

**TOWN OF WALPOLE
MEETING OF THE SELECTBOARD
AUGUST 26, 2021**

Selectboard Present: Cheryl Mayberry (Chair); Steven Dalessio; Peggy Pschirrer

CALL TO ORDER: Ms. Mayberry called this Selectboard meeting to order at 6:00 PM in the Walpole Town Hall. This meeting was being recorded. Also present was Mrs. Jodi Daigle, Water & Sewer Clerk and Administrative Assistant, and Mrs. Regina Borden, Recording Secretary.

Members of the public in attendance were Ms. Lori Landry, Superintendent of Fall Mountain Regional School District SAU 60; Senator Jay Kahn; Mrs. Jan Galloway Leclerc and Mrs. Myra Mansouri, Zoning Board of Adjustment; Ms. Celeste Aumand, North Walpole Village Commissioner; Mr. Jody Spivey.

PUBLIC BUSINESS:

SCHOOL REOPENING PLAN WITH LORI LANDRY, SAU 60: Ms. Landry wanted to update the Selectboard on School Reopening and Bus Route Plans. She distributed copies of the "FMRSD Mask Decision Making Matrix (based on NH DHHS matrix) and the "Fall Mountain Regional School District COVID-19 Framework 2021-2022". A lot has happened since their last day of school in June. The COVID numbers had come down and they want to work a normal school operation. They were looking forward to five full days of in-person learning. Their three priorities were No More Remote Learning, Academic Recovery and Social Emotional Academic Recovery. Since then, COVID numbers have gone up to a substantial range. On August 13th the NH Department of Health and Human Services came out with when they needed to wear a face mask. We have no COVID within our school district. The forms outline "Masks" and when they are Optional, Targeted and Universal. They went to the School Board and asked that everybody be moved to a Substantial Level of Transmission. They needed to support and protect the students and teachers in their buildings. Right now, they will be wearing face masks and using the matrix. A physical distance of 3-6 feet will be kept as much as possible. They are trying to keep students in the same building. Their assigned seat will remain the same for the entire school year. This year they will not have one large meeting at the beginning of school in the High School but rather there will be smaller meetings at each school. Keeping lower numbers will be a benefit to everyone. Visitors will not be permitted into the schools. They will be restricted to more outdoor use. Transportation will be consistent to what they had last year. Windows will be open in busses and there will be no monitors. Last year they did temperature checks but they are finding out from the DHHS that they no longer need to do them. They are using different strategies, using plexi-glass, washing hands often, sanitizing as much as they can, etc. They are happy to be able to have the students come back this Fall. They will keep the School Board and Selectboard informed.

There is a lot of discussion about the Federal money they are getting; ESSER/American Rescue Plan. Posters are up for many different vacant positions. They want people to work with the students and classroom teachers. They anticipate this grant will last this year and two more years. Having social workers in the district is very important. Mr. Dalessio expressed concern about the tax rate in the future. Ms. Mayberry explained that all the additional staff is being paid for; it has no impact on the regular school budget. They are struggling to find social workers right now. Ms. Landry noted that early intervening makes a big difference. Mrs. Pschirrer reported the Selectboard is about to begin their proposed 2022 budget work and one of the things they always worry about is their collection of tax money. Our collection rate cannot be set until the County, School and Fire Department come up with what they will need. Ms. Landry mentioned their goal is to be on target for everything. She has put together a timeline for the administrators. It is a group effort. They use a lot of grant money.

Ms. Landry reported they have updated their website. It will be clearer for people to find information. Their Policy Committee is meeting once a month; their meeting schedule is on the website. They are trying to be more pro-active in getting information out.

There is a new principal at the Charlestown Middle School, Kathy Poghorian. They wish her well.

Ms. Mayberry asked about outdoor classrooms/tents. Do we have a plan in writing? We need to identify what each of the principals is doing so they can define it with the CARES money. It needs to be cost effective and planned for. Ms. Landry is looking forward to an exciting year.

JAN LECLERC – BOARD EMAILS: Mrs. Jan Leclerc (Chair) and Mrs. Myra Mansouri of the ZBA were present. Mrs. Leclerc reported that Mrs. Pauline Barnes attended a “Right to Know” webinar given by the NH Municipal Association. Two lawyers suggested it might be a good idea for boards to set up a separate email account solely for board business. Some ZBA members are concerned about some recent court rulings regarding email and town officials. Therefore, the members wanted to discuss this with the Selectboard. If a court case comes up, all their emails can be subpoenaed. Does the Town of Walpole have the ability to assign email addresses so their personal emails could be separate? Mr. Dalessio said “yes” they do but the members would have to bring their computers in to allow the Town’s network company to do it. The Town does not back-up their emails. It is their responsibility to do that. They used to have a ZBA address, but it was never used. Therefore, it was deleted. If everybody would “cc” Walpole at least they would go to a central spot. Mrs. Pschirrer advised that emails have been able to be subpoenaed for a long time. Depending on who was coming after us might decide that wasn’t enough. They could still subpoena an individual as well. They might still want personal emails depending on the level of distrust. Mr. Dalessio said they can make some attempt to control the emails. They can set up a ZBA email address and each member would have to “cc” it to the Town. It might help. Mrs. Leclerc summarized that they would take this information to the next meeting to see what the members prefer to do.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE WITH SENATOR JAY KAHN: Senator Jay Kahn will be presenting a Legislative Update. He is currently in his third term and has some county-wise interests. The House Representatives like Lucy Weber will submit their legislation during September and finalize it in October. The Senate submits its legislation in October and finalizes it in the first week of December. The Senate has more flexibility to submit things because of the later timelines. Some of the biggest things they will be looking at are the fact that they set up some funds to receive federal funding of One Million Dollars of American Rescue money. These funds are like Broadband, Law Enforcement, etc. Hopefully, there will be some public works money coming to the State; about a half-million dollars. There is also money coming to the State without a distribution plan. Childcare money is coming; about seventy-five million dollars divided into two pools – one is to assist families and the second is to build capacity.

