

SELECTMEN'S MEETING MINUTES - TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2022

6:00 PM – SELECTMEN'S MEETING

Present: Chairman Sean Roche, Selectmen Kathy Chase, John MacLeod, Tim Roche, Bob Foley, Town Manager Larissa Crockett, Meeting Recorder Cinndi Davidson.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION – FY23 Budget Proposal Presentation

Ms. Crockett presented the proposed increases: \$176,603 for the Town, \$53,918 for the county, \$568,815 for the school budget, for a total increase of \$779,336. We are well below the LD1 tax cap as mandated by State statute. A town meeting vote would be required if we exceeded it.

The tax rate is estimated at \$10.50-\$10.64 per \$1,000 and varies inversely with the valuation. We will do the residential revaluation in house and contract out for the commercial properties and a market update. The target date is Fall 2023.

The budget proposes a 4.5% salary increase for non-union staff and an above-contract increase for the union employees. We can manage this increase without decreasing service to our residents. Excise tax collections are up. Several long-time employees have retired, and the new hires will start at a lower salary band. Funds that have been held in reserve accounts can be applied to CIP projects.

There are two bond proposals to address urgent infrastructure needs without exceeding LD1 or cutting services. There are 4 bridge projects pending, plus Drakes Island Road and the Webhannet South sea wall. The engineers advised that Webhannet North and Casino Square are not as urgent. Grant funding for the projects is being explored. ACOE expects to dredge the harbor next winter and the funds are available.

The school budget presentation to the BOS will be in late March/early April. The Budget Committee will be meeting Wednesdays through March, then conduct a reconciliation meeting with the Board.

MUNICIPAL OFFICERS WORKSHOP / BUSINESS / PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. Public Hearing on eliminating sprinkler requirement from Marijuana Production Facilities.

Mr. MacLeod recused himself. Tonight's packets contain an amended version of what was posted. The public hearing should be rescheduled so the correct language can be posted. The ordinance change covers cultivation and processing facilities and dispensaries.

There were no public comments.

Motion by Mrs. Chase, seconded by Mr. Foley, to close the public hearing. Passed 4-0-1.

Motion by Mrs. Chase, seconded by Mr. Foley to schedule a public hearing for 6 PM on February 15, 2022 at the Municipal Building, 208 Sanford Road, on ordinance change proposals to eliminate sprinkler system requirements in medical marijuana facilities. Passed 4-0-1.

Mr. MacLeod returned to the Board.

2. Robert D. Callioras, dba: Litchfield's Bar and Grill, 2135 Post Road, Wells, application for a full-time Malt, Wine and Spirits Liquor License. (R)

AND

3. Robert D. Callioras, dba: Litchfield's Bar and Grill, 2135 Post Road, Wells, application for a Special Entertainment Permit. (R)

There were no public comments.

Motion by Mrs. Chase, seconded by Mr. MacLeod, to close the public hearings and grant the license and permit. Passed unanimously

4. Mike Dinardo, dba: The New England House Seafood & Sports Bar, LLC, 124 Post Road, Wells, application for a full-time Malt, Wine and Spirits Liquor License. (R)

There were no public comments.

Motion by Mrs. Chase, seconded by Mr. MacLeod, to close the public hearing and grant the license. Passed unanimously

5. Richard M. Varano, dba: Varano's, 60 Mile Road, Wells, application for a full-time Malt, Wine and Spirits Liquor License. (R)

There were no public comments.

Motion by Mrs. Chase, seconded by Mr. MacLeod, to close the public hearing and grant the license. Passed unanimously

6. Trailblazers Inc., dba: Trailblazers Family Club, 102 Bills Lane, Wells, application for a full-time Malt, Wine and Spirits Liquor License. (R)

AND

7. Trailblazers Inc., dba: Trailblazers Family Club, 102 Bills Lane, Wells, application for a Special Entertainment Permit. (R)

There were no public comments.

Motion by Mrs. Chase, seconded by Mr. MacLeod, to close the public hearings and grant the license and permit. Passed 4-0-1 with Mrs. Chase abstaining.

8. Pine Tree Waste/BBI/Oceanside, dba: Casella Waste Services, 19 Clear Zone Road, Sanford, application for a Solid Waste Disposal License. (R)

There were no public comments.

