

## SANBORNTON BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S MINUTES

*October 14, 2020*

### **Town Office**

The Board of Selectmen convened in regular session and in teleconference: in attendance were Selectman John Olmstead, Selectman Jim Dick, and Town Administrator Trish Stafford. Selectman Olmstead made a **motion** to allow Tom Salatiello to join the meeting by telephone. Selectman Dick **seconded** the motion. All in favor, ayes have it. **Motion carries.**

**Pledge of Allegiance** - Those in attendance recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Public Comment** - Andrew Sanborn of Quimby Rd made a comment regarding the discussion that was held at the September 30, 2020 BoS Meeting about the Welfare Department; he voiced his concern with the conversation and how it started about the department and moved to be more about the person overseeing the department; Melanie Van Tassel. He said he was disappointed that the Board would talk about an elected official without that person present. He cited examples from the recent past where the Town had issues because officials couldn't cooperate, and he urged the Board to do a better job of collaborating and to set a good example for dealing with officials and employees.

### **New Business** –

**General Assistance Discussion** – Overseer of Public Welfare Director, Melanie Van Tassel discussed sporadic communication with the Board. She stated that she is opened to providing information rather than what previous Boards asked for. Currently, there is no liaison. Selectman Olmstead volunteered to be liaison. She was upset and angry after listening to the BOS meeting of Sept 30, but is now calm and takes her job seriously along with confidentiality. She felt it was inappropriate discussing her personal issues. She wanted to go on record that she does not talk about these things and take her communication with the Board seriously and wants all to know she does not act in that way. She addressed some of the topics discussed by the Board at the September 30<sup>th</sup> meeting. She discussed payments to funeral homes. She has used the same funeral home for several burials, but because they offer the best price. She has never signed a contract as an elected official. On the topic of audits, she stated that she is audited every year and there have never been any issues or concerns raised by the auditors over the general assistance program. Also, regarding mortgage payments being made, her statement was that we cannot discriminate in rent or mortgage. Most times, by the time she gets involved, people are a few months behind and the payments stop foreclosure. We do not routinely pay mortgages on a recurring basis. Paying mortgages is a difficult thing as they could have minor children in the home and we have an obligation to provide them proper housing. Often paying the mortgage to avoid foreclosure is less expensive than paying to relocate someone. And children that are relocated are entitled by law to continue attending their original school, so the Town could find itself paying for transportation to get students from another town back to our school district. It's out financial responsibility to help them out in time of need. She wished that concerns would have been addressed with her attending the meeting to discuss it. On the issue of outside assistance, she said that CAP and State agencies can help as well but they have so many budget cuts that people are being sent to the towns. Outside funding is drying up. So, it's not that she doesn't try to take advantage of outside resources, but they just aren't available. She said the waiting list for CAP fuel assistance is 3 months long – that doesn't help when a family needs fuel

now. On the topic of expenditure reports, she was unaware that the Board didn't see her expenditures when the registers were signed. Selectman Dick explained that the register shows the payment and the payee, but nothing indicates it is from the Welfare accounts. Reporting procedures were discussed, and Melanie said she would be more than happy to provide the Board with a regular expenditure report. Selectman Olmstead would like to get an update from Melanie once a quarter and if anything came up that we had questions on could be answered. Selectman Dick would like to see a monthly report as it is showing the general health of the town to give BOS a sense of the struggles of the town and how things are going. Welfare Director suggested ways to report to the BOS in more detail and will send to TA Stafford. She noted that there have not been a lot of payments – just one in September and two in August, but that with cold weather coming there will be more requests for fuel assistance. Melanie discussed the Welfare budget of \$100,000 and pointed out that it is inclusive of her salary, while the figure quoted at the September 30<sup>th</sup> meeting for Tilton was just for vendor payments. Selectman Olmstead said that if Welfare Director needed any assistance to just let the BOS know. She feels that she has a handle on it. Last year's expenditures were under budget and we are prepared if something happens. Food purchases have a printed receipt. Vouchers or food stamps are no longer used. We do use gift cards and no longer use a grocery store charge card. Certain items are allowed and others are not. We do allow prescription medications if they are life sustaining. Selectman Dick said that there are many nuances, and that Melanie provided info and from his perspective it was what the Board is interested in. He said her idea of a quick summary will help us with our responsibility as we are responsible for these expenditures. Even with a budget of zero, the Town is still obligated to provide assistance and he agreed that we don't want to under budget in case we have a bad turn. Director Van Tassel said that after 17 years has never had a legal inquiry or a fair hearing. She feels that she has been fair to the town with welfare requests. Selectman Olmstead reiterated that a quarterly report would be good and if Melanie needs anything to let the BOS know. Selectman Dick said that personally talking to Melanie about the program, he felt it opened communication about how things are going. He asked Melanie to re-read the Town's policy and procedures as it may not reflect updates and best practice, as BOS are responsible for the guidelines and want to make sure Welfare Director has the tools that she needs and also updated standards of practice. Melanie agreed to review the Town's welfare guidelines and propose some updates.

