

Colebrook Select Board
Selectmen Meeting Minutes

July 8, 2024

Selectboard Members: Greg Placy, Sue Collins, and Ray Gorman

Staff: Tim Stevens and Heidi Lawton

Public: Melissa Elander & David Brooks

Roll Call & Pledge of Allegiance

Hearing of the Public:

- A. Melissa Elander came to advise the board that the NH Dept. of Energy Grant has opened. We are a Tier 1 town so that makes us eligible to ask for \$50,000.00 to \$200,000.00 dollars. This grant is 100% of the solar cost. Melissa advised the board that \$12,000.00 of Dave Belanger's quote will not be covered by the grant as transformer upgrades are not eligible. Melissa said that applications are due August 1, 2024. Sue explained that we will need an award amount for the Warrant Article for the Town Meeting. Tim is going to check to see if we even need a transformer.

Regular Agenda:

- A. Review and approval of Minutes of 6/24/24. Sue made a motion to approve the minutes of 6/24/24, Ray seconded. Motion passed.
- B. Review and Sign Payroll and Disbursement Manifests: The Selectmen reviewed completed payrolls and disbursement manifests and signed them.
- C. Town Manager's Report

-Stop Sign on Spring Street & Titus Hill: Tim advised the board that it has been recommended to change the Yield sign at the intersection of Spring Street and Titus Hill at Dunkin Donuts to a Stop sign. Tim would like to know if the board is in favor of this. The board members were all in favor. Sue made a motion to replace the Yield sign at the intersection of Spring Street and Titus Hill with a Stop sign. Ray seconded the motion. Greg then took a vote of the board.

Greg Placy: Yes
Sue Collins: Yes
Ray Gorham: Yes

-Kearsarge Solar Array: Tim did some research on the three properties involved and all three properties are owned by the Town of Colebrook. The estimated revenue will be up to \$41,000.00 in the first year if both the North end well site and the landfill are developed for solar. Sue suggested that if the project goes forward the revenue generated from the landfill site should be recognized as landfill revenue and less withdrawn annually from the Landfill Capital Reserve Fund which will extend the life of the fund.

-Normandeau Trucking Inc. Contract: The Selectmen discussed the Normandeau three-year contract proposal. Tim noted that rates have increased in each year of the contract. Sue made a motion to approve the Normandeau contract for the next three years starting on July 1, 2024, and expiring June 30, 2027 and to authorize the Colebrook Town Manager, Tim Stevens to sign this contract. Ray seconded the motion, all approved, motion passed.

-Washburn Dam & Bear Rock Projects: Tim advised the board that the projects for the Washburn Dam and Bear Rock Bridge have started. Tim had Dispatch notify all First Responders and a message put on Facebook and the town webpage for the public.

-Eversource: Tim advised the board that Eversource is sending letters to all of their customers to let them know of a potential rate increase. The rates will increase 5.72 % in 2024 and 5.53% in 2025.

-Tim brought before the board some grant paperwork from Holly Boisvert, Grants Manager for the Operation Stonegarden Grant, the paperwork would change the detail rate for Operation Stonegarden & The Northern Border Alliance Grant to \$67.73 an hour. Discussion ensued. Ray made a motion to accept the detail rate of \$67.73 for the Operation Stonegarden Grant & The Northern Borders Alliance Grant as of July 1, 2024, Sue seconded the motion, all approved, motion passed.

-Tim brought a grant amendment for the 2024 Colebrook PD Highway Safety Grant 24-038. The NH Office of Highway Safety is amending the FFY24 original award amount from \$24,737.50 to \$34,110.00, this is for additional Speed Enforcement Patrols in the amount of \$5,000.00 and 2 in-car radar units for the cruisers at \$4,372.50. Currently the PD has one radar, and they would like one in each cruiser. The shortfall on the radar units will come out of the Police Detail Savings Account. Sue requested a two-year accounting of the Police detail account. Sue explained that money should be coming in and going out and she is not sure that is happening based on the status of the account as listed in the Town Report. She would like to see a report on Fund 10 Revenue Detail, what is happening to the cash at the end of the year. There should be some activity in the account for 2023, nothing is shown in the Town Report. Sue also wants to see back-up. Sue made a motion to approve the amendment, with any excess cost coming from the Police Detail budget, Ray seconded the motion, all approved, motion passed.

-Dick & Joni Hicks Abatement: Tim explained to the board that Dick and Joni Hicks had an old vehicle that was registered to them through the business, an LLC. They sold the vehicle and when they went to register the new vehicle, they did it under their names instead of the LLC. There is an overlap from the old registration and the new one and they are asking for a refund of the old registration since they have paid for 2 vehicles during those overlapped months, one of which is no longer registered. They are looking to get the town portion of this registration abated. Sue made a motion to abate the town portion of the vehicle registration, Ray seconded the motion, all approved, motion passed.

