

Colebrook Select Board Meeting

September 8, 2021

Colebrook Town Hall Courtroom

Select Board Members Present: Greg Placy, Chairperson, Suzanne Collins, Ray Gorman

Town of Colebrook Staff Members: Melanie Mathieu, Tax Collector; Aaron Miller

Meeting was called to order at 1:00 pm.

REGULAR AGENDA

The Board reviewed the draft application that is being submitted to DES on 9/9/2021. The Board took up NH DES Form 2 - *Authority to Submit Drinking Water and Groundwater Trust Fund Funding Application for the Colebrook Water System.*

Selectman Suzanne Collins made a motion to submit a Drinking Water and Groundwater Trust Fund funding application to the NH Department of Environmental Services to fund a water system improvement project. The motion was seconded by Ray Gorman.

Chairman Greg Placy asked if there were any comments related to the motion.

Greg stated that the total grant application is for \$1,397,000.

There being no further discussion, questions, or comments, he called for a vote on the motion.

Gorman voted yes; Collins voted yes; and Placy voted yes.

Selectman Suzanne Collins made a motion to authorize Greg Placy, Chairman of the Board of Selectmen to execute any documents which may be necessary to complete the funding application.

The motion was seconded by Ray Gorman.

The Chairman asked if there were any comments related to the motion.

There being none, he called for a vote on the motion.

Gorman voted yes; Collins voted yes; and Placy voted yes.

Suzanne Collins signed the DES Form 2 DWGTF to be included with the application.

Hearing of the Public

Aaron Miller reported that he has an appointment with AHEAD on September 9, 2021, at 9:00am. He reported that nothing has happened with cutting the wood, selling part of the property, or going to the bank with a loan. AHEAD is going to help Aaron tomorrow.

Sue noted that the selectboard is ready to take the property today.

Ray asked if Aaron and his wife would be going for a loan and whether they were working with AHEAD in the loan process.

Aaron said that this was correct.

Ray asked how long Aaron thought it would take for them to be approved for the loan.

Aaron did not know.

Sue noted that on September 20th the select board will need signed loan documentation/paperwork.

Ray said they need an absolute process so that the Town of Colebrook will be repaid.

Aaron said that this was clear to him.

Greg confirmed that the selectboard would see Aaron at the September 20th meeting at 1:00pm.

Aaron agreed.

Review & Approval of Minutes of 8/23/21 and 8/31/2021. Sue made a motion to approve the minutes of August 23 and August 31, 2021, Ray seconded the motion. All approved.

New Business:

Northern Borders Dispatch – There is a meeting scheduled for tomorrow night, September 9th. Troy Merner spoke with Ray about the Town of Lancaster and about the process for their switch to Grafton County dispatching. Troy gave positive reviews of service and costs. Troy reported that it costs under \$100,000 per year. There are no complaints about the service in Lancaster.

If Northern Borders Dispatch wants to stay with what they have, the Town of Colebrook could go out on its own.

Sue noted that the Town of Colebrook needs to know tomorrow night (at the meeting). It's getting to be time to address this for the 2022 Town budget.

If Northern Borders doesn't say let's do it together, then the select board will ask them to the next meeting.

The 45th Parallel needs a building – Greg Placy agrees. It has to be designed and it will need some money. This project is probably years away and its unclear if the 45th Parallel could provide dispatch services.

Dispatch has to be supervised by a police department.

Sue asked how this would work if other towns don't want to go with Grafton County? What department would oversee dispatch?

Ray noted that this will be part of tomorrow night's agenda: Greg thinks that the meeting will go into non-public quickly.

Further, he noted that the Town of Pittsburg brought up the Grafton County option. It's a touchy situation.

Ray noted that The County voted stipends to cover the next two months as a way to deal with personnel probably leaving. The stipends are \$200 per person for eight weeks. Ray will bring this up at the Northern Borders meeting. This stipend would cover at least 80% of the employees, Ray supposes. The situation with the County personnel is difficult.

Sue noted that the County staff received stipends all through the COVID-19 pandemic state of emergency.

Used Oil Grant Application 2021 – Certificate of Authorization to be signed by the Town Clerk.

Town Clerk, Deb Thompson arrived at the meeting.

