutes.

**It was moved by Paul O’Brien and seconded by Linda Murray to accept the minutes of November 18, 2020 as amended. Roll call vote Brad Harriman – yes, Linda Murray – yes, Dave Bowers – yes, Dave Senecal – yes, and Paul O’Brien - yes. Being none opposed, the motion passed.**

**Public Hearings**

**Temporary Events**

1. New England Chapter, Antique and Classic Boat Society to host a Boat Show on July 24, 2021 from 6:00 AM to 2:00 PM at the Town Docks, Parking lot, Cate Park and Community Bandstand. Permit# 2021-5

Chairman Harriman opened the public hearing.

Scott Robinson, Representative of the New England Chapter, Antique & Classic Boat Society due to speak. Unable to reach him but he was online. Linda Murray said it’s a reoccurring event and we should move forward. A map will need to be provided and insurance is required within 2 weeks of the event via the guidelines of the State of NH.

Chairman Harriman closed the public hearing.

**It was moved by Dave Senecal and seconded by Linda Murray to authorize the Town Manager to move forward accepting the proposed event of the New England Chapter, Antique and Classic Boat Society on July 24, 2021 from 6:00 AM to 2:00 PM at the Town Docks, Parking Lot, Cate Parke and Community Bandstand Permit #2021-5. Roll call vote Brad Harriman – yes, Linda Murray – yes, Dave Bowers – yes, Dave Senecal – yes, and Paul O’Brien - yes. Being none opposed, the motion passed.**

**Public Input**

**(**Limited to 3 Minutes per resident, not to exceed 15 minutes in total)

Chairman Harriman opened the public hearing.

Suzanne Ryan, Resident of Wolfeboro, requested that at some point would she be able to get the net valuation of the town or exemptions the auditor may have when setting the tax rate.

Jim Pineo stated we can tie this in with Tim Greene’s, the Town Auditor, report.

**Bulk Vote**

1. **Weekly Manifests**
2. November 20, 2020
3. November 27, 2020
4. **Intent to Cut Wood or Timber/Warrant**
5. North Line Road Tax Map 52 Lot 1

1. **Property Tax Exemptions/Credits**
2. 29 Spruce Rd Tax Map 228 Lot 25
3. 188 S Main St Tax Map 218 Lot 97
4. 35 Bird Rd Tax Map 173 Lot 21

**It was moved by Linda Murray and seconded by Paul O’Brien to approve the Bulk Vote items A-C. Roll call vote Brad Harriman – yes, Linda Murray – yes, Dave Bowers – yes, Dave Senecal – yes, and Paul O’Brien - yes. Being none opposed, the motion passed.**

**Board/Committee Appointments**

1. David Stauch Ag Commission Member to Alt.
2. Lawreen Strauch Ag Commission Member-1 year term

**It was moved by Linda Murray and seconded by Dave Senecal to appoint David Stauch Ag Commission Member to Alt. for a term to expire 3/2021 and to appoint Lawreen Strauch Ag Commission Member for a term of 1 year to expire 3/2021. Roll call vote Brad Harriman – yes, Linda Murray – yes, Dave Bowers – yes, Dave Senecal – yes, and Paul O’Brien - yes. Being none opposed, the motion passed.**

**New Business**

1. **Discussion of 2019 Audit**

Tim Greene, Town Auditor - report see attached

Greene stated one issue was that a lot of items were not ready for audit. Reconciliation of accounts should be done monthly so the General Ledger can be kept up to date. The town hired outside auditors to help out. A draft was sent to the town in November with the final report done by the end of November.

Paul O’Brien had two questions for Tim Greene

1. Is it paying down the debt of the bond that the surplus exists?

Tim Green: That is correct.

1. Where do I find the amount of uncollectible property tax that was written off?

Tim Green: Page 34 and is the same as the year before. Do not have the amount abated in 2019 as of now.

1. **Approval of the Josiah Brown Scholarship Approvals**

Jim Pineo expressed an interest to the town treasurer of increasing the amount awarded. Town Treasurer recommends we stay at the $1,500. There are five returning parties for the last award and one new one this year.

O’Brien asked the reason for the Treasurer’s recommendation.

