

**Kingston, New Hampshire  
Board of Selectmen  
Meeting of February 1, 2021  
FINAL MINUTES**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM. The meeting was held via Zoom software, with Selectman St. James joining from the Town Hall to provide access as posted on the agenda. The Right-to-Know law checklist was read prior to the start of the meeting.

**PRESENT:** Phillip Coombs, Chair; Donald Briggs, Vice Chair; Electra Alessio, Kevin St. James, Richard Wilson, Select Board Members.

**7:00 PM: PUBLIC HEARING** to consider the application of Chinburg Properties for a Community Revitalization Tax Relief Incentive (RSA 79-E) for estimated \$7 million building improvements to the property located at 178 Main Street. The subject property is located in Historic District 1, Tax Map R34, Lot 17.

Chairman Coombs opened the hearing and introduced the topic by saying that the 79-E tax incentive had been passed via Town Warrant Article last year, to allow for investment in properties in the historic district.

Eric Chinburg was present and gave some background on his application, adding that he had responded to questions and comments of the 79-e Committee by making a few additions and amendments. He explained that the duration of the tax relief period per the RSA is 5 years, and he had asked for the additional 4 years for a structure on the Historic Register, as well as an additional 2 years that can be added for creation of housing. In negotiations with the Select Board, he had agreed to a total of 9 years. He had added a copy of the nomination form adding the Sanborn Seminary to the National register of Historic Places.

Mr. Chinburg said that his goal is to convert the two buildings (Sanborn Seminary and the old Science building) into nice market rate apartments. He said the Seminary building will look as it does now, but the Science building will need windows and some other adaptations that Mr. Chinburg said he would not be able to do under strict adherence to historic standards. He said he is hoping to have approval of this Board, and then would be moving on to the Planning Board and Historic District Commission.

Selectman Wilson asked if a breakdown of the cost for each building could be prepared, in case for any reason it was decided to not do both. Mr. Chinburg said this can be done following the meeting. There was some discussion of the age of the Science building; Selectwoman Alessio said that the Science building is 50 years old, and would need windows for security and insulation purposes. Selectman St. James said his only concern was for the Seminary building, and did not want Mr. Chinburg to be restricted in any way with his use of the Science building due to historical standards. Selectman Wilson added that while the Science building did not have the same historical value as the Seminary, there is interest in keeping the qualities of the building. Mr. Chinburg said he agreed with all the comments, and that the higher historical significance is clearly in the Seminary building. He said he might have considering demolishing the Science

building except that he needs the total square footage to make the project financially viable. He said the goal is to keep the integrity of the building, but while the Seminary will look as it did when it was built, the Science building will look more repurposed. Selectwoman Alessio commented that the Science building had been recommended to be leveled, and it is to Mr. Chinburg's credit that he sees some redeeming value in it. Chairman Coombs concurred, saying that according to the appraisals that had been done, the Science building had been considered a tear-down, but the idea is to conserve this known entity as best as possible while making it a useful structure. Selectman St. James said that Mr. Chinburg's work in other areas shows that he has a flair for making his buildings fit in, and the quality of his work is high.

Committee member Glenn Coppelman commented that the Science building is not as old as the Seminary, but still has historic value and it part of the fabric and rhythm of the historic district. He said there should be more flexibility in dealing with it, but that this question will be explored in more depth by the Historic District Commission.

In response to a question submitted by a Committee member, Mr. Chinburg said that the project will not include Chase field, and that it will not affect any wetland. Selectwoman Alessio confirmed that the agreement did not include Chase Field, that the school district retained ownership.

Ernie Landry asked if partial tax relief under the Secretary of Interior Standards is allowed under the RSA or not. Mr. Chinburg referred to RSA 79-E:5, section IV: "The governing body may adopt local guidelines to assist it in determining the appropriate duration of the tax assessment relief period."

There was a discussion of when the tax relief begins; Selectwoman Alessio said that the clock doesn't start ticking until the project is complete, which will be in 2 years.

The Chairman opened the hearing to public comment.

Bob Berg, 18 Jericho Drive, said he was here on another topic, but the project sounded good to him.

Marghi Bean, 44 Tucker Road, asked how 70 apartments could be squeezed into the buildings. Mr. Chinburg answered that apartments are getting smaller, and he calls it "living large in small places". He also said that he put in 70 as a maximum number, but it could end up being fewer.

There was no further input from the public.

The Public Hearing was concluded at 7:31 pm.

**MOTION:** by Selectwoman Alessio, to grant 9 years of tax relief to Chinburg Properties for the renovation of property located at 178 Main Street, per the terms of RSA 79-E.

**SECOND:** Selectman Wilson

In discussion it was noted that taxes will be paid on the current assessment of the property until the project is completed. It was also noted that no taxes have been paid on this property before.

**All in favor via roll call vote.**

## **APPOINTMENTS:**

### **Kingston Days Committee**

This appointment was postponed until February 8.

### **Jericho Road Residents re: Torromeo Industries blasting/sound mitigation**

Bob Berg, 18 Jericho Drive, was present and referred to an email he had sent to the Chairman, requesting a copy of Torromeo's agreement with the Town that was discussed during a visit by town representatives to the site. Mr. Berg also had included a list of questions he would like answers to in writing, such as the size of the berm, blasting plan for the north wall of the pit, further expansion, and safety concerns.