Motion by Mrs. Chase, seconded by Mr. MacLeod, to close the public hearing and grant the license. Passed unanimously

9. Good News

~CEO Jodine Adams has reviewed the site plans for several facilities along Route One that have experienced increased activity recently. A copy of her memo is in tonight's packets. Some properties that predate the ordinance do not have site plan approvals. Without a site plan approval, the Town follows the 28 day check-in/check-out rule. In some facilities, people have to surrender the room for 24 hours. In others, they have to leave the facility for 24 hours. The Selectmen have the authority to revoke a license for violations of a site plan approval. The Code Office can issue a Notice of Violation which can be appealed to the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Chief Putnam reviewed recent police activity involving notices of criminal trespass, protective custody, and outstanding warrants. Several people have been removed from facilities and the number of police calls is decreasing. One owner has added security cameras and provided Wells PD with a list of people allowed on the property. One property is no longer accepting clients from YCCA. Ms. Crockett said staff will do an assessment of all hotels this spring and determine what their site plan approvals allow. The rules will be enforced as of Fall/Winter 2022/2023. Funding for the program begins with the federal government and Maine State Housing, and responsibility is delegated to the county programs. People have to find their own housing, then YCCA arranges the payments with the facility. Case managers can help if people have trouble locating housing.

Mr. Foley asked about drug dealing. Chief Putnam said some dealing is suspected. Mr. T. Roche asked about safety, how many people occupy a unit and are they cooking in their units. The units might have microwaves or hot plates but no stoves. In case of a fire, the Fire Department needs to know how many people are occupying that unit. There were four commercial burglaries recently and Wells PD has solved all of them. Ms. Crockett invited people to call her or Chief Putnam if they have questions or concerns about anything they heard or saw.

Vouchers are available at Town Hall and the PD for emergencies if people need prescriptions, food, gas or train tickets. For emergency housing, two of the hotels have their front desks staffed 24 hours. There is an emergency account with funds provided by Salvation Army, not Town funds.

Ms. Adams will begin working with the owners of the four facilities identified by the Code Office. Site plans need to be reviewed starting with the independently owned establishments that aren't condominiums. Owners will receive letters outlining what the rules are that we will be enforcing. If a facility loses its license people might lose their housing, but the Town is not responsible for finding them new housing. Mr. Foley and Mr. MacLeod were in favor of revoking licenses if facilities are tolerating situations that put the community at risk.

~Chairman Roche suggested combining Town Manager's Report and Good News earlier in the agenda.

~Dog licenses were due December 31 and the State allows a one month grace period. A license renewed on February 1 is 32 days late, not one day late. The licenses are available October 15 every year. The \$25 fine for a late renewal is imposed by the State. Licensing also ensures that dogs get their rabies shots. Ms. Crockett has been receiving complaints about the Clerk's Office enforcing the regulations. The Town Clerk is elected by the residents and does not report to the Town Manger or Selectmen.

~Thank you to DPW and our public safety team for doing a great job with last weekend's storm clean-up.

~There were two tragic events in the past week. We extend our condolences to the families. We recognize the burden this places on our first responders who have to deal with these events and then show up for work the next day.

10. *Open to the Public*

~Many residents use FaceBook to share messages and photos that Town leaders need to be aware of. People are submitting FOI requests; some were answered while others are still pending. A lot of good work is being done. We need transparency.

CURRENT AGENDA ITEMS

1. *Review and action on Accounts Payable and Payroll Warrants.*

Motion by Mrs. Chase, seconded by Mr. MacLeod, to approve and sign the Accounts Payable Warrant dated February 1, 2022 in the amount of \$633,186.13 and the General Assistance Warrant dated February 1, 2022 in the amount of \$1,940.79. Passed unanimously.

2. *Update, discussion and action on Committees, Projects, Issues, Purchases and Personnel*

a) *Discussion and possible action on MTA land acquisition for land for an emergency vehicle ramp.*

Steve Tarr, Director of Engineering for the Turnpike Authority, was present. The Turnpike Authority wants to go out to bid on the emergency ramp project and wants to make sure they have clear title to the land. The land will be taken by eminent domain and the Town will be reimbursed \$6,000. Mr. MacLeod asked to have this project well publicized because of its proximity to the solar panel project. There will be construction updates on the Turnpike web site with links to the Town web site.