Route 145 Project. Sue reported that after the Board opened the bids for the Route 145 Project with the low construction bid from J.P. Sicard coming in at \$407,253 - as verified by CMA on July 2nd - and the total project estimated to cost \$541,453, she reviewed the ARPA funding approved by the County at \$304,000, the Town ARPA funding still available as reported by Kendra Bell at Cohos Advisors and there was still a \$154,158 shortfall. Sue contacted Town auditor Tim Greene and asked him if the Town could use part of the audited unrestricted 2022 fund balance in the Sewer Enterprise Fund. She thought that additional funds would be added to that fund balance based on 2023 operations currently being audited. Tim Greene replied the short answer is yes and he agreed that preliminary audit figures for 2023 supported her assumption that more funds would be added to the fund balance in the 2023 audited statements.

Sue made a motion to approve the J.P. Sicard bid of \$407,253 for the Route 145 Sewer Main Relocation. Ray seconded the motion, all approved, motion passed.

Sue made a motion for funding the Route 145 Sewer Relocation Project in the amount of \$541,453, using \$304,000 of the County ARPA grant, \$83,296 in unexpended Town ARPA funds, the balance to be paid by the Sewer Department. Ray seconded the motion; the motion approved by all and motion passed.

Sue stated she had also sent an email to Paul Schmidt and Josh Bouchard at CMA letting them know that they had incorrectly stated County ARPA funding at \$229,000 in their letter to Tim Stevens dated July 3rd. An additional grant request had been approved for \$75,000 totaling \$304,000 from Coos County.

New Business:

- A. The board had an appointment letter to appoint Mike Ouellet an alternate on the Planning Board. Ray made a motion to accept the appointment of Mike Ouellet as an alternate to the Colebrook Planning Board. Sue seconded the motion, all approved, motion passed.

Old Business:

- A. None

Tabled/Pending Items:

- A. Working on Ordinances.

For Approval and Signature:

- A. ATV Permit: Rose Boivin, the board approved the permit just from her property to the trail. Tim will leave a note with the permit that Colebrook cannot authorize her to use any roads located in Columbia.
- B. Abatement Request for School Resource Officer: The school gets a grant every year to pay the School Resource Officers, this year the grant covered the Resource Officers in Pittsburg and Stewartstown, but since the Resource Officer in Colebrook was doing a program after school and working an extra hour, the bill for Colebrook was not completely paid because the grant ran out of money. Tim talked to the Superintendent, and the school definitely wants to keep the program after school, next year the school will have a stipend in the budget. Tim reported that Chief Rella stated he will watch the amount being expended more closely next year and he will be able to cover the additional \$2,507 from the 2024 Police Department budget. Sue made a motion to abate to the Colebrook School District the \$2,507.00 of the School Resource Officer invoice that the grant could not cover, Ray seconded the motion, all approved, motion passed.
- C. Yield Tax Warrant: The board reviewed the warrant and signed it.

Greg advised that he has seen kids on ATV's coming down Reed Road to go to South Hill because it is the closest road to the town trail, but they all have yellow permit stickers and should be going up Reed Road to East Colebrook Road and going from there. Greg would like Tim to advise the PD.

Hearing of the Public and Any Other Business:

Sue: Melanie needs to start billing Northern Borders Commission Grant at North Country Council for all amounts paid to date on the Sludge Removal Project ASAP.

Greg: September is coming soon, and we need to get a Moderator for the town for elections. Tim will look into this; he has heard there may be some movement on this already. He believes that Mike Ouellet is interested.

Sue: At the North Country Chamber (NCC) Meeting Sue was talking to Beno Lamontagne and Beno said that there is still three million dollars in USDA money for the Town of Colebrook for our multiple projects. The board was surprised to hear this. Sue stated that USDA has requested an updated Engineering Report. She stated we should have it before next Monday's monthly project meeting with CMA. The Selectmen have asked Paul Schmidt many times, but he has never produced one to date. Tim will look into this.

Ray: Ray said that at the same NCC Meeting Beno asked Ray about the town abating APP's bills for water, sewer, and taxes. Ray said that he would talk to the board, but that probably will not happen. Tim heard that there is potentially a buyer for that building. Board members agreed that water, sewer and property taxes would not be forgiven, nor would the outstanding engineering invoices that remain unpaid by APP.

Sue: At the last Selectmen's Meeting Tim discussed some highway trucks that were for sale. Sue would like to know what vehicles are for sale and how we are selling them? Tim told Sue which vehicles the Highway Dept. is selling. Discussion ensued. Greg advised that at the last meeting the board decided that they were going to sell the vehicles like they did the old police cruiser.

