

Colebrook Select Board Meeting

August 23, 2021

Colebrook Town Hall Courtroom

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

Town of Colebrook Staff Members: Melanie Mathieu, Tax Collector, Dottie Uran,  
Tax Clerk

Guests: Kaela Tavares, North Country Council. Jay Snell. Wayne Frizzell, Ray Davis  
Real Estate. Aaron Miller.

**Meeting called to order at:**

Sue Collins made a motion to approve an ATV permit for Jay Snell of #75 Brandy Lee Lane, Map #10 Lot 135 to access ¼ mile of Brandy Lee Lane to reach the trail at Colby Street. Motion seconded by Ray Gorman. Motion passed unanimously.

Public Hearing Opened: In accordance with RSA 31:95-b III (a), the acceptance of American Recovery Plan Act (ARPA) Funds from all sources. Town allocation received is \$111,913.23 (50% of total grant); County allocation approved for Edwards Street Pumping Station and necessary pipe work is \$229,000; and any funding as a result of applications submitted for state funding.

Sue noted that under this RSA the Town of Colebrook is receiving unanticipated monies of \$10,000 or more. So, the selectboard has to hold a public hearing on the action to be taken and on the use of the funds.

No comments.

Public Hearing Closed.

Sue made a motion for the Town of Colebrook to accept American Recovery Plan Act funds from all sources. Currently those sources include Town allocation received is \$111,913.23 (50% of total grant) with the balance of the grant coming in 2022; and a county allocation approved for Edwards Street Pumping Station and necessary pipe work is \$229,000 and any funding as a result of applications submitted for state funding.

Ray seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

**HEARING OF THE PUBLIC**

**Review and Approval of the Minutes.** Sue made a motion to approve the minutes of August 9, 2021. Ray seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

**Northern Borders Dispatch Intergovernmental Agreement** – Ray said that this is the year of the renewal of three-year contracts. Now is the time to make changes.

He noted that the other towns seem to be happy with the agreement. The Town of Lancaster is being dispatched for about 40% of what the Town of Colebrook is paying. They are under contract with Grafton County.

He noted that if the Town of Colebrook leaves and comes back it may not be at a reasonable cost. He is not suggesting any action in particular; he is just providing the select board with the information. He walked through some of the possible effects of making changes.

Greg noted that maybe all effected towns should be included in a review of the dispatch services.

Ray noted the \$200,000+/- amount that the Town of Colebrook pays seems well over what Lancaster is paying for dispatching. It might be worthwhile to consider options.

Sue asked if Ray would be comfortable contacting the chair-people of the core towns and asking if they would be interested in looking at or listening to a presentation.

Ray said he would be willing to do this as well as approaching the Northern Borders organization as well – based on his conversation with Lancaster. He thinks it's worthwhile to explore this "stuff." There is a lot to figure out.

Greg noted this appears to be financially the right thing for the Town of Colebrook to look into. There are going to have to be some changes to make this happen – this cannot happen quickly.

**Sue made a motion to go into Non-Public Session under RSA 91-A:3, II(d).**

Ray seconded.

Sue Collins - Yes.

Ray Gorman - Yes.

Greg Placy -Yes.

The board entered non-public session 22 minutes into the meeting.

The board came out of non-public session at 1:38pm.

**Kaela Tavares – discussion of housing in Colebrook.** Kaela gave some history behind the motivation for her appearance at the meeting today and her work on housing in Colebrook.

Sue noted that the Colebrook Planning Board has created a sub-committee to look at housing. The sub-committee is led by Robert Murphy.

Kaela noted that the APP expansion and upstaffing are connected to the need for housing development, specifically tailored to their employees.

Where is the right housing? Where is underutilized housing in Colebrook? Where are the opportunities for it?

How does the Town of Colebrook get a say or express an interest in where they would like to see that housing be? What kind of housing? And how to move forward some of the community goals around housing when you have a relatively large partner with such a large need. The interests and goals could be similar but could also deviate.

Kaela said that North Country Council has the ability to bring in some rent money, bring in some partners, and some expertise to talk about and assess and inventory where the places are you all want to move forward with housing goals.