No action by the Board is necessary.

b) *Discussion and possible action to set a date for a community forum.*

The problem is having a room large enough for a community forum that can be streamed. The school doesn't have a large space that can do live streaming. The community college has a vaccine mandate and mask mandate. The meeting room at Town Hall is too small for a community forum. One option for next year is to buy a camera that streams and hold the forum at the junior high school. The consensus was that the public could be in the Littlefield Room with a moderator and the panel could be remote.

The forum will be scheduled for March 1 in the Littlefield Meeting Room with the BOS meeting at 5 PM and the forum starting at 7 PM. The topic will be the recent increase in crime and how to address it. Questions can be submitted in advance. Invited panel members will be the YCCA director, WEMS Director Lapolla, Chief Putnam, Chief Dupuis, Town Attorney Leah Rachin, Ms. Adams, Mr. Livingston, Mr. S. Roche and Ms. Crockett.

c) ***Discussion and possible action on letter to State of Maine officials.***

A draft of the letter is in tonight's packets. Our state officials need to be aware of our frustration, and the letter will be sent to the governor, DHHS, Maine State Housing Authority, YCCA and our state representatives. References to "the program" will be changed to specify ERA. We are requesting #1 vetting before anyone is accepted into the program, and #2 removing people from the program for any event requiring police action.

d) ***Discussion and action to schedule a public hearing on Spring Thaw Road Postings.***

Motion by Mrs. Chase, seconded by Mr. MacLeod, to schedule a public hearing on February 15, 2022 at 6PM, 208 Sanford Road, to review the Spring Thaw Road Postings. Passed unanimously.

e) ***Discussion and action to schedule a public hearing on the Beach Parking Pass Policy.***

The policy hasn't been drafted yet and the Board usually discusses the draft before the public hearing.

Motion by Mrs. Chase, seconded by Mr. MacLeod, to table the public hearing. Passed unanimously.

f) ***Discussion and action on accepting a fire cistern and access easement for Fairway Village.***

The Fire Chief and Town Planner/Engineer recommend accepting the easement.

Motion by Mrs. Chase, seconded by Mr. MacLeod, to accept the easement. Passed unanimously.

g) ***Discussion and action to approve a request from Northern New England Chapter Cystic Fibrosis Foundation for the CF Cycle for Life bicycle tour through Wells on July 16, 2022.***

Motion by Mrs. Chase, seconded by Mr. MacLeod, to approve the CF Cycle for Life bicycle tour through Wells on July 16, 2022 and authorize the Town Manager to sign the approval document. Passed unanimously.

h) ***Discussion and action to accept donations and bequests.***

1. \$27.00 from Various Library Users to the Wells Public Library.
2. \$400.00 from St. Francis Of Assisi to the Town of Wells for the Fuel Assistance Program Fund.

Motion by Mrs. Chase, seconded by Mr. MacLeod, to accept the generous donations and write letters of thanks to the donors. Passed unanimously.

i) ***Discussion and action on approving minutes of the January 18, 2022 Selectmen's meeting.***

Motion by Mrs. Chase, seconded by Mr. MacLeod, to approve the January 18, 2022 Selectmen meeting minutes. Passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Open to the Public

~The Chamber of Commerce contacted Chairman Roche about the increase in crime. Local businesses, especially along Route One, are concerned.

~When construction is done on the Newhall Road bridge, we will offer to relocate the family for a few days. We are not requiring them to move out. The cost of temporary housing is included in the project budget.

~Chief Putnam reported the passing of Officer Ken Berdeen who served many years in Wells and Kennebunk. Our condolences to his family.

~Mr. T. Roche reported the passing of Representative John Tuttle of Sanford. He was formerly a lifeguard at Wells Beach. He was a veteran and an advocate for veterans’ affairs at the legislature. Our condolences to his family.

~The girls’ basketball team is undefeated. Congratulations to Grace Ramsdell who became the third Wells athlete to score 1,000 points. The boys’ team won tonight; both teams are going to the State tournament. The track team is also doing well.

2. ***Town Manager’s Report***

~The sea wall stayed up during the last storm; fortunately, the wind was off the land. A temporary rock barrier will be placed in the next few weeks.

~Town staff is staying healthy with no reported COVID cases recently. Thank you to everyone for the teamwork.

3. ***Adjournment***

Motion by Mrs. Chase, seconded by Mr. MacLeod, to adjourn. Passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Accepted by,

Cinndi Davidson,
Meeting Recorder