Pineo said it may be the amount of revenue coming in at this point.

Murray was surprised to hear this recommendation as there is a surplus and Paul O’Brien agreed.

Harriman suggested bumping up the amount to $2,000.

**It was moved by Dave Senecal and seconded by Linda Murray to increase the amount to $2,000 for the fall scholarship. Roll call vote Brad Harriman – yes, Linda Murray – yes, Dave Bowers – yes, Dave Senecal – yes, and Paul O’Brien - yes. Being none opposed, the motion passed.**

Harriman read out the names of the recipients, congratulated them and wished them good luck

Cameron Hopkins

Alexander Hopkins

McKenzie Chamberlain

Lily Green

Ben Shaw

Kaitlyn Folsom

1. **Wedding Permit Policy**

Pineo stated the increase in the use of venues in town for weddings. Linda, Amy and Christine put tother a policy and procedure rough draft so that going forward a general policy would be in place for public/town properties. Amy stated that the town has been using the Temporary Event process for Cate Park but some events have reached 100 people and included chairs.

A policy that is used for Prescott Park in Portsmouth was reviewed for ideas.

The areas to include on the policy will be Cate Park and Libby Museum/Boat Launch area.

Christine Collins said a specific software could be used to help collaborate Town Hall and Parks and Rec online to include information for the public and to receive payment.

Linda Murray said 50 people at Cate Park was large enough for an event and leave space in the park for the public as well. Libby max should be 10 due to parking. Maybe we can open up other spaces in the future.

Paul said a great job was done putting the policy rough draft together and agrees with not utilizing other spaces until we put some structure around this. Premier and returning events will take precedence over onetime events.

Harriman asked if we had received requests for Abenaki?

Christine stated that Abenaki does have lodge rentals and has an alcohol permit.

It was discussed clarifying the area specifically at the Libby Museum.

Murray says we are going in the right direction and it looks good.

1. **Warrant Articles 2021**

Jim Pineo stated that there are a significant amount of warrant articles and suggested holding a separate meeting to go through them all. All bonds, cash and warrant articles total 9.6 million that is just sitting there.

Paul O’Brien – Linda and I spoke about the warrant article for the Public Safety Building Project and wanted to know how much was in the kitty? We also spoke to Dave Senecal for a list of items we need. If we have enough we don’t need a warrant article?

Linda Murray agreed about signing off on warrants next Wednesday (12/9/2020).

Pineo was concerned but said it may not be possible due to the preliminary tax rate

Paul O’Brien said it is important to get the tax bills out.

Kathy said we can make a decision in the short term on the tax rate knowing where the surplus is and that she would run the software to get the warrant article to Paul. But if the tax rate isn’t decided tonight it would push back the bills.

Paul asked about a buy down on the tax rate.

Kathy said we have three options, keep the rate, change the rate or by it down but she would need to know by tomorrow to lock it in with the DRA. She received the preliminary tax rate from the DRA today at a rate of $13.01. Rate is down 17.9%. Valuation has increased and residential homes are up 18.6%. She also stated the tax rate would have gone down any ways even if we hadn’t done the revaluation. See attached Tax Rate Sheet. (?)

Paul O’Brien asked - So you are looking for an assent to we recommend we do not buy down the tax rate correct?

Kathy essentially said yes. Save the kitty, use it for future spending. If you do buy down your tax rate this year then essentially if you don’t use that same number next year you are going to have that increase on your tax bill. It’s a one year help only if you use the same number next year.

Pineo asked - Would next Wednesday be a good night for the board to do the warrant articles?

A discussion was had about the undesignated funds and Harriman suggested putting some of that money out there for a tax break during COVID.

Endorse the recommendation of Town Manager and Financial Director relative to the use of the unrestricted fund balance toward warrant articles. Not to be used to decrease the tax rate for the year of 2020. Resulting in a $13.01 tax rate.

