

SELECTMEN'S MEETING  
February 9, 2023 - 3 PM  
Colebrook Town Hall (Manager's Office)

Present in Person from the Board: Greg Placy, Chairman; Raymond Gorman, Suzanne Collins  
Present via Zoom Link: Beno Lamontagne – NH Department of Business & Economic Affairs (BEA)  
Others Present: Jake Mardin, Colebrook News & Sentinel; Mike Worters, Water & Sewer Department;  
Melanie Fogg, Tax Collector; Dorothy Uran, Assessing Clerk.

Chairman Placy called the meeting to order at 3 PM. He waived the Pledge of Allegiance, there being no U.S. Flag in the office.

**HEARING OF THE PUBLIC:** Beno Lamontagne, North Country Industrial Agent, BEA joined the meeting via ZOOM Link. Beno had requested to meet with the Board as a follow-up to a January site visit to APP on his economic development tour with Councilor Joe Kenney, DES Deputy Commissioner Sanborn, DES Director Pelletier. Others in attendance at the APP tour stop included Rick Tillotson, Ron Guerin and Cindy-Lou Amey representing APP.

Beno stated that while at APP, DES Director Pelletier inquired if Beno knew what Colebrook's plans are for the future. DES needs to know what is going on between the Town and APP.

- What does Colebrook want going forward?
- Does Colebrook want development?
- Will we invest in the Wastewater Treatment Plant or just get it upgraded?
- Does Colebrook want more manufacturing and businesses? Does Colebrook want growth?
  - Director Pelletier said he was asking these questions as DES had recently visited the Town of Epping who made it very clear that they wanted no more growth.
- DES is committed to come back to Colebrook to sit with the Board, with folks from APP and other businesses.

Beno asked about the funding that Colebrook has left from various grants and loans. Councilor Kenney had asked if Colebrook received any funding from USDA as he understood that USDA is good for \$3,000,000 for water and sewer. Beno stated he would check with Eric at USDA to see if that money is still earmarked for Colebrook. Sue stated that Jamie Emery of GZA Environmental has plans to contact USDA in regard to Colebrook's on-going project to develop new water wells for the Town. Funds are needed for construction but we don't have enough data yet to prepare funding estimates and requests (depending on which site is selected and approved by DES).

Beno stated that APP still has its sights set on producing 1 billion gloves a year and employing 200. Members of New Hampshire's federal delegation are trying to push federal agencies to order gloves from US sources and rely less on Chinese fulfillment. President Biden is encouraging Buy America. Beno stated that a major Montreal newspaper in an recent article is talking about Canadian companies coming here.

Greg stated that Colebrook is not looking at a new Waste Water Treatment Plant. That would require a tertiary plant and all the associated regulations where operational costs are exorbitant.

All agreed that Beno would attempt to convene a meeting of all parties on either March 27<sup>th</sup> or April 3<sup>rd</sup> at 1 PM. It was agreed that CMA Engineers (Paul Schmidt) and GZA Environmental (Jamie Emery) would also be asked to the meeting. Beno will be back in touch with the Selectmen concerning meeting plans. Beno signed off.

**Minutes of 1-31-2023:** Ray Gorman made a motion to approve the minutes of 1-31-2023. Greg Placy seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

**Status of Town Manager Recruitment:** Greg stated he had received no further inquiries and wondered if our next step would have to be a costly headhunter. Ray Gorman who also serves as a Coös County Commissioner stated that the County is also having a hard time finding qualified candidates.

**Reports of Wood Cut – Late Fee:** Based on a recommendation from the Town’s contracted forester Greg Ainsworth, Sue made a motion that the Town institute a late fee of \$50 for Reports of Wood Cut that are not received by the due date of May 31<sup>st</sup>. Ray Gorman seconded the motion. Discussion: On or about May 1<sup>st</sup>, Dorothy Uran will notify all landowners that have yet to file a Report of Wood Cut reminding them of the due date and informing them of the late fee. It was also noted that last year the Timber Yield Tax bills went out late and should be ready for the Board’s approval early summer this year. There being no further discussion, all members voted in favor of the motion.

**Target date for signing 2023 Warrant and MS-636 for Posting:** February 20 or 21.

**Water & Sewer Warrants – 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter 2022 Billing:**

Sue Collins made a motion, seconded by Ray Gorman, to accept and sign the following warrants:

Water: \$78,308.72; Sewer: \$88,253.62.

All voted in favor of the motion.

