



**Office of Board of Selectmen
Town of Mason**

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Selectmen Meeting 6/25/2019
Approved Minutes

Present: Selectmen Louise Lavoie, Pete McGinnity; Kathy Wile; State Senator Melanie Levesque, State representative Jack Flanagan; members of the public.

Called to Order: The meeting was called to order at 7:31 PM by Chair Louise Lavoie. She introduced the guests and said they would each talk about new or pending legislation and how it would affect Mason, then there would be a time for questions from the public. Louise also presented them both with invitations to join the Mason Library celebration for Smokey the Bear's 75th birthday celebration to be held July 16, 2019.

State Sen. Melanie Levesque spoke first, thanking people for coming. She said the budget was pending the governor's approval. The process is all 3 entities (governor, house and senate) create a budget independently, then the house and senate work to agree on a version which goes to the governor for final approval. In terms of positive effect for Mason of the proposed budget was that there would funds from revenue sharing of \$20,000 to be given to the town for education, in addition to the usual funding. Negotiations of house and senate led to giving up on paid family leave, while keeping funding for mental health, opioid addiction, DCYF and education funding intact. Other bills included with the budget bill include HB 104, allowing moderators to work with SOS office to potentially reschedule town elections due to weather conditions. In recognition of limited numbers of volunteers in many small communities, there is another bill to allow town officials to serve on multiple boards at the same time.

Rep. Jack Flanagan also spoke on the budget, saying he had reason to believe the proposed budget would be vetoed, which he agreed with. He said inflated revenue numbers had been used, and there are many other bills attached which should be considered separately, including HB 306 which would enable property owners who were denied applications by local boards to appeal to a state board instead of superior court. He added concerns about raising the minimum wage and the effect it would have on employees getting hours cut, etc. He also mentioned he had introduced 12 pieces of legislation, 6 of which have been retained.

Melanie added that the Senate does get actual revenue numbers, NH uses Federal minimum wage, and business tax cuts are frozen at 7.9%.

During the question period, Louise asked for help with getting grants. As a small town, we have found we don't qualify/impact enough people or resources to qualify for many grants. Both officials said they can look into how other small towns such as Brookline handle this, and would get back to the town.

Doug Whitbeck commented that the one or two year special funding/revenue sharing things are great but they are hard on planning – any way to smooth things out? Challenge for town budgeting appreciated, but hard to predict some incomes to the state and the resultant sharing.

Harry Spear said he had heard about a possible increase in the amount of the Veteran Tax Credit – any truth to that? Mr Flanagan said that the amount of the tax credit is decided by a town meeting vote, and towns were free to approve any amount in excess of the minimum (\$50). Mason currently gives \$500, the top of the range. Ms Levesque said there are several bills coming through involving veterans, and the committee would be reviewing them.

There was discussion about the veto of renewables bill, or net metering cap for solar installations. Cost to Eversource for managing system influenced the decision, no override of the veto by the House.

Liz Fletcher spoke about culvert replacement, which in her opinion should be more of a state responsibility.

Ms Levesque closed out by saying that NH had become the 47th state to celebrate the holiday known as “Juneteenth”. The holiday was first celebrated June 19, 1865 and celebrates the emancipation of enslaved peoples.

Approvals: The regular meeting resumed at 8:40 PM.

- Noted that the payroll manifests and accounts payable manifest had been signed.
- Minutes of the June 11, 2019 staff meeting were reviewed. Pete motioned to accept the minutes as written, second from Louise. 2 votes to accept the minutes of 6/11/2019 staff meeting as written.
Minutes of the June 11, 2019 general meeting were reviewed. Motion by Pete, second from Louise, to accept as written. 2 votes to accept the minutes of the 6/11/2019 general meeting as written.
Minutes of the June 17, 2019 staff meeting were reviewed. Motion by Pete, second from Louise, to accept as written. 2 votes to accept the minutes of the 6/17/2019 staff meeting as written.
- Contract with Wetherbee Plumbing, to complete water hookups and eyewash station at the highway garage, was signed by Louise on behalf of the Board. Bid previously accepted at the 6/17/2019 staff meeting with Road Agent Dave Morrison.
- Veteran credit application had been approved and recommended by the assessor, reviewed and signed by both selectmen.
- Elderly exemption application reviewed and recommended by the assessor as well – reviewed and signed by both selectmen.