Selectman Salatiello discussed an issue with the welfare guidelines and what the Town should be doing. Selectman Olmstead summarized the updating of the regulations and the policies for the Welfare Dept and will be checking in with Melanie from time to time and keep the lines of communication open. Welfare Director will have this available for next meeting in November. Selectman Dick apologized and no one doubts your service and appreciates how the business gets done. Melanie thanked all that was involved.

**Police Department Cruiser** – Chief Hankard requested the check and the authorization from the Board to take delivery of the new police cruiser. Selectman Olmstead made a **motion** to approve in the amount of \$32,274.00 to Irwin Motors, Inc with funding to come from the already approved appropriation from the Town meeting. Selectman Dick **seconded** the

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motion. Roll call vote, Tom Salatiello votes yes, Jim Dick votes yes, John Olmstead, yes. All in favor, ayes have it. **Motion carries.**

**Fire Department EMPG-S Grant** – Chief Dexter received an Emergency Management Performance Grant COVID-19 Supplemental Grant Agreement for the work in the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) Equipment Project. The Grant Agreement is for \$74,971, which is a 50/50 match grant. Chief Dexter pointed out that the funding authorized at Town Meeting for the updates to the Life-Safety Building counted as the Town’s matching share. Selectman Olmstead **moved** that the Sanbornton Select Board accept the terms of the Emergency Management Performance Grant as presented in the amount of \$74,971.00 to purchase and install equipment that will support and enhance the community’s Emergency Operation Center (EOC). Furthermore, the Board acknowledges that the total cost of this project will be \$149,942.00, in which the town will be responsible for a 50% match (\$74,971.00). **Seconded** by Selectman Dick; Roll call vote, Tom Salatiello votes yes, Jim Dick votes yes, John Olmstead, yes. All in favor, ayes have it. **Motion carries.**

**Highway Department Bid Award** – Manager Johnny Van Tassel presented 2 bids received for sand. Suggested to the BOS to accept the contract with GMI for sand. GMI’s bid was \$8.60 per/ton delivered, and \$4.90 picked up, which was the lowest bid received. Selectman Olmstead made a **motion** to approve the bid from GMI. Selectman Dick **seconded** the motion. Roll call vote, Tom Salatiello votes yes, Jim Dick votes yes, John Olmstead, yes. All in favor, ayes have it. **Motion carries.**

#### **Committee Appointments –**

Karen Bordeu, re-appointment to the Conservation Commission. Selectman Olmstead made a **motion** to approve Karen Bordeu as a re-appointment to the Conservation Commission with term to expire in 2023. Selectman Dick **seconded** the motion. Roll call vote, Jim Dick, yes, Tom Salatiello, yes, and John Olmstead, yes. All in favor, ayes have it. **Motion carries.**

Nina Gardner, re-appointment to the Capital Improvement Plan Committee. Selectman Olmstead made a **motion** to reappoint Nina Gardner to the Capital Improvement Plan Committee with term to expire in 2022. Selectman Dick **seconded** the motion. Roll call vote, Jim Dick, yes, Tom Salatiello, yes, and John Olmstead, yes. All in favor, ayes have it. **Motion carries.**

Jody Slack, re-appointment to the Capital Improvement Plan Committee. Selectman Olmstead made a **motion** to reappoint Jody Slack to the Capital Improvement Plan Committee with term to expire in 2021. Selectman Dick **seconded** the motion. Roll call vote, Jim Dick, yes, Tom Salatiello, yes, and John Olmstead, yes. All in favor, ayes have it. **Motion carries.**

#### **Nonpublic session**

**Motion** to enter non-public session in accordance with RSA 91-A:3 II (c), *matters which, if*  
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*discussed in public, would likely affect adversely the reputation of any person, other than a member of this board, unless such person requests an open meeting. This exemption shall extend to any application for assistance, tax abatement or waiver of a fee, fine or other levy, if based on inability to pay or poverty of the applicant;* made by Selectman Olmstead, **seconded** by Selectman Dick. **Roll call** vote to enter non-public session, Jon Olmstead, yes, Jim Dick, yes, John Olmstead yes at 6:46 pm.