Sue made a motion to authorize Greg Placy, Chairperson of the Select Board, to sign contracts on behalf of the Town of Colebrook with respect to grant contracts with the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services, specifically for this \$2500 Used Oil Grant.

Ray seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Town Clerk witnessed the motion, and the Town Clerk signed the paperwork.

CMA Contract Amendment #3 to APP Evaluation – Previous to the meeting there was a call to Paul Schmidt, from CMA Engineering, to remove the amendment #3 and start it as a separate project because it pertains to water, and the water wells have no direct connection to APP. Funding for the water needs to stay totally separate from anything that is part of APP's expansion.

Old Business:

Sue reported on Jonathan Frizzell's opinion on the property sale. Sue made a motion that based upon the recommendations of the realtor and legal counsel, the select board accept the offer of \$440,000 from Mark Chase as presented.

Ray seconded the motion which passed unanimously. Greg called the realtor to let him know about the motion. Greg reported to the realtor that Attorney Frizzell had given the select board the wording of the motion as made and passed.

Sue reported that she prepared a bill of sale for the old compactor to Chapman's Scrap Metal for \$900 and David Bunnell provided the serial numbers she needed. It had not been picked up by last Saturday. Normandeau will probably pick it up soon – if he hadn't already.

Status of SEARCH Grant – Tammy is getting the runaround from USDA because of a change of personnel there.

Greg placed a call to Paul Schmidt at CMA and asked Paul about the status of the SEARCH grant. Paul has not heard anything from USDA or Tammy.

Paul had emailed Tammy an alternate name at USDA. Paul is going to phone USDA to see if he can move it along.

Recess for 5 minutes to make copies, etc.

ATV - OHRV Ordinance & Policies Review – The board went through the ordinance with their individual notes and questions. The board discussed what questions to send along to Attorney Frizzell.

Status of Appointment of Dan Skousen – No update.

Updated Tax Deeded Property List – Sue reported about Tammy's email saying that the select board needs to address the delinquent taxes on empty trailers in the Colebrook Mobile Home Cooperative.

Ray reported that he spoke to Donald Dostie who is interested in putting houses on lots in the Mobile Home Park. Donald will rent these houses himself.

The board took an example from the deeded property list and there were questions about the list as provided.

The select board needs to be able to see the total that each property owner owns with the date of the report.

Greg said that perhaps a non-meeting with Counsel and Donald Dostie so that the Attorney can tell the select board how to get out of the mess they are in.

Sue reviewed Tammy's questions in the August 21st email:

1. Is the trailer still there?
2. Should you tax deed them and sell them to the park so they can get paying tenants into the trailers? Consider selling them for \$1.00 just to get them back on the tax rolls.
3. Is the trailer in bad enough condition that the Town should tax deed them and demolish them?
4. Is the trailer so bad that the Town does not dare to demolish it? Maybe work out a deal with the trailer park that they empty and demolish the trailer can bring the debris to the transfer station for free. Maybe have the transfer station and highway department supervise the demolition for salvage.

Sue noted that the Town is not going to pay to have trailers demolished.

Greg does not want the Town responsible for putting something in the landfill that does not belong there. This is why he would like to consult with Counsel. He would like the Town to not end up with liabilities associated with this. Also, Donald needs to hear the complexity of this situation as well.

Ray: If Donald takes the trailers and gets them out of there. Will the Town abate the taxes?

Sue: We need a written agreement from Donald Dostie.

Greg: Does the Town contact the owner and have Counsel/Jonathan come up with something that transfers the ownership of the trailer to Donald Dostie? However, immediately prior to that the Town would have to abate the taxes.

They discussed various other trailers on the list including those “owned” by people who are deceased. This is an example of the complexities with this situation.

The Town is not going to take down any more trailers.

Sue summarized that the select board needs to schedule a non-meeting with Jonathan Frizzell, Alan Blake (who can decide to include Dawn Cameron if need be), Melanie Mathieu, and Donald Dostie.

Sue will share Tammy’s thoughts and the trailer list with Jonathan ahead of the meeting. This meeting needs to be a separate meeting (from a regularly scheduled select board meeting). The meeting will potentially take place during the last week of September.