The following question was asked: During the legislative session why did he not propose a bill for the Vilas Bridge? Senator Kahn said it can be done but will be defeated. They are looking at the Ten-Year Transportation Plan. Ms. Aumand stated the Walpole sewer line runs underneath that bridge. Senator Kahn pointed out that it is crucial for representatives from the Town to be there when there is discussion for the Vilas Bridge. Ms. Mayberry noted the Ten-Year Transportation Plan is not enough because the Department of Transportation (DOT) sees the Vilas Bridge as an infrastructure issue instead of a transportation issue. That is part of the reason they funded it at 50%. In regional project priorities, the Vilas Bridge rehabilitation is being evaluated. It needs more leverage from another avenue in order to push it forward. Without the support of the DOT, it will not get ranked high enough to get moved ahead. It does not hit all the criteria; there have been no deaths or injuries.

It scores low on other issues. Mr. Dalessio has said for years if that bridge continues to deteriorate it could create a regional disaster. The legislators know this. Senator Kahn was happy to hear this sentiment; he has heard it in the past. They now have the attention of the Department of Environmental Services (DES), the Executive Counselor and other officials. Mrs. Pschirrer noted that even though they are getting the American Rescue money it is not enough to move their sewer lines. Their allocation of \$419,000 will barely pay for the engineering, permits to go up Rt. 12 and across the river plus other preliminary work. Walpole has already taken care of broadband.

Senator Kahn mentioned the storm issues in July were significant in Sullivan and Cheshire counties. He toured many of the areas. Homeland Security, Department of Transportation, Department of Environmental Services and Small Business Administration are involved. He feels they are past the threshold for both storms. His intent is to try to leverage a mitigation strategy – if they can use that leverage – the Vilas Bridge will be a separate issue. He is glad they are getting shovel ready with the design work. Mrs. Pschirrer said the strategy of having this area declared is important to Walpole as they had over \$2,000,000 of damage. FEMA and Homeland Security will be here on Monday. Until somebody declares we are a disaster area, Walpole is not getting any money. Senator Kahn understands. There are other towns with significant damages. A visual is always more effective than a story. He is trying to leverage as much money for this region as he can. Walpole has a Hazard Mitigation Plan. Senator Kahn mentioned a GEO Database has been developed. The information is shared with the Southwest Regional Planning Commission (SWRPC).

Going back to the last legislative session, the budget had a lot of tax cuts in it that are not very favorable for this county. He voted against this budget. He looked at the Walpole School Funding and it goes up.

He is also working with the State's Tele-Medical Health Services. They want to be sure all providers are being reimbursed the same rates as in-office visits. He will continue to be an advocate for healthcare, school funding and property taxes.

Mrs. Pschirrer was disappointed that they did not pass any legislation that would allow virtual meetings as case numbers are up in this town and county. They might have a call for a hybrid meeting. When they had virtual meetings, they had people in the audience. A hybrid meeting saves transportation money when a town invites representatives from the EPA, DES, engineers from other parts of the state, etc. Mr. Dalessio felt it should be left up to the towns to decide.

Senator Kahn asked if the Town had applied for any State Revolving Funds this year. Ms. Mayberry replied that they had applied in North Walpole for water treatment in their water supply and they received approval for the amount needed after grants. She provided an explanation of this project.

There was discussion relative to poor communication. It is not productive. Ms. Mayberry said when they get late notices they do not, in most cases, have the opportunity to take advantage of a good opportunity.

Mrs. Pschirrer reported that the Town has joined the Community Power Coalition of NH. Walpole is one of the first nine members. We now have a seat on that board. They will incorporate October 1st, 2021.

Ms. Mayberry thanked Senator Kahn for coming to this meeting. They need his help with the Vilas Bridge project. Let's work together. Mrs. Pschirrer said they appreciate him coming and they hope he will continue coming back with updates.

