

Kingston, New Hampshire
Board of Selectmen
Meeting of August 6, 2018
DRAFT MINUTES

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM in the Meeting Room at the Kingston Town Hall.

PRESENT: George Korn, Phillip Coombs, Kevin St. James and Donald Briggs, Jr., Selectmen.

ABSENT: Mark Heitz, Chairman

The meeting was brought to order by Selectman Korn, who will be acting Chairman for this meeting. He noted that the non-public session scheduled for 6:30 had been cancelled.

2018 Revaluation Presentation - Assessor Fred Smith

Fred Smith of Purvis & Associates, the Town's Assessor, addressed the Board on the topic of the property revaluation, which is done every 5 years and is taking place in 2018. Mr. Smith referred to informational binders he had prepared to explain the revaluation process and how property values are calculated. He also provided a binder of preliminary valuations. He gave a brief overview of what property transfers are relied upon for sale information, how the median ratio is determined, improvement values, estimated land values, and the statistical analysis using pre-existing conditions.

Selectman Korn asked for an explanation of the jump in assessed values. Mr. Smith said that the last time the properties were assessed was in 2013, and that the equalization rate in 2018 was 20% low, meaning that the overall value of the Town's properties had increased by 20%. He added that this is the average increase, and that not every property has gone up by that margin.

Mr. Smith also said that the new value should not be multiplied by the old tax rate; the County will be setting a new tax rate. He said he will be sending notices out to all property owners, and will make appointments to meet with anyone who wishes to discuss the changes. He added that this is a big part of "quality control" of assessments, meaning that people can bring attention to any incorrect information on their property.

18 Babscott Lane, Culvert Issue

This matter was postponed until September 10th, 2018, on the request of the property owner.

Bill Bartlett re: Certificate of Occupancy for R3-4-LU4-1

Bill Bartlett was present with the Certificate of Occupancy for the house he had built at 2 Bent Grass Circle. The certificate had been signed by all department heads except the Building Inspector. Because the site is under a notice of violation, Mr. Bartlett had been instructed to bring the form to the Selectmen for final signature.

Selectman Briggs noted that he had spoken with Building Inspector Robert Steward, who informed him that he had inspected the property and is all set, that one minor item he had pointed out had been taken care of.

MOTION: by Selectman St. James, to authorize acting Chairman Korn to sign the Occupancy Permit for 2 Bent Grass Circle, Map R3 Lot 4-LU4-1 in place of the Building Inspector, on behalf of the Board.

SECOND: by Selectman Coombs

All in favor

Review of Proposals Received - Masonry Work at Museum

Road Agent Rich St. Hilaire and Heritage Commission member Ernie Landry were present to address this matter. Mr. St. Hilaire said that the work to be done is to the steps and side walls to the steps, and to repoint any other areas of masonry that need it. Mr. Landry said that he had sent Request for Proposal (RFP) forms to 6 contractors that do masonry work on historic buildings, and also placed an ad in the Manchester Union Leader. Only one response was received to the RFP, but an old proposal for the same work was already on hand.

Copies of the proposals were reviewed and Selectman Korn noted that the issue with the bids is that they are not even close, that he did not know how to assess them. He said additional proposals will be needed, and asked Mr. Landry if he was willing to go through the process again.

It was decided to reject all bids and have Mr. St. Hilaire and Mr. Landry go out with a new RFP. The two bidders will be contacted to explain that more information is needed (in the form of more bids for comparison).

Town Hall Mold Testing

Mr. St. Hilaire brought copies of the full report of results of mold testing at the town hall, done by RPF Environmental Testing and Consulting on June 29. Testing was done inside and outside of the building. He suggested that the Selectmen take it home and read it; the technician will be invited to attend a meeting with the employees.

Review of Previous Meeting Minutes: 7/9/2018; 7/23/2018

MOTION: by Selectman St. James to approve the Public session and Non-Public session minutes of July 9, 2018, and the Public session minutes of July 23, 2018, as written.

SECOND: by Selectman Coombs

All in favor.

Friends of Kingston Open Space

Mr. Landry and Glenn Coppelman, members of the Friends of Kingston Open Space (FOKOS) updated the Selectmen about property at 57 Exeter Road, which the Town may be interested in purchasing for its value as a water source. FOKOS had received permission from the Selectmen in April 2018 to approach East Kingston, as part of the property is in East Kingston, and the land owner, to share the cost of an appraisal with the Town and FOKOS.

A summary of proposals for appraisal of the property ("Trabucco property") was shared, which showed a higher cost than anticipated. The original estimate of cost was \$3,000; the estimates received were for \$4,800, \$4,000 and \$3,700, and an additional consultant will be required to evaluate the value of the water source on the property. Mr. Landry said he thinks at least \$5700 will be required, but the cost of the water analyst is not known.

Mr. Landry said he planned to set up a meeting with East Kingston on Monday. Selectman St. James questioned the apportionment of the land between the towns. Mr. Coppelman noted that the water source, access to the property and the larger portion of the lot are on the Kingston side. Selectman St. James asked whether the land should be separated. Options for sharing the land, water source and costs were discussed. Mr. Coppelman said that another option is for Kingston to proceed alone. Mr. Landry said that the towns will need to work together to decide what to do. Selectman Korn said that as East Kingston has already been involved, it may be difficult to change now. It was noted that the appraisal will be done on each lot, and then as a whole property.