Setting the goals. Inventorying what is out there. Who are the partners who could help the Town of Colebrook? She discussed examples such as the Colebrook Academy Building versus looking at 3 or 4 partners who have apartments available on Main Street.

The roll of manufactured housing. One to two landlords with various properties. AHEAD developing a big property. These are variance options.

There is space for conversation with APP and a separate conversation with the residents of Colebrook.

She talked about aligning and separating goals of the Town of Colebrook versus APP.

She spoke about the changing dynamics around real estate and available properties, including land. She has heard from people concerned about where people from this area being able to have the spaces they need.

North Country Council is working to change housing policy. Over a year they have been working on a study on housing across their region (Plymouth – Conway – and

North). Something that came from this study is that communities do not always have the data and information on how to make decisions and have tricky conversations around housing issues.

She is willing to help the Town of Colebrook have conversations around goals and actions and finding funding for studies and planning meetings, etc.

What could she and North Country Council try to do? She has an idea to use grant funding to help the Town of Colebrook with this process and decisions.

She mentioned "Plan NH" an organization that has a specific granting program for working on improving housing policy and getting to a better place as a community.

They require a 15% match – not necessarily cash – match with the value of volunteer participation. She used this grant funding with the Town of Franconia to do this type of work.

Funders are interested in Town identifying their own destinies. There are not cumbersome or clunky requirements to go along with the grant.

She is working with Annie Kuster's office to get funding out of the US Congress. She is not sure about this funding.

If the Town of Colebrook Select Board is interested, she is willing to work with the Town among other towns she is working with.

Greg reported on APP going up to approximately 350 employees and 16-line machines. Now they are talking about four Malaysian machines (versus the original two) which will offer technical jobs versus just pulling gloves. This many employees will require housing – which increases the need.

He noted that there really isn't anything available in Colebrook. He and Brian LaPerle counted 30 apartments available, but the landowners are doing nothing with them. Some are salvageable. Some need to be bulldozed. The condition that these buildings are in – they are difficult to sell.

Sue asked about the partners that Kaela talked about. Kaela talked about AHEAD for purchasing and rehabbing buildings. Another is a real estate investment group with a leader from New Hampshire. They work in Towns that have opportunity zones.

She described the program and how investors use this program for write-offs of tax liabilities.

She knows a housing developer who is involved in the opportunity zone investments as well. This person would be willing to help the Town of Colebrook a bit as well as local property owners.

Kaela noted that APP has its own set of well-connected politicians working on that side, including the Northern Forest Center on trying to understand their options.

Kaela listed the following steps that she is suggesting:

Data collection. Community visioning. Are there particular properties that are interest? Identify willing landlords. Who would be the players to get some momentum in this world?

Greg responded that he is not sure if APP has a special projects person to really grab hold of this. The conversation goes out – but he's not sure that this remains a priority. This is his guess. There appears to be a paucity of details behind their big picture topics.

Sue asked about the Northern Forest Center – what is their mission? How are they getting involved in housing?

Greg – they have some ability to finance projects. He does not think it is specific to any type of a project. But they will sometimes back other funding sources.

Next steps with Kaela: Does the Town of Colebrook want to apply for one of these Plan NH grant? Scope it out together.

She will meet with the Planning Board at their September meeting.

Greg reported that Central Paving gave the Town of Colebrook an estimate for the sidewalks. TJ said that his crew is going to tidy up what they need to. Central Paving is going to have to take over after TJ does what he and his crew can do. If TJ and his crew do more, then perhaps this estimate/price be reduced.

Sue made a motion to accept the job estimate from Central Paving to do the sidewalk on Park Street from Main Street until the end which would be where the sidewalk goes over to the concrete sidewalk for a total of \$14,700 to come from sidewalk paving and highway paving line items. And the chairman is authorized to sign the job estimate on behalf of the Town.

Ray seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

**Aaron Miller/Kym Lambert.**

Sue made a motion to enter into non-public session at 2:35pm. Seconded by Ray.

Sue YES

Ray YES

Greg YES

At 2:55pm, Sue made a motion to exit non-public session. Seconded by Ray.

Sue YES

Ray YES

Greg YES

The board exited non-public session.