Sue: Asked Melanie if the town financials are closed? Melanie said that she has closed March, April, and May, but is not sure if Maggie has closed them or not. Heidi emailed Maggie to find out the status.

Sue: Sue asked Melanie about the County ARPA Funds, how much the town has received to date and Melanie said \$37,210.11, how many claims have been sent, Melanie said three claims have been sent and she is working on a fourth, she just needs a cancelled check back from CMA. Sue asked Melanie if there were any claims that had not been paid, Melanie said no, all claims have been paid. Sue said that sludge removal claims, Phase 10, on the CMA bills, need to be sent to North Country Council ASAP; we have expended close to \$48,000 with no claims submitted yet. That is cash that sits at North Country Council that should be in the Town's checking account.

Ray: What was happening Sunday at the dump? David Brooks and Tim told Ray that the arm on the loader broke. The compactor box was full, and they were trying to push down more items when it broke. Tim explained that a lot of the truckers took the holiday off, so there was no one to empty or take away the full boxes. Eric from Highway did compact it more on Monday morning.

Ray: Ray asked about the insurance presentation that the board is supposed to have. Heidi advised that she has talked to someone at both HealthTrust and Interlocal Trust and is waiting for them to get back to her.

Ray: Ray wanted to know about the parking lot across the street and why the rocks were so bad. Sue said she almost twisted her ankle walking over there last week. Tim said now that vehicles have driven on the rocks, they are beginning to settle, and it is much better over there. Ray would like the rocks near the edge of the grass to be moved so Phil Freudenberger can mow the Memorial Lot better. Ray would also like the parking lot edging weed whacked and make the end near the Town Parking Lot look nice. Sue said that Phil Freudenberger wants to put in a proposal for upgrades to the Memorial Lot looking nice. Ray hopes that Phil submits his ideas before the end of August, so the board can look at budgeting for this.

Sue: Discussed the Housing Opportunity Grant with the board. She provided Heidi with an email that had been sent to Melanie, the Planning Board Chairman and Su regarding grant close out with all the information due on July 10th. Heidi will follow up with Melanie.

Sue made a motion to take \$11,753.10 out of the NHPDIP Bridge Aid Account to reimburse the Town for invoices paid to HEB Engineering for Pleasant Street Bridge engineering. Ray

seconded the motion, all approved, motion passed. Melanie is to contact Treasurer Alicia Boire to make the transfer.

Board: The board discussed the Pleasant Street Bridge and how the town will need to put out an RFP for Engineering. The board wanted to know why any work was done on the bridge and why invoices were sent, when they had not approved HEB to go ahead. Sue said the board has not received an email from HEB regarding Pleasant Street Bridge since March 6, 2024.

Sue made a motion to allow the Town Manager, Tim Stevens to do an RFP for Engineering of the Pleasant Street Bridge, Ray seconded the motion, all approved, motion passed.

There will need to be a warrant article on the 2025 warrant for the Pleasant Street Bridge Project.

Tim: Tim advised the board of a new Invest NH source of funding. Invest NH is giving municipalities money for any buildings that currently do not have apartments in them but are being renovated and will have 3 affordable housing units/apartments after the renovation. apartment in it. It is a housing incentive, and it has a stipulation about a certain amount of rent the owner can charge for it to qualify. The board was trying to think of some buildings that might qualify. They thought of the old veterinarian's building on Cooper Hill and possibly the Williams Building on Main Street.

Ray: Has Shallow River Properties filled out a site plan change of use yet for their new property on Edwards Street? Tim said that Mike Ouellet contacted them, and they had their lawyers talk to Mike, but nothing has been filled out yet, that he knows of. Tim stated that he will be talking with Mike.

Ray: How are things coming with the Rt. 26 property that was cleared? NHDES has sent Tim a complaint form. He will fill it out and send it back to NH DES with pictures. The board then started to talk about campers on people's properties and how if they have two or more it is considered a campground under current state statutes. Ray asked Tim if anything had been done on Cree Road with the campers up there. Tim said he did not know. Sue said that the Planning Board worked with some people on the corner of Stevens Hill & South Hill about campers and they built nice cabins and got rid of the campers last year. It was reported that now they are bringing in more campers. The Town will need to begin issuing cease and desist orders. Tim asked that the Planning Board needs to provide him with specific information, and he will see that cease-and-desist orders are issued. Discussion ensued.

Determine Date for Next Meeting: July 22, 2024, at 1:00pm

Adjourned: Sue made a motion to adjourn, Ray seconded the motion, motion passed to adjourn meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 6:55pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Heidi Lawton

Heidi Lawton, Administrative Assistant, Town of Colebrook