Chairman Coombs said that he will answer what he can, but to start with, the agreement with Torromeo was in the form of a friendly conversation and not a formal document. He said that more detail can be provided when they are putting in the berm. Selectman Briggs said that as for drilling on the north wall, there will be none until further notice; he said he assumes the berm will be put in first. Chairman Coombs said a basic plan should be in place by April, and the neighbors will be notified.

Mr. Berg also said they would like to be notified before any significant blasting in the future. Chairman Coombs said the Town will be looking into notifications via the website such as there are for meeting notices.

Sara Taglieri, 24 Jericho Drive, said she would echo Mr. Berg's comments, and she is sure the Town can appreciate their concern. She said this is not the first time the neighbors have been told the sound will be mitigated, and the berm may or may not work. She said the problem is not only the sound but the vibrations. Chairman Coombs said he understands the concerns, and that this will not immediately replace trees that took 70 years to grow.

**PUBLIC COMMENT I:** None heard.

## **OLD BUSINESS:**

### **IT Services Contract: Decision**

Selectman St. James described the process he and Chairman Coombs went through to get more information about the various companies who had bid for the IT contract, including checking references. He said that Block 5 is first choice based on this final research.

Selectman St. James said he had talked with Block 5 also about the length of the contract; he was told that they could extend into a 3-year contract but could not offer anything more in return, and said that it would be hard to know what a third year would entail or cost. In discussion, the Board agreed that a 2-year contract would be preferable, to get the basic improvements done, and then re-assess needs and put out a new request for proposals after the 2 years are up.

**MOTION:** by Selectman St. James, to award the IT contract for a 2-year term to Block 5 Technologies, to take effect after the Town Meeting in March.

**SECOND:** by Selectman Briggs

There was a brief discussion of where this expense falls in the budget. It was agreed that there is enough money under Contractual Services to cover IT Services as well as water testing.

**All in favor via roll call vote.**

Selectman St. James will contact Block 5.

It was agreed that Town Counsel should be asked to review this contract before signing.

**MOTION:** by Selectwoman Alessio, to authorize the Chairman to sign the contract with Block 5 Technologies for IT services for 2 years, pending legal review.

**SECOND:** by Selectman St. James

**In favor: Alessio, Briggs, St. James, Wilson; Abstain: Coombs (via roll call vote)**

### **Sale of Town Property**

There was a discussion of Town lots in Great Pond Park that abutters have expressed interest in obtaining; a third resident has sent a letter of interest this week. All lots so far discussed are in Tax Map U4 (Lots 175, 179, 186, 27 and 30). All are unbuildable; one (Lot 175) is in need of hazardous tree removal. Selectman St. James has talked with all the interested abutters. In the case of Lot 175, two abutters are interested, and Selectman St. James suggested that the lot may be split. Before being offered for sale, these lots need to be reviewed by the Planning Board and Conservation Commission.

Another lot on Pillsbury Pasture Road may also be offered; that lot contains a Town easement.

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

#### **New sign at Wadleigh and Main Streets**

Selectman St. James said that the granite sign for the Richard D. St. Hilaire Recreation Center is now in place. There was a discussion of the cost and payment; total cost is \$1550. It was noted that Scout Owen Tebo, who renovated the shed at the Recreation Center for his Eagle Scout project, had returned \$390 in donations to the Town that had been left over when he was done, and this will be put toward the sign. Selectwoman Alessio said she was not comfortable asking Mr. St. Hilaire to pay for this out of his budget.

**MOTION:** by Selectman St. James, to pay for the Recreation sign out of the General Fund.

**SECOND:** by Selectwoman Alessio

Chairman Coombs pointed out that whether in the Highway fund or not, the money is all Town funds, not belonging to any person or department. He said this is exactly the sort of expense Buildings and Grounds is meant to cover. Selectman Wilson suggested that the Motion be amended to say that the bill will be paid out of the General Fund, and transferred from Buildings and Grounds later. Selectman St. James amended his motion to include this phrase; Selectwoman Alessio Seconded.

**In favor: Alessio, Briggs, St. James, Wilson. Opposed: Coombs (via roll call vote)**

There was a discussion of the dedication ceremony, which is set for February 13, especially with regard to parking arrangements.

**COMMITTEE LIAISON REPORTS:**

None

**PUBLIC COMMENT II:** None heard

**BOARD BUSINESS:**

The Administrative Assistant was asked to follow up with Town Counsel regarding a notice of violation sent to him for review.

**CORRESPONDENCE, APPLICATIONS, PURCHASE ORDERS:**

- A technical memorandum was received from Truslow Resource Consulting, LLC regarding ground water testing at the All American Assisted Living site.

**APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:**

Deferred to the next meeting of the Board.

**NON-PUBLIC SESSION:**

**MOTION:** by Chairman Coombs, to enter non-public session under RSA 91-A:3, II (I) Legal

**SECOND:** by Selectman St. James

**All in favor via roll call vote**

**Meeting adjourned to non-public session at 8:34 PM.**

**MOTION:** by Selectman St. James, to return to public session at 9:01 PM

**SECOND:** by Chairman Coombs

**All in favor**

**MOTION to seal** these minutes for an undetermined length of time, made by Selectwoman Alessio, seconded by Selectman Wilson, because it is determined that divulgence of this information likely would:

xx Affect adversely the reputation of any person other than a member of this board.

Passed by unanimous roll call vote.

**Discussed during non-public session:** Legal matters

**Adjournment:**

**MOTION:** by Selectman St. James to adjourn at 9:02 PM

**SECOND:** by Chairman Coombs

**All in favor via roll call vote**

Respectfully submitted,  
Susan Ayer, Administrative Assistant