

TOWN OF LYME
Select Board Meeting
Tuesday, September 5th, 2023
9:00 AM
Approved: Thursday September 21st, 2023

The following people were present for part or all of the meeting: Select Board members Judith Brotman, Benjamin Kilham and David Kahn, Administrator Dina Cutting.

Select Board/Assessing Clerk Jordan Toland via Zoom

Public: Richard Brown, Hebe Quinton, Jan Williams via Zoom, James Graham, Hunter Snider, Jim Nourse, Sue McKenzie, Patricia Jenks, Joe Driscoll (Mitchell Municipal), - Herndon (CPCNH)

1. At 9:00 AM Mrs. Brotman opened the meeting.
2. Public comment:
 - a. Ms. Mackenzie inquired about roadside mowing, and gave a suggestion that it should be done in early August due to the timing of vegetation growth. Mrs. Brotman thanked her for the suggestion. Mrs. Cutting reported that Road Agent, Scott Bailey, has asked Mrs. Cutting to put this out to bid. Mrs. Cutting explained that Goose Pond Rd and its setbacks due to rain has put this on hold, but some intersection maintenance will be addressed. Ms. Mackenzie asked about the status of the Goose Pond Road project. Mrs. Brotman explained that the last step is paving and is scheduled in mid to late September. Ms. Mackenzie asked if there are any 2024 road projects. Mrs. Brotman said Mr. Bailey would be presenting his ideas to the Board shortly. Ms. Mackenzie suggested South River Rd.
 - b. Mr. Nourse asked where on the website the bridge information and link is located? Mrs. Cutting said she would ask Ms. Toland so she can point the public in the right direction.
 - c. Mr. Brown asked if the Old to New Report is available. Mrs. Cutting informed him that it is not final yet, and Ms. Toland and herself are reviewing the report to finalize it.
3. Mrs. Brotman reported on an official audit report from the Department of Safety Division of Motor Vehicles performed on August 28th, 2023, pertaining to motor vehicle registration and processing. It was a stellar report, and the Board shows their support and gratitude to the Town Clerk staff.
4. The Board decided to wait on the approval of the August 24th, 2023 public and nonpublic session minutes. Board members did not have time to review them for this meeting.
5. At 9:15 AM Mrs. Brotman moved to open the Public Hearing to review and accept unanticipated revenue in accordance with RSA 31:95 b. Additional Block Grant Funds in the amount of \$82,534.88.

The Board was encouraged to accept these funds by the public. Mr. Kahn moved to accept the additional block grant funds in the amount of \$82,534.88. Mr. Kilham seconded the motion. Voted unanimously in favor by roll call vote.
6. At 9:17 AM Mrs. Brotman closed the Public Hearing.