**Motion** to leave non-public session made by Selectman Olmstead, **seconded** by Selectman Dick. **Roll call** vote to leave non-public session; Olmstead, yes; Dick, yes; and Salatiello, yes. **Motion carries**

Returned to public session at 7.11pm. Selectman Olmstead said that during the non-public session, the Board voted to waive tax deeding on Map 12 Lot 2 and Map 2 Lot 62 until December 9, 2020. No other votes were taken.

### **Polling Form -**

Town Clerk Lonergan requested a State of NH form be signed by BOS for the upcoming election. “To the inhabitants of the Town of Sanbornton, in the County of Belknap, NH, you are hereby notified to meet at Sanbornton Central School, 16 Hunckins Pond Rd, Sanbornton, NH 03269, on Tues, the third day of November, 2020. The polls will be open between the hours of 7:00 am to 7:00 pm to act upon the following subjects: To bring in to your votes for President and Vice President of the United States, Governor, United States Senator, United States Representative, Executive Councilor, State Senator, State Representatives and County Officers. Given under our hands and seal, this fourteenth day of October, in the year of Our Lord two thousand and twenty.” Signed by Sanbornton Board of Selectman during the meeting.

Per Town Clerk Lonergan, she sent in a notice that the Town will be pre-processing ballots at the Old Town Hall at 9 am on Oct 29 and on Oct 22, there will be training for voting officials. There are 35 volunteers on the list. She will be closing the office on Oct 22 due to training at 1:00 and 6:00 pm. Closure hours were put on the back of the registrations that were mailed. The preprocessing will be open to the public with social distancing. Pre-processing involves opening only the outer envelope and checking the signature. Sheila Dodge will be supervising the checklist. Discussed procedures. Selectman Dick has the utmost faith in the absentee ballot system. The Town Clerk has had requests for 540 absentee ballots and rising. The Town received a \$5,000 grant to use for the polls and the election. People will be paid by the hour with volunteer stipends. Good to move to the school for the general election. Clean up Wed morning will be a challenge but worth it. Selectman Dick made a **motion** to accept the \$5,000 grant from the Center for Tech and Civic Life for the purpose of planning and operationalizing safe and secure election administration in Sanbornton Town in 2020 under RSA 31:95.B. Selectman Olmstead **seconded** the motion. **Roll call** vote, Jim Dick, yes, Tom Salatiello, yes, and John Olmstead, yes. All in favor, ayes have it. **Motion carries**

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**Old Business** – none

**Town Administrators Report** –

**Warrant from Belknap County** – TA Stafford received a Warrant from Belknap County Treasurer. The school is not finished with their portion. Town tax contribution to the county is \$608,835.00 due by December 17, 2020.

**Center for Tech and Civic Life Grant** – TA Stafford applied for this grant of \$5,000 and Town Clerk Julie Lonergan is the proud recipient of it

**Health Trust Rates** – TA Stafford presented a packet- no increases for the dental and the medical rate not to exceed 9% increase. Rates will be re-evaluated in the spring and our final rate could be less than 9%. Selectman Dick said the good news is that it's a figure we can use for the budget.

**Energy Purchase** – TA Stafford has received quotes from Constellation and TRU Energy. Selectman Dick made a **motion** to authorize TA Stafford to request a contract from Constellation for electric service from Nov 2020 to Nov 2021 and authorize her to sign on the Town's behalf. Selectman Olmstead **seconded** the motion. Roll call vote, Jim Dick, yes, Tom Salatiello, yes, and John Olmstead, yes. All in favor, ayes have it. **Motion carries.**

**Treasurer Laptop** – TA Stafford had planned for this year to replace 2 computers, including the laptop that the Treasurer is using. That one is still in good shape and has service life left. She recommended repurposing the Treasurer's old laptop to have available for anyone who needs it for presentations, travel, etc. The Board agreed and she will proceed with having it prepared for general use.

