TOWN OF CHESHIRE

80 CHURCH STREET | CHESHIRE, MASSACHUSETTS 01225
PHONE (413) 743-1690 | FAX (413) 743-0389

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OFFICE OF THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Board of Selectmen
Finance Committee

Meeting Minutes –April 30, 2024

Pursuant to a notice duly filed with the Town Clerk, a meeting of the Board of Selectmen was held in person at 191 Church Street (Cheshire Community House) on Tuesday April 30, 2024, at 6:00 PM.

Board of Selectmen Members Present: Shawn McGrath, Chair
Jason Levesque, Vice Chair
Ray Killeen, Member
Michelle Francesconi, Member
Ron DeAngelis, Member

Others Present : Jennifer Morse, Town Administrator ; Corey McGrath, DPW Director; Ed Bassi, HLD Prudential Committee; Liseann Karandisecky, HLD Prudential Committee; Lynn Melchiori; Ron Charbeneau; Dean Creighton; Peter Traub; Whitney Flynn; Eileen Quinn, AT Committee; Art Kaufman; Lyle Caouette; Christine Emerson, Town Clerk.

S. McGrath opened the meeting of the Board of Selectmen at 6:30 p.m.

Discussion/Decision Items

A. Hoosac Lake Public Beach Discussion requested by Peter Traub

Peter Traub requested the meeting to discuss the potential for a public beach at Hoosac Lake. He stated that he was told to come before the board to discuss, the Town Administrator clarified that Mr. Traub was contacting state agencies inquiring about a public beach at Cheshire Lake under no authority of the Board. . Mr. Traub informed the board that he had been discussing with the Planning Board, Recreation Department and various other boards and committees the possibility of a public beach at the lake. Mr. Traub sent several documents prior to the meeting (in packet), he stated that he feels that a public beach would bring and retain people to the area, he discussed the privately owned Horns Beach of the past. Mr. Traub went on to say that Farnum's Crossing is owned by the Town and maintained by the State (DCR), and he inquired about a written agreement between the two entities. It was noted that the State (OFBA) put in the docks and fishing piers and that the DPW director is currently working to upgrade the boat launch with OFBA. Liseann Karandisecky, Hoosac Lake District Prudential Committee Chair shared that DCR does not want a public beach at Farnum's Crossing, a feasibility study shows that the lake is better for fishing and that the culvert flow at that location would not be safe for a beach. Further she went on to state that the North Basin is being treated according to the approved NOI, that a Lake Management Plan is in process, she takes offense to the statement that Mr. Traub made about HLD not wanting undesirables at the lake, the lake is better suited for other recreational

and wildlife activities such as boating, kayaking, bird watching, fishing. The Town and HLD are currently working on a grant for dredging and well as a grant for a phosphorus study. She further stated that the water in the lake turns over every fourteen days as it is a river and wondered who was going to handle the parking, sound complaints and trash not to mention water testing, lifeguard and other expenses such as increased insurance.

Lyle Caouette stated that on a nice weekend there is no parking available at the causeway or boat launch area.

S. McGrath pointed out that there is a difference between Pontoosuc Lake and Cheshire Lake, the sediment and depth issues are concerning, and he believes the best use is to keep it natural and to complete the phosphorus study and lake management plans. R. Killeen mentioned that the lake is too shallow but is a prime location for kayaking and wildlife preservation. The DPW director spoke about the new dock going in at the boat launch in the next few weeks.

S. McGrath asked Mr. Traub not to approach state entities regarding a public beach at Cheshire Lake, moving forward he should contact the Town and the HLD in order to have a coordinated effort.

B. Appalachian Trail Sign

Eileen Quinn joined the board to discuss the AT Kiosk that was previously at Lealand Park. The preferred new location is on the sidewalk in the parking lot adjacent to School Street. This location will be safe from plow damage and gives ample parking to hikers. S. McGrath suggested that perhaps DCR could help with parking lot improvements to the area. M. Francesconi inquired about the coolers that are often left and if there could be a wooden enclosure, there was a discussion about possible solutions. There was also discussion about adding a trash can to the area and the Town Administrator will investigate another Bear Proof Receptacle Grant. Eileen shared that June 15th is AT clean up day and they hope to install the kiosk at that time. The Little Library also came up as it was removed from Leland Park, the structure has rotted, discussion on replacing it and placing it next to the kiosk, this will be further explored.

C. Town Clerk Discussion

The Town Clerk asked for the meeting to bring up two subjects, first she would like to see the Clerk office used as secure storage, it is not feasible to use the space for the library since they would have to install a doorway which would lose bookshelf space. She also discussed the possibility of the library utilizing the space that was formerly the Assessor's office on the second floor for classes or a kid's section. . S. McGrath noted that they would take the suggestions under advisement but would like to wait until a new clerk is in place to see what those needs might be. R. Killeen asked the Town Clerk about giving him a walk through the of the space.