7. The Board reviewed the Manifest totaling \$67,215.35. Mr. Kilham moved approval of the Manifest. Mrs. Brotman seconded the motion. Voted unanimously in favor by roll call vote.
8. Mrs. Cutting gave a report on financial information for an additional holiday, Juneteenth. Wages for employees who qualify for a paid holiday total \$3,019.00, this number does not include benefit numbers. Mr. Kilham moved to approve adding Juneteenth to the paid holiday list. Mrs. Brotman seconded the motion. Mr. Kahn explained his concerns adding a holiday that is targeted towards a specific racial group. Mr. Kilham explained his opinion that many holidays do have the same rationale. After a brief discussion the motion was voted unanimously in favor by roll call vote.
9. Mrs. Cutting does not have any additional information on the Edgell Bridge. Mrs. Cutting is waiting to hear back from the Historical Bridge Foundation, who typically helps with funding these projects. Currently the bridge fund has a total of \$411,197.00, plus the \$50,000.00 being put into the fund this year. The tentative estimate for cost for this repair is \$690,000.00, this number is just an estimate and there could be additional cost as the project moves forward.
10. The Board began the 2024 Budget discussion. Mrs. Cutting produced a budget projection spreadsheet with a 3% wage increase. This equals roughly a \$41,037.00 increase from last years' budget. Ms. Quinton expressed her opinion that she supports the 3% increase for our Town Employees. Mr. Kahn feels comfortable with 3%, but suggests we keep an eye on the social security COLA projection and make adjustments if needed before we finalize this budget item. Mrs. Cutting asked the Board if they wanted to dedicate portions of many meetings to address budget discussion or dedicate a full meeting. Mr. Kahn and Mr. Kilham are in support either way and asked Mrs. Brotman what would work best for her. Mrs. Brotman will take a few days to look at her calendar and see what will work best. Tentatively Mrs. Brotman feels we could dedicate the meeting on October 5th, 2023 to budget discussion.
11. Ms. Quinton was reviewing the MS-1 report and was confused as to how the total value of the Town has decreased, and the elderly exemption total decreased. Mrs. Cutting explained that the total value has decreased because the utility assessments have decreased. Mr. George Sansoucy is responsible for the utility assessments. The elderly exemptions have changed because there have been a few deaths and some applicants changed age category.
12. At 10:00AM the Board had a discussion concerning Lyme Community Power Electric Aggregation Plan with Attorney Joe Driscoll and Mr. Herndon from CPCNH. The Board asked questions and addressed concerns with joining CPCNH. Mr. Kahn expressed concerns regarding understanding the cost and administrative work that comes along with joining CPCNH. Mr. Kahn wondered if a new employee would need to be hired to administer and manage this service. Mr. Herndon clarified that Lyme is a member in the coalition, but at this point the Town of Lyme is in an earlier phase of that membership

that has no cost. The next steps would be to take a warrant article to town meeting to give the Select Board the authority to contract for services, but would not require any course of action by the Select Board. Mr. Herndon explained that through the membership with the coalition a call center/contact center for customers is available to assist with administrative duties. This would alleviate the town's need to hire employees. Mr. Driscoll asked Mr. Herndon the response time of the call center. Since this is a small community, many complaints will come straight to the town office staff. Mr. Herndon assured the Board and Mr. Driscoll that their customer service is effective, and town employees should direct any questions or concerns to them. There should be no extra work necessary from town employees. Mr. Kahn asked what type of flexibility this agreement with CPCNH has. Mr. Herndon expressed that CPCNH is flexible and encourages towns to customize their plans. They also will conduct a technical review to assure the edits align with legislation. Mr. Herndon also clarified that each individual customer does have the ability to terminate at any time. The Town also has the ability to terminate with some fees addressed in the contract agreement. Mr. Herndon explained the next steps include: obtaining vote at town meeting, signing agreement with CPCNH, and then CPCNH will need to collect data and mailing information for customers and handle the launch of the program. A chart comparing company prices is available on the CPCNH website. Mr. Herndon will send a template warrant article and other information to the Board and Mr. Driscoll for review. The LEAC will review and edit their plan as needed and Mr. Driscoll will review the revision and the Board will proceed from there. The Board thanked Mr. Herndon and Mr. Driscoll for their time and information.

13. At 11:02 AM Mrs. Brotman moved to enter a non-public session under RSA 91-A:3 II (a) personnel. Mr. Kilham seconded the motion. Voted unanimously in favor by roll call vote. Present for this session were Mrs. Brotman, Mr. Kilham, Mr. Kahn and Mrs. Cutting. An employee raise was discussed.
14. At 11:19 AM the Board continued in non-pubic session under RSA 91-A:3 II (c) reputation. Present for this session were Mrs. Brotman, Mr. Kilham, Mr. Kahn and Mrs. Cutting. A hardship abatement was discussed.
15. At 11:25 AM the Board continued in non-public session under RSA 91-A:3 II (a) personnel. Present for the session were Mrs. Brotman, Mr. Kilham, Mr. Kahn and Mrs. Jenks. At 11:43 AM the Select Board returned to public session having taken no action.
16. At 11:45 AM Mr. Kilham moved to adjourn. Seconded by Mr. Kahn. The motion was voted unanimously in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Jordan Toland