**Discussion on a Liquor License Request from Linda Dexter.** Linda is requesting the selectboard do a letter to the State of New Hampshire on her behalf. The letter will be ready in a couple days. Linda is hoping to open in October at #25 Parsons Street. "Xaio Fei's Buffet."

She has contacted the Colebrook Fire Chief directly.

Dottie prepared the letter for the select board to sign so that Linda can submit it with her application for a NH liquor license.

The select board applauded Linda's entrepreneurship and welcomed her as a new business owner in Colebrook.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

**Bear Rock Bridge Update** – email from Colin Lawson from Trout Unlimited. The selected engineering firm is going to be CMA Engineers. Greg said the final design plans are in Concord being reviewed. The contract cannot be bid until the design plans are approved. Greg will reply to Colin. Construction anticipated in the Spring of 2022.

**Outside Fires** – The Town has a stack of people not paying their fire call bills. Christine and Sue had worked on a letter so that folks outside the precinct would understand their liability – this does not seem to be working.

Maybe the select board should meet with the new fire chief.

The select board will give Chief Woodward a choice to come on either September 26<sup>th</sup> at 1:00pm or the October meeting at 5pm.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

**SEARCH grant** – Two weeks ago Sue contacted Paul Schmidt. Tammy was present. Sue sent an email on August 20<sup>th</sup> for an update from Tammy & Paul.

Heather Malone is moving to another position at USDA. Eric Law may be another contact and Tammy said she would reach out to Eric.

**ATV/OHRV Public Hearing – Confusion from the Colebrook Chronicle article.** Sue described the issue and her conversation with Donna Jordan. Donna quoted him verbatim with her video recorder – but it was out of context.

Before the next meeting, the select board will review what Attorney Jonathan Frizzell has sent them. There will be another public hearing on the ordinance.

Ray reported that Dennis Thompson is looking for the State to draw up RSAs to take over the law-making relative to ATVs/OHRVs. There is already talk about this on the County level. Ray will take care of this.

**Dan Skousen** – tabled.

**Update Tax Deeded Property** – next meeting.

**Status on Sewer Line Project** – Mel reported that Randy spoke to TJ, and everything is ready to go August 30, 2021.

**Main Street TAP** – Greg gave an update. Waiting for a call from the project manager.

**Status of the Northern Borders Dispatch Funding Claim to Homeland Security** – Sue said that Becky thinks the money will be here in a couple days.

**EPA Permit Application (IDP)** – The permit was submitted on August 20<sup>th</sup> as scheduled. Status of this EPA Permit will be kept on the agenda.

**Boston Post Cane Responses to Ad** – Intended for the oldest resident. More research needed.

**SP King – Sewer Abatement** There is nothing in the ordinance about abatements. It does not allow for abatements. Denied.

### For Signatures

**Budget Transfer – Colebrook Police Department.** Moving \$2500 from part-time wages line to firearms program supplies line.

**Cartographic Associates** – Contract increase from \$3150 to \$3400. Every time there's a land transfer they change the tax maps – keeping the tax maps up to date.

Memo from Gary Fournier Assessor regarding current use application from Mr. Steven Braithwaite. He has two lots, together are 10 acres. Gary made it clear that Mr. Braithwaite can do this because they are adjacent properties.

Sue made a motion to approve the current use application from Steven Braithwaite for Map 254 Lot 24 and Map 354 Lot 23. Ray seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion about accessing Sharon's email. Mel needs to give them select board instructions because Sharon is still getting her Town of Colebrook email. That should have been shut-off the day she retired.

Greg does not want her to have any access to anything that has to do with the Town of Colebrook.

Sue said that the select board needs to have access to Sharon's previous emails. When Becky Merrow left, they had access. Under the Town of account, they need to be able to get into Sharon's previous emails.

Sue made a motion to go into non-public session at 3:38 under RSA 91 – A:3, II(a). Seconded by Ray.

Sue YES

Greg YES

Ray YES

At 3:46pm Sue made a motion to exit non-public session. Seconded by Ray.

Sue YES

Greg YES

Ray YES

The next meeting will be September 7<sup>th</sup> at 1:00pm.

Sue made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Ray. Meeting adjourned. Recorder reads: 2:04:40.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Christine E. Charman*

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