**It was moved by Paul O’Brien and seconded by Dave Senecal to endorse the recommendation of the Town Manager and Finance Director relative to the use of the unrestricted fund balance toward warrant articles. Not to be used to decrease the tax rate for the year of 2020. Resulting in a $13.01 tax rate. Roll call vote Brad Harriman – no, Linda Murray – yes, Dave Bowers – yes, Dave Senecal – yes, and Paul O’Brien - yes. Brad Harriman being opposed, the motion passed.**

1. **Warmth and More Fund Update**

Amy has been working with others to increase donations. There is currently $14,500 in the fund.

Linda Murray asked if we were doing anything with the electric bills where customers can round their bill up to donate.

Pineo said he wasn’t sure if we can accommodate that, but we are working on it.

**Other Business**

Nothing to report

**Committee Reports**

Paul O’Brien: Budget Committee, Dock Committee, also there is a survey on the town website pertaining to Atlantic Broadband (cable company)

Dave Senecal: Budget Committee, Public Safety Building (potential locations)

Linda Murray: Energy Committee (location for a car charging station), Wedding/Event Policy, Special Events (Last night events cancelled, all virtual, except for Scavenger Hunt 12/26-12/31)

Brad Harriman: Planning board, Budget Committee

**Town Manager Report**

Mr. Pineo stated the following:

Town Hall has been closed for appointments only due to a COVID exposure. Cases are increasing and we are encouraging the use of drop boxes and online services.

Budgets are under way. No sign off on fireworks on public property this holiday season.

Received a petition for the layout of a road. Should we get it on the Betterment Assessment for 2021. Concerned that we already have a significant number of projects for the 2021 Budget season. If we took on this road it means additional work for staff and maintenance of the roadway. And, if we continue to take on more roads, we will need to add on to our Highway Dept. Does the Board want to entertain this petition?

Linda Murray: If we say no, they can just get a petition with 25 signatures and then we are required to put it on the warrant article.

Dave Ford stated we pay for it if they petition and it goes directly to a warrant article. But if the selectmen do not support it, it won’t be on the budget.

Dave continued, when we took over two roads recently it stressed us to the max. When do we need to add employees? We need to know the cost of taking care of another road. We should put it on hold for 2021 to come up with a process and know the liability going forward.

Harriman said why don’t we have them go through the process but not do anything for a year so we could research what it would cost or take to do this. With no promises to the landowner. We will tell them we need more time. This is just the beginning of many roads to come. It will increase the value of our town.

Pineo stated Attorney Puffer would let him know what needs to be done.

Paul O’Brien stated the Highway Department is at a breaking point.

We would love to do it, but it is not in our sites for the upcoming year.

**Questions from the Press**

Jake with WCTV asked: Regarding the closure of town hall, will hybrid meetings be moving to full virtual?

Pineo answered that a cleaning schedule is set up and appropriate spacing is used, so hybrid meetings will continue.

**Public Input**

**(**Limited to 3 Minutes per resident, not to exceed 15 minutes in total)

Suzanne Ryan, Wolfeboro Resident, recapped what Paul said about people expecting things. “I have always opposed taking over roads in this town. The town road map needs to be looked over for other projects.”

She also discussed the setting of the tax rate and using the surplus balance, that tax payers gave to the town but you want to use it for the warrant articles. “I would like to see some come back to me”

**It was moved by Paul O’Brien and seconded by Dave Senecal to enter into non-public session under RSA 91-A: 3 II to discuss personnel matters. Roll call vote, Dave Bowers – yes, Linda Murray – yes, Brad Harriman – yes, Paul O’Brien – yes and Dave Senecal – yes. Being none opposed, the motion passed.**

The Board re-entered public session at 10:29 PM.

**Paul O’Brien moved the Wolfeboro Board of Selectmen to seal the minutes of the December 2, 2020 non-public meeting. Dave Senecal seconded. Roll call vote, Dave Bowers – yes, Linda Murray – yes, Brad Harriman – yes, Paul O’Brien – yes and Dave Senecal – yes. Being none opposed, the motion passed.**

**It was moved by Dave Senecal and seconded by Brad Harriman to adjourn at 10:31 PM. Roll call vote, Dave Bowers – yes, Linda Murray – yes, Brad Harriman – yes, Paul O’Brien – yes and Dave Senecal – yes. Being none opposed, the motion passed.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Christine Metcalfe Doherty