**Sale of Cemetery Lots:** On Monday, February 6<sup>th</sup>, Cemetery Trustee Chairman Danny Lyons has submitted a request from Cemetery Sexton Sheila Parkhurst for the Board to consider raising its prices for selling various size lots in Colebrook Cemeteries. The Board discussed Sheila’s recommendations. Some items were unclear and it was agreed that Sue would get clarification from Sheila and report back to the Board at its next meeting.

**Developing policies on use of town assets by employees:** The Board agreed to table this item until neighboring towns of Northumberland and Lancaster are contacted to inquire about their policies, if any.

**Status of Fraud Investigation – Bangor Savings Bank:** Late afternoon February 3<sup>rd</sup>, Treasurer Alicia Boire reported to the Board of a check fraud situation with the Town of Colebrook account with Bangor Savings Bank. She and Melanie were contacted by a team member from BSB about a series of suspicious checks that had been cashed in various BSB branches in southern New Hampshire (totaling over \$53,000). After contacting Melanie, it became apparent that these checks were indeed fraudulent. Melanie and Alicia worked with BSB to deal with the situation. The general fund was immediately frozen and any legitimate checks still outstanding were to be cashed on a verified basis (positive pay). The Town had to open a new account so that we could continue to process our transactions. An insurance claim through BSB allowed us to recover any town monies that had already been fraudulently processed through our account. The bank will also provide the Town with a new check supply.

**C. Charman request regarding safety at the Head Start Program on Route 145 (Park Street):** Christine had expressed her concern about the drop-off time for kids during the morning commute. She stated it is very dangerous with many drivers going quite fast on that stretch of road. Greg stated he would contact Phil Beaulieu of NH DOT District 1 since it is a state road.

**Status of Refund to CEDC:** Sue stated that Melanie had contacted her explaining why interest could not be charged on back taxes that are being abated. The amount of the refund was recalculated and paid. Sue had informed Erika Canales that the refund would be larger than previously reported.

**Bear Rock Bridge Project:** On February 7<sup>th</sup>, Greg had received a letter from NH DOT – NOTICE TO PROCEED TO AWARD LOW BID – MODIFIED. The letter listed items that needed to be addressed.

- Melanie has sent the Notice of Award and will copy it for the Town Manager Office file;
- The contractor cannot work onsite until the NHDOT has approved the Construction Engineer Scope and Fee along with Quality Based Selection documentation.

Greg stated that he will complete the required information for Melanie right after this meeting is adjourned.

**Tax Collector's Deeds:** Ray Gorman made the motion to accept the Tax Collector's Deed on the Kenneth Wormstedt property. Sue Collins seconded the motion and all voted in favor. Melanie continues to work on other properties.

**Fire Department Water Meter:** Mike Worters and Melanie reported that it has been installed and it is working.

**Reinstatement of Fees Paid for Indigent Burials and Cremations:** Ray has assumed the responsibility of general assistance during the absence of a Town Manager. He reported being contacted by a family member for help with an invoice from the NH Cremation Society. The Board reinstated its policy of paying \$200 towards a cremation and \$750 towards a funeral for a Colebrook resident who dies without any assets to pay for either a cremation or funeral.

**CDBG Grant Administrator Contract for Colebrook Homeowners Cooperative Project:** Sue reported that Alan Blake of the NH Community Loan Fund had contacted former the Town Manager letting Mr. O’Gorman know that Alan had spoken with North Country Council, Donna Lane and Joia Hughes who are approved CDBG administrators. NCC and Donna Lane are not available to administer the grant. He recommended that the Board sign a contract with Joia Hughes for \$22,500. Sue stated that to date Joia has not completed the close-out of the CDBG Feasibility Study which is 9 months to a year overdue.

Sue Collins made a motion to approve Joia Hughes as CDBG administrator **contingent** upon her successfully closing our the CDBG Feasibility Study and to authorize Chairman Greg Placy to sign the professional services agreement on behalf of the Town of Colebrook. Ray Gorman seconded the motion. There being no further discussion, all voted in favor of the motion.


**Letter to Invest NH Regarding Colebrook Homeowners Cooperative Demolition Project:** Sue reported that Alan Blake had not received a response from the former Town Manager on the InvestNH Grant application that had several outstanding questions. Alan had prepared a letter for the Board’s signature which Sue had reviewed, revised and placed on Town letterhead. Chairman Greg Placy signed the letter and Sue will transmit it to InvestNH and Alan Blake.

The Selectmen signed the following:

- Intent to Cut – Matt Franks;
- Intent to Cut – Mike Rodrique
- Letter of Support for Kiwanis Park Restoration Project

Sue Collins made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:05 PM. Ray Gorman seconded the motion and all approved.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Suzanne Collins  
Selectman