The select board reviewed the updated tax deeded property list with Melanie.

Ray made a motion to go into non-public under RSA 91-A:3, II(c) Matters which, if discussed in public, would likely affect adversely the reputation of any person, **other than a member of this board**, unless such person requests an open meeting. This exemption shall extend to include any application for assistance or tax abatement or waiver of a fee, fine or other levy, if based on inability to pay or poverty of the applicant.

Sue seconded the motion.

Ray YES

Sue YES

Greg YES

The select board entered into the non-public session at 2:20pm.

At 3:16pm the select board came out of non-public session.

Status of Sewer Line Project Town Hall – Melanie reported that the project will start September 14th.

Update on the Main Street TAP Project – no update.

Status of Northern Borders Dispatch Funding – Sue reported that Becky Robinson reported she was promised 30 days ago that the Town would get the funds in 45 days. Melanie looked at the bank accounts and nothing has been received. This will be discussed tomorrow night at the Northern Borders meeting.

Greg noted that the discussion tomorrow night will include how this will be handled with future grants so that the Town of Colebrook is not fronting 100% of every project.

The conversation tomorrow night needs to include how Northern Borders Dispatch is going to handle the fronting of funds in the future because the Town of Colebrook cannot afford to front 100% anymore.

The fronting of funds needs to come from each of the five towns, 20% each. Then, Colebrook will sign grant paperwork.

Greg reported that Alan Coates said the Stewartstown select board may be willing to takeover the Northern Border Dispatch employees as employees of the Town of Stewartstown. So, if they want to have that discussion, the select board will support it.

The timing is good in terms of the Colebrook budgeting. Sue noted that it is time for this transition to take place. This would mean Stewartstown takes over all the payroll functions associated with having employees.

Greg reported that Dispatch has zero confidentiality. There is nothing confidential in Dispatch – as soon as something happens, it comes right over to the Town Manager's office. This is what Greg reported in the meeting with the other towns last night. He noted that the meeting participants were very surprised.

Status of EPA Permit Application – Individual Discharge Permit – Greg has heard nothing more on this.

Boston Post Cane - Ed Lewis lives in Colebrook and is the oldest person the select board is aware of. Sue will call Palmer or Linda to verify.

Status of FEMA COVID-19 Reimbursement Request – Melanie reported that she just heard from Courtney, the FEMA Field Rep, and roughly from when COVID-19 started to September 20th the Town could possibly get back \$24,000. Melanie can give Courtney more information and Courtney can make it a big project. Melanie is going to ask Dottie to pull timesheets and see how much more money the Town can get.

For Signature:

Jane Benson Late Application for Deferred Taxes – Select board signed denial of prior request so that the new application approval will stand.

ATV Permit Application for Joe Bettencourt Piper Hill Road – use ½ mile of Piper Hill Road to access the trail system by the pump house across Route #3. The Town cannot approve this because of the crossing of Route #3.

Ray is attempting to get this gentleman set up to go across Hughes Road.

Intent to Cut – Yvonne Burrill. Approved. Signed.

Purchase Order Approval for Bolen's Invoice - from the Sewer Department. It is over \$1,000.

Other Business:

Sue noted that the Town of Colebrook is paying the meter fee .89 per meter per month for 625 meters but we only have 400+/- installed. The Town is paying \$556 per month for meters.

Greg noted that the phone app is very easy to use for monitoring water usage.

Greg reported that it has gotten to the point in Colebrook that certain people are complaining about how employees in businesses in town are being treated. Visitors are treating people horribly. Greg wonders about writing a letter to the newspaper. If you're coming up here, please respect what is happening up here – other than that don't come to our businesses. We don't have enough

employees up here. Our local people/employees are being very poorly treated. Businesses are posting "Take it easy on us, we're doing the best we can." There are examples of this all over the place with businesses kicking people out of their businesses.

Ray spoke today with a citizen who was intimidated at the transfer station on a Tuesday afternoon: The County was pulling containers while the station was still open.

It was intimidating to Ray as well. Maybe they could wait until 2:00pm before they grab the containers.

Ray is going to call Ben Champagne about this.

Ray made a motion to adjourn. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Christine Charman

Christine Charman, Transcriptionist