D. LB Contract for Roadway Resurfacing Summer 2024

The contract was presented in the package, R. DeAngelis inquired about prevailing wage payroll, the Town Administrator shared that it is turned into the town and kept with all contract documents in case of an audit. The project includes Full depth reclamation of Ingalls Road, Stewart White Road along with resurfacing of Yorkshire Drive, Wiltshire Drive, Devonshire Drive, Hutchinson Lane, Curran Road and Ingalls Crossing. The total cost of the project is $1,016,414.80 and is funded with a Mass Works grant and Chapter 90 funds.

A motion was made by J. Levesque and seconded by R. Killeen to approve the LB Contract for Roadway Resurfacing Summer 2024.

Roll Call Vote: R. DeAngelis – Yes; R. Killeen – Yes; J. Levesque – Yes; M. Francesconi – Yes; S. McGrath – Yes
Motion Carries: 5-0

E. Appoint NBEMS Representative John Meaney to the Public Safety Complex Building Committee

A motion was made by S. McGrath and seconded by R. Killeen to appoint John Meaney to the Public Safety Complex Building Committee

Roll Call Vote: R. DeAngelis – Yes; R. Killeen – Yes; J. Levesque – Yes; M. Francesconi – Abstain; S. McGrath – Yes

Motion Carries: 4-0-1

F. Cheshire Rod and Gun Club Licenses

A motion was made by M. Francesconi and seconded by S. McGrath to approve the Cheshire Rod and Gun Club One Day Liquor Licenses for May 4, 2024, and May 18, 2024.

Roll Call Vote: R. DeAngelis – Yes; R. Killeen – Yes; J. Levesque – Abstain; M. Francesconi – Yes; S. McGrath – Yes

Motion Carries: 4-0-1

G. Short Term Rentals – General Bylaw

The Town Administrator informed the board that the Planning Board voted to table the Short-Term Bylaw at their meeting last week. Town Counsel has said that the Board of Selectmen can move forward with the bylaw as a General Bylaw. A DRAFT version was reviewed based on what Great Barrington has put into place, the Town Administrator also shared that the Town of Orange and a few other communities are in the same process and will get additional drafts to review.

H. Budget Discussion

The Town Administrator asked if the current numbers in the DRAFT budget are set to be implemented into the Warrant. She also shared the draft article and motion for the HVRSD budget, additionally it was noted that the passage of the HVRSD has no impact on the rest of the town operating budget articles as they are all voted on individually now instead of in one article. Discussion turned to the HVRSD budget, M. Francesconi stated that the decision to move forward with a Prop 2 ½ question for the school budget would put the decision in the hands of the voters an that the town. There was discussion on the district agreement and the need to implement a five-year rolling average, so towns are not impacted with a change of just two students. J. Levesque requested an itemized list of what E&D funds are earmarked to be used for. The conversation turned to the Student Resource Officer position, it was agreed that the position is needed however the Town of Adams, District and Cheshire should all be at the table to discuss, R. DeAngelis shared that he attended the school committee meeting on Monday evening and they talked about the position but only to say they would support it if the town supported the budget, which was also in the email from Superintendent Dean.

The board discussed the request for a new cruiser and boom mower. It was noted that the Boom Mower is a piece of equipment used daily in the summer, that the current mower is 20 years old and often broken down. The DPW director confirmed that the price to contract roadside mowing would be astronomical. The Town Administrator was instructed to get information regarding borrowing for the cruiser and for the boom mower based on different scenarios.

The Town Administrator reviewed a list of earmarked articles to verify if they should be placed on the warrant. A draft warrant will be reviewed at the next meeting with the finance committee in attendance.

Consent Agenda

- Minutes – Tabled
- Account Payable and Payroll Warrant

A motion was made by S. McGrath and seconded by J. Levesque to approve the accounts payable and payroll warrant.

Roll Call Vote: R. DeAngelis – Yes; R. Killeen – Yes; J. Levesque – Yes; M. Francesconi – Yes; S. McGrath – Yes
Motion Carries: 5-0

Town Administrator Updates

The Town Administrator shared that a new employment application was drafted and reviewed by counsel.

Announcements from Board Members

M. Francesconi noted that the Memorial Day Committee is looking for student essays and the reading of the Gettysburg address.

Public Comment – None

Adjournment

A motion was made by S. McGrath and seconded by R. DeAngelis to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 p.m.
Roll Call Vote: R. DeAngelis – Yes; R. Killeen – Yes; J. Levesque – Yes; M. Francesconi – Yes; S. McGrath – Yes
Motion Carries: 5-0

Respectfully Submitted:
Jennifer Morse
May 10, 2024

Document List

- Agenda – April 30, 2024
- Email from Peter Traub re: Possible Beach on Cheshire Lake
- AT Sign Map/Kiosk
- LB Corporation Contract Summer Paving 2024
- Short Term Rentals Bylaw DRAFT
- Employment Application DRAFT
- DRAFT Article and Motion for HVRSD Budget
- Email from Superintendent Dean regarding SRO Position Discussion

Approved: May 14, 2024