

**Kingston, New Hampshire
Board of Selectmen
Meeting of April 27, 2020
FINAL MINUTES**

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

PRESENT: Phillip Coombs, Chair; Donald Briggs, Vice Chair; Kevin St. James, Richard Wilson, Electra Alessio, Selectmen.

APPOINTMENTS:

Affinity LED Lighting- streetlight conversion proposal

Steve Lieber and John Branagan of Affinity LED Lighting were present via Zoom to discuss this proposal, which had been emailed to the Selectmen recently for consideration. Selectman St. James introduced the topic and said that Mr. Lieber had looked at Kingston's fixtures and identified 34 that would need replacement of the power brackets, or arms that extend over the road. For this work there would be a separate cost of \$22,000, which would be charged directly from Unital; he said that Unital has agreed to tie this cost into the overall program.

Mr. Branagan explained the program, saying that the projected energy savings will in effect fund a 5-year interest-free loan that will pay for the conversion. He said that the total cost of \$75,833 will be reduced by Unital's incentive of \$30,861, making the total net cost of the project \$44,972. Payment will be broken down into three components, the \$326 monthly payment, the \$424 monthly repayment of Kingston's co-pay after rebate, and the calculated monthly energy cost savings of \$750. Mr. Branagan explained that the total monthly payment of \$750 is offset by the monthly energy cost savings.

Chairman Coombs asked what the anticipated life span of the fixtures is; Mr. Branagan said that the standard lifespan of the fixtures is 120,000 hours, and that the warranty on the equipment is for 10 years. Further details were given on the coverage and the experience of other local towns that had done fixture replacement projects. He added that the fixtures are assembled in Dover by veterans.

A question from the public was answered by Mr. Lieber: All lights will be verified to belong to Kingston, and a map of all fixtures will be created. Inventory details will be provided by Unital, and it was noted that they are generally very reliable with current bookkeeping.

Selectman St. James questioned if any lights should be added at this point. Mr. Branagan said that in going over the job with local officials, often that will be the time to identify if any lights should be added or moved. Selectman Alessio said she likes the idea of going over the lighting, and taking public input on location or adding/removing lighting. Mr. Lieber cautioned that while Affinity could sell the lights to the Town, Unital would be the entity to decide on placement. He also made the point that some residents may want more lights but others may be more interested in minimizing lighting, and the

town shouldn't be in the business of placing private lighting. Selectman Briggs said that lighting on Route 125 has been decided based on dangerous intersections and the number of accidents.

Selectman Alessio said that the town's departments should have the biggest say in placement. Selectman St. James said a survey might be helpful. Mr. Lieber then shared a screen showing a map of lights in the Town of Plaistow to illustrate how the lights are identified and tracked through the process of replacement.

Selectman St. James said he had followed up with other towns that had hired Affinity for this work, and said the lighting in Exeter is different, very good, and that they had realized the savings anticipated.

MOTION: by Selectman St. James, to contract with Affinity LED Lighting for conversion of town street lights to LED lights, per the terms in the written agreement.

SECOND: by Selectman Alessio

All in favor via roll call vote.

Selectman St. James will continue to act as go-between with Affinity.

Fire Station Building Committee

Committee members Mark Furlong, Graham Pellerin and Rich St. Hilaire were present and Chuck Hart joined in the discussion via Zoom.

Mr. Furlong said that the bond application for the Fire Station is due on May 8.

MOTION: by Selectman St. James to authorize the Board Chair to sign the bond application.

SECOND: by Selectman Alessio

There was a brief discussion in which Chairman Alessio commented that no matter what happens with the building plans, the bond application needs to be submitted.

All were in favor via roll call vote.

Mr. Furlong said that the project can move forward with funding that is already available. He noted that the Bauen construction management agreement was in two parts; one was up to the March vote, and the current part brings it up to the bidding process for items contractors. Mr. Furlong listed the items to be done in the immediate future, including geotechnical testing which determines the type of foundation the building should have, and the moving of the utility poles.

There was a discussion of the water piping currently in place, that services sprinkler systems and fire hydrants for the fire station, town hall, school and Congregational Church. As this will be re-engineered and replaced, it was agreed that a discussion needs to take place with church representatives as well as the school system and the new owner of the Sanborn school. It was agreed that information on cost needs to be obtained for this discussion, to take place at a future meeting.

Road Agent Rich St. Hilaire was present, shared details of the system, and suggested that the Board should contact SFC Engineering as soon as possible. It was agreed that Chief Pellerin and Mr. St. Hilaire will reach out to Jeff Murphy at SFC about engineering

already done, and how to separate the costs related to the church and school from Town and Fire Station costs. Preliminary meetings will set up with the School Superintendent and church officials; details about the piping project itself will be pursued by Mr. St. Hilaire.

There was a discussion of other items such as the status of the septic system and utilizing Town equipment and labor as much as possible.

PUBLIC COMMENT I: None heard.

OLD BUSINESS:

Heritage Certified Local Government Grant

It was explained that the Heritage Commission had been approved for a grant to be used toward completing a National Register nomination for the Plains Cemetery. The paperwork now needs to be signed and returned to the state Division of Historical Resources.

MOTION: by Selectman Wilson, to authorize Chairman Phillip Coombs to enter into the grant agreement on behalf of the Town.

SECOND: by Selectman Alessio

All in favor via roll call vote.