Road Agent Rich St. Hilaire was asked his opinion on the cost of the appraisals and said he thought an amount not to exceed \$6,500 would be appropriate. Selectman Coombs said that a water expert is definitely called for. The question of proceeding alone or including East Kingston was discussed. Selectman Korn suggested a non-disclosure agreement should be put in place if Kingston was to enter negotiations including the owner.

There was a discussion of prior appraisals or water studies done on the property, and Mr. Coppelman noted that several proposals had come to the Planning Board over the years, including a residential development that did not move forward, and for commercial water extraction, which was approved. He said that information about the amounts and quality of the water should still be in the Planning Board files. He recalled the output being 2,000 to 3,000 gallons per day, with recharge sufficient to support this output on a daily basis indefinitely.

MOTION: by Selectman Coombs, to authorize up to \$6,500 for appraisal of the value of the Trabucco property, to be paid for by the Town of Kingston alone.

SECOND: by Selectman St. James.

Selectman Korn said that if this passes, he would ask that FOKOS approach East Kingston to explain the reasons for proceeding alone. Selectman Coombs said that this does not necessarily preclude a future partnership. He said that at this point, in order to save time, and because the main value of the property is on the Kingston side, it makes sense to proceed alone. Chief Briggs suggested that as the original intention was to work together with East Kingston, they should still be included as a partner. Mr. Coppelman said that if this motion passes, the message to East Kingston should be that Kingston is going forward covering the cost of the appraisal alone for expediency, and will come back with the results and continue talking.

All in favor.

Mr. Landry then asked the Selectmen to choose from the three appraising companies. It was decided to contact Crafts Appraisals, as they already work with the Southeast Land Trust, and as they are the least expensive and promise the soonest date of completion. Funding for the appraisals was discussed, including several possible grant sources.

Road Classification, Bluebird Lane

Phoebe Sirois introduced herself as the daughter of Demetra Apostolou of 3 Bluebird Lane. She said that Bluebird Lane is a Class 6 road and the family would like to have it changed to Class 5. She said she does not understand why it was never made a Class 5 road.

Selectman Briggs said that Bluebird Lane was originally an access road when Route 125 was being built. Mr. St. Hilaire added that in 1965 when the road was built, lots were cut off; the house the Apostolous own was in the middle of the intersection of Routes 125 and 111, and was moved to what was Access Road H, later renamed Bluebird Lane. He said the Town never maintained the road, he is not sure why, but the residents maintained the road themselves. He said that the residents petitioned for snow removal in the last 2 years and the Selectmen agreed, but it is still a Class 6 road. It was noted that the Board had recently authorized work on the road to repair holes and clean out the culverts, in order to ensure access for emergency vehicles.

Selectman Briggs questioned the cost of bringing the road up to Class 5, and it was estimated by the Road Agent that the cost would be roughly \$300,000. In conversation it was determined that a developer would normally be responsible for the cost of upgrading the road, or the residents could place a petition warrant article asking for the Town to pay for it. However, the Selectmen agreed that this would set a potentially costly precedent as there are a number of Class 6 roads in town. There was a discussion of the road itself and whether there was even room for the 60 wide road bed required to meet Town standards. Mr. St. Hilaire said he did not think so.

Selectman St. James said that the Board had just authorized work to be done on the road to repair holes and clean out the ends of the culverts, to make the road accessible for emergency vehicles.

Ms. Sirois said she was here for information, as the family are weighing options for the property. Selectman Briggs suggested that they could hire an engineer to see if a plan could be made for the road and cul de sac, and then bring that to the Planning Board.

OLD BUSINESS

Certificates of Occupancy - Hawks Ridge

There was a discussion of how to handle the issuance of Certificates of Occupancy for new homes in the Hawks Ridge development, which is still without an approved amended site plan. The fact that the CO for Lot 29 was only signed by one Selectman was noted and also that a request for one more CO, for Lot #5, is expected. Selectman Coombs said that these need to be properly signed by authorizing the Chairman to sign them. He also said that no further lots should be released until the Planning Board approves an amended site plan.

MOTION: by Selectman Coombs, that for the lot previously approved on July 23, the Chairman has the authority, with majority Board approval, to sign in place of the Building Inspector.

SECOND: by Selectman Briggs.

In Favor: Coombs, St. James, Briggs

Abstain: Korn

NEW BUSINESS

Request from the Newton-Kingston Taxpayers Association to air videos on the Town's cable channel: This request was considered, but it was decided not to air the series of 7 videos, which are between 3 and 8 minutes in length, due to the length and also the possible political content.

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

- The Highway block grant from NH DOT for State Fiscal Year 2019 totals \$175,995.68, an increase of about \$2,200 over 2018.
- The junkyard renewal for the Whitney junkyard was referred back to the Planning Board, as the owner is applying for a new use.
- Before issuing a renewal permit for John's Truck & Auto junkyard, Selectman Briggs asked that a site walk be planned.
- The quarterly environmental report for the landfill was received; levels of contaminants continue to go down.
- Facilities Use applications for cross country meets on the Plains in September were signed.
- The annual Application for Reimbursement for Federal and State Forest Land was signed (for Rockrimmon State Forest).
- A sample access agreement document prepared for use by Truslow Resource Consulting at the All American Assisted Living site (for monitoring of neighboring wells) was approved.
- Until vegetation management plans were received.

MOTION: By Selectman Korn, to adjourn the meeting at 9:30 PM.

SECOND: by Selectman St. James

All in Favor

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Ayer
Administrative Assistant