- Abatement request had been reviewed by the assessor, and recommended to be denied. Selectmen reviewed application and reasons for denial, and signed.

New Business:

- See above notes on State delegation.

Old Business:

- Building Permit for 472 Old County Rd – Building Inspector Jake Olson and the property owners were present for the discussion regarding their denied permit to build a new house on their property which will replace their current house. The problem from the BOS side was the guarantee that the old house would be demolished. Owners said the old house would be demolished so they could connect the water to the new house, and they are willing to sign an agreement saying that. Final decision is that there would be no CO issued until first house is completely gone, and that owners will bring in a letter stating the time frame for the building project and for demolition of original structure before the project begins.
- New building at the Driving Range – Nicole Ruggiero introduced the property manager for the Range, Bob. BOS position was that the new building, which measured out at over 300 square feet was not on the site plan, did not have a permit for the building or for the electrical hookup. Nicole and Jake agreed she had mentioned a plan to bring in a shed, which Jake reported he never saw details of until it was in place. Bob reported the building is used for 3-4 hours the evening of events only. There was discussion of size restrictions on sheds, commercial vs residential property restrictions, conforming to the site plan, and possible alternatives including use of an RV for entertainers to change in. The Range is to have the building removed within 10 days.
- Jake stayed for one more building concern – the permit application for a garage on Class 6 portion of Hurricane Hill Rd. The way forward for the homeowner is to have the permit denied, and then to request a hearing from ZBA to get an exception for the new structure.
- Conservation Commission, represented by Bob Dillberger, came for discussion and approval of the LCHIP application for parcel B-4-2. Pete spoke on behalf of BOS, and thanked CC for the packets they had made for selectmen. He went on to explain concerns that BOS had with the application – it excluded the complete cost amount, CC does not appear to have the total amount of their monetary contribution without depending on projected income and depleting their accounts, that the LCHIP ownership in perpetuity could potentially involve costly mandates and as such may not be the best source of funding. Selectmen are not willing to sign at this point, and invited CC to come back again for the next grant round with improved financials.
Bob responded that the final budget had been revised and the CC contribution had been decreased. He also said that the LCHIP restrictions were not as onerous as BOS seemed to feel, and that it is actually the easement holder, not LCHIP, that determines what can/cannot be done with a property and monitors it. Bob said that BOS refusal to sign the application has the effect of terminating their funding project which they had been given authority to get. BOS position was that they

had been given authority to get funding, but that getting it from LCHIP was not in the best interests of the Town, and to find another source.

Liz Fletcher added that CC had some contingency funding from future timber sales to replenish their funds.

Informational Items/Communication:

Public Forum:

- Garth Fletcher thanked BOS for having the representatives onsite, hopes it will happen again
He mentioned the light audit meeting earlier in the day – Kathy will be sending BOS an email to update on that.
- Donna Dills of Barrett Hill Rd asked about the email she had sent regarding a neighbor's construction of new driveway on top of boundary walls and set backs for new construction. BOS responded that that is a state road, and any concerns about driveways would have to go through state DOT office. Road Agent Dave Morrison supplied her with the number of the Greenville office.
She was further advised that the boundary walls would need to be a private landowner issue, not under the authority of the town.

Non-Public:

Adjourned:

There being no further business, Louise motioned to adjourn, second from Pete.
Two votes to adjourn the meeting at 9:37 PM.

Next regularly scheduled meeting will be Tuesday July 9th, 2019 at the Mann House at 7:30 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Kathy Wile
Administrative Assistant