NEW BUSINESS:

Employee evaluations and raises

There was a lengthy discussion of the status of employee evaluations, and how to handle raises this year with the uncertainty of cash flow due to the COVID-19 crisis. The difference between budgeted increases in place to bring certain employees up to standard pay and pay for performance increases still pending was discussed. Chairman Coombs suggested that increases should be on hold until the town's financial situation is better known, and a date set by which to make a decision about whether the increases can take place this year. The logistics of how this can be fairly handled were discussed with the department heads present.

A non-public workshop was set for Wednesday, April 29 at 2:30 PM to discuss details of evaluations and increases. Results of the discussion will be shared, and any decisions will be formalized at the May 11 meeting.

Emergency Fund

Chairman Coombs said that three checks had been received toward a town emergency fund for residents in need due to the COVID-19 virus. He said that the total of the gifts to date is under \$5,000 but still needs to be accepted by the Board to be held in trust, fully expendable, and an agent to expend should be named.

MOTION: by Selectman St. James, to accept the gifts, totaling \$1500, and establish a COVID-19 emergency fund with Ellen Faulconer as agent to expend.

SECOND: by Selectman Briggs

All in favor via roll call vote

COMMITTEE LIAISON REPORTS:

Selectman Wilson reported that it is the recommendation of **Recreation** Director Paul Butler to cancel summer camp this year. If it is possible to put together a short term camp later in the summer, this will be considered.

MOTION: by Selectman Wilson, to instruct Mr. Butler and the Finance Officer to refund any money already received for summer camp.

SECOND: by Selectman St. James

All in favor via roll call vote.

Code Officers: Selectman Briggs reported that he had received a call about an RV trailer, and also had the Health Officer look at it. The owner has submitted an application for a 90-day permit.

School: Selectman Briggs also reported on plans the school is discussing for graduation, possibly to take place on the Plains where there is more room for social distancing. The event and possible location are still to be determined by the school, but Selectman Briggs said he had been approached with this possibility. While expressing concern about safety, the majority agreed that if the state and the local departments involved gave permission, they would have no problem with this use of the Plains. Selectman Alessio said she would rather see the plan before forming an opinion.

Health: There was a discussion of reopening the Town Hall, which is awaiting guidance from the State. Mr. St. Hilaire reviewed safety measures that should be taken, and said that the Health Officer should put a plan in place. This request will be relayed to the Health Officer by Selectman Briggs.

Mr. St. Hilaire also said that the landfill closure report, received quarterly from CMA Engineers, needs to be reviewed by the Board and signed by the Chairman rather than coming to him as it has up until now. He suggested that a representative of the company should be invited to a meeting to familiarize the Board with the reports. It was agreed to do this at the soonest opportunity.

Fire Department: Selectman St. James brought forward two invoices for recent forest fires that can be submitted to the State that require the signature of the Chairman.

MOTION: by Selectman St. James, to authorize the Chairman to sign two fire related invoices to be submitted to the state.

SECOND: by Selectman Alessio

All in favor via roll call vote.

Selectman St. James brought to the attention of the Board that he felt it is inappropriate for members to take comments or have conversations via cell phone during the meeting. It was noted that members of the public that wish to comment on the meeting should submit their questions or comments via Zoom. Selectman Wilson said that one reason he was getting comments was because people had been kicked off of the Zoom meeting unexpectedly.

PUBLIC COMMENT II: A question that had been received via Zoom chat during the discussion of employee raises was read: "Isn't there a \$70,000 contingency line that will

help fund any COVID expenses at this point: Isn't this the type of emergency this is there for?"

There was a brief discussion of funding for the costs of the virus response and when it will be available. It was noted that there is the ability of the town to move money between funds to pay for unanticipated expenses, but that there is no need at this point.

CORRESPONDENCE, APPLICATIONS, PURCHASE ORDERS:

- A letter received from NH DES regarding invoices they will be sending to the Town for work on PFOA contamination in Kingston was acknowledged. It will be forwarded to Town counsel.
- The Finance Officer has informed the Board that a relief stimulus check has been received in the amount of \$5406.54 from Federal HHS for the town's share of COVID-19 funds towards providers who billed Medicare in 2019.
- Intent to cut, West Shore Park Road, was reviewed and signed.
- Intent to cut, Small Pox Road, was held back as it is missing information.
- One Elderly exemption that has been reviewed for income information was approved.
- Letter received from Virginia Morse asking that she be reappointed to the Historic District Commission. This was agreed; she will be reappointed for another three year term.
- A complaint has been received from a resident of Shendoar Drive regarding a neighbor dumping excavated material on his property. Selectman Briggs said he believes this may be resolved. Whether this is an issue for DES was questioned, and Chairman Coombs said that it is a civil issue.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:

MOTION: by Selectman St. James to approve the meeting minutes of April 14, 2020 as written.

SECOND: by Selectman Wilson.

In favor: Coombs, Briggs, Wilson, Alessio; Abstain: St. James.

NON-PUBLIC SESSION:

MOTION: by Selectman St. James, to go into non-public session under RSA 91-A:3, II (a): The dismissal, promotion, or compensation of any public employee.

SECOND: by Selectman Briggs

In favor: St. James, Coombs, Briggs, Wilson, Alessio

The Board adjourned to Non-public session at 9:38 PM

MOTION: Upon motion of Selectman Coombs, **SECOND** of Selectman Wilson, it was voted by roll call to return to public session at 9:55 PM

In Favor: St. James, Briggs, Coombs, Wilson; Motion passed.

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

__xx__ Render a proposed action ineffective.

Passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Discussed in non-public:

Personnel

Adjournment:

MOTION: by Selectman Coombs to adjourn at 9:56 PM

SECOND: by Selectman Briggs

All in favor.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Ayer
Administrative Assistant