**Artisan Group Request** – They have asked that they want to do a trick or treat event and looking for guidance as they wanted to put out baggies of candy, etc. Selectman Dick said he didn't see how that was any different than what they did on a weekly basis with their goods, so it didn't seem to be an issue. Selectmen Olmstead and Salatiello agreed.

TA Stafford reported that the Recreation Department trailer will get moved to the Town Park next week.

TA Stafford followed up with Chief Hankard on under coating of the vehicles. The Town car had not been done previously – just the SUVs received the coating. That's why the cost for undercoating would be the first-time price, not the repeat. TA Stafford will get the car in for that service as it will prolong the life. BOS agreed it's a good thing to do.

**Selectboard Report's-**

Selectman Olmstead had a Rec Commission meeting last night and they are going to do Trunk or Treat on Oct 31 in the Town Park from 2-4 pm and regular trick or treat from 5-8 pm. Hand sanitizer will be available.

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In December at Gunstock, they will be having outreach Ski and Snowboard--lessons including ski rental for each week. Also proposing Dec 12 Christmas tree lighting in the gazebo with hot cocoa and cookies and treats available. Have a box of ornaments for kids to trim the tree. In Dec or Jan, they are considering a contest to build and decorate a snowman at the Town Hall and front of the. A question was raised about whether the Town Park be rented out. TA Stafford can check with Primex for liability issues for private or public use. TA Stafford reported that the new gate will be installed there soon, we have a quote for \$1,700.

Planning Board Meeting tomorrow and Solar Garden is coming up again. They have requested another continuation. Pilot agreement is coming up for renewal next year. We have not seen progress in 5 years.

Selectman Dick had a Building Construction Committee meeting for potential design and put out a press release in the Echo and Laconia Daily Sun and social media. They are starting to get responses. Some residents have raised concern that they were in person meetings with the dial in and complaints with the poor audio quality. The Committee will discuss the option to have some meetings full remote. Next week going into budget review cycles with various departments. Lastly, we worked on the MS 434 anticipated revenue, worked with Town Clerk and Town Administrator on registrations, past due taxes, updated rate of Transfer Station. TA Stafford said per the auditors, we have not been putting enough money in the overlay. She also noted that the auditors complete the Form 535.

Had a Historic District Commission meeting last night. The grant money that they got last year for a survey of the district is done. Last thing to do is public meeting to present the results. Commission opted to set up as virtual meeting. We will put up on the website, etc.

Selectman Salatiello said were heading in the right direction this year. I think we all agree that Julie and Gloria have been doing a great job.

#### **Selectboard Signatures-**

##### **Authorize Payroll, Accounts Payable Registers, Assessing Forms and or PAF's.**

Completed signatures on Payroll & the Accounts Payable Register. The Selectboard signed payroll registers for October 7, 2020.

BOS signed checks for the following: \$52,299.56 to the Treasurer of the State of NH Retirement System, \$32,274.00 to Irwin Motors, Inc., \$11,156.21, to Casella Waste Systems.

**Approve Meeting Minutes-** Members of the Board reviewed the BOS meeting draft minutes of September 30, 2020 with any corrections. Selectman Olmstead made a **motion** to accept and approve the draft meeting minutes with any corrections of September 30, 2020.

Selectman Dick **seconded** the motion. Roll call vote, Jim Dick, yes, Tom Salatiello, yes, John Olmstead, yes. All in favor, ayes have it. **Motion carries.**

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**Next Meeting(s)** – The Board of Selectmen’s next meeting with the Budget Committee will be held at the Sanbornton Town Office on **Wednesday, October 21, 2020 @ 6:00 p.m.**, and regular Board of Selectman’s meeting will be held at the Sanbornton Town Office **Wednesday Oct 28 at 5:00 pm.**

**Adjournment** – Selectman Salatiello made a **motion** to adjourn the meeting at 8:06 p.m. Selectman Dick **seconded** the motion. Roll call vote, Jim Dick, yes, Tom Salatiello, yes, John Olmstead, yes. Ayes have it and the **motion passes.**

Respectfully submitted,

Sue Smith  
Administrative Specialist

Selectman’s Clerk \_\_\_\_\_  
Approval Date 10.28.2020

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