CELESTE AUMAND: Ms. Aumand referenced a letter she received from Trisha Perkins regarding trees on the Aumand property. If they are dead, Mr. Aumand is liable to take them down. About 15 years ago they had to pay to have a catch basin put in on the Aumand property because at that time the Selectboard told her father he had to fix the problem. Every time it rains hard, Mr. Gary McCormack's property has the same problem with run-off. Ms. Mayberry had a conversation about this with Mr. Jim Tyrrell when it was first brought to her attention. At the time his response was there was nothing they could do about the drainage. Ms. Aumand advised all their paperwork was destroyed in their store fire. Is it their responsibility or the Town's responsibility to clean that catch basin? Ms. Mayberry replied that technically it is on the Aumand property. Therefore, it is their responsibility. Ms. Aumand asked if the Town maintain catch basins in North Walpole? There is one between the school and basketball court. It looks like an oak tree is growing out of the catch basin that is off the access road to the school. She has been cutting it back, but it now needs heavier equipment. It is close to the road. Mr. Dalessio will ask Mr. Rau to look at that.

JODY SPIVEY: Mr. Spivey reported the Town of Peterborough had a cyber scam this summer and he wanted to know if the Town of Walpole had taken preventive measures. Mr. Dalessio advised we do not usually do electronic fund transfers. We have instituted a "sweep" account at night at the bank. Mrs. Pschirrer noted they write most of the town's checks and they are signed by the Town Treasurer. An annual check to the County is hand delivered; it is not even put in the mail. Ms. Mayberry stated they have to stay vigilant.

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE:

Mrs. Pschirrer moved to accept the Accounts Payable Check Register in the total amount of \$149,178.78 for checks issued August 27, 2021. Seconded by Mr. Dalessio. With Mrs. Pschirrer, Mr. Dalessio and Ms. Mayberry in favor, the motion was approved.

PAYROLL:

Mrs. Pschirrer moved to accept the Payroll Check Register for the week ending August 21, 2021, in the amount of \$33,698.96 for checks dated August 27, 2021, and for the 941 Payroll Tax Transfer in the amount of \$6,555.11. Seconded by Mr. Dalessio. With Mrs. Pschirrer, Mr. Dalessio and Ms. Mayberry in favor, the motion was approved.

SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES:

SELECTBOARD MINUTES – August 19, 2021: Mrs. Pschirrer moved to accept the Minutes of the Selectboard meeting of August 19, 2021, as submitted. Seconded by Mr. Dalessio. With Mrs. Pschirrer, Mr. Dalessio and Ms. Mayberry in favor, the Minutes were approved.

STAFF MEETING – August 19, 2021: Mrs. Pschirrer moved to accept the Minutes of the Staff Meeting of August 19, 2021, as submitted. Seconded by Mr. Dalessio. With Mrs. Pschirrer, Mr. Dalessio and Ms. Mayberry in favor, the Minutes were approved.

NON-PUBLIC SELECTBOARD SESSION – August 19, 2021: Mrs. Pschirrer moved to accept the Minutes of the Non-Public Selectboard Session of August 19, 2021, as submitted. These Minutes will remain sealed. Seconded by Mr. Dalessio. With Mrs. Pschirrer, Mr. Dalessio and Ms. Mayberry in favor, the Minutes were approved.

COMMITTEE REPORT:

The Selectboard acknowledged receipt of the following Committee report:

- Zoning Board of Adjustment Meeting – August 18, 2021.

OLD BUSINESS:

Streetlights: Mrs. Pschirrer spoke with a subcontractor of Liberty Utilities who asked if all the lights had been changed. She suggested he talk with Mr. Steve Grenier as she was not sure if they were all done.

Hubbard Economic Revitalization: Mrs. Pschirrer moved to approve each of the five Economic Revitalization locations as follows:

- Map and Lot #004-003-005 – Hidden Acres Lane;
- Map and Lot #010-006-000 – 1 Pomeroy Lane;
- Map and Lot #012-057-000 – 46 Upper Walpole Road;
- Map and Lot #014-020-000 – 129 Valley Road;
- Map and Lot #022-005-000 – 195 Main Street.

Seconded by Mr. Dalessio. Ms. Mayberry asked if there was any discussion. There was none. With Mrs. Pschirrer, Mr. Dalessio and Ms. Mayberry in favor, the motion was approved.

FEMA Visit: The FEMA visit to begin the Preliminary Damage Assessment was re-scheduled to Monday, August 30, 2021, at 9:00 AM at the Highway Garage.

Pending Further Actions: Vilas Bridge, Generators, Three Phase Power for Industrial Avenue and Bensonwood, Complete Streets re: Sidewalks.

Emergency Permits: Mr. Dalessio reported that two emergency permits were issued for Mill Road and the wash-out on Cold River. Both of these permits should be here in a day or so. They can be repaired under the existing Highway Department budget. They may apply for a third permit. Someone from the Army Corp of Engineers will come and sign off on the emergency permits. This will allow us to possibly recover some of this money when available.

Other Projects: Elm Street is still planned for an October date. The material is in the process of being made. They had talked about School Street and Union Street; the vacuum people should be in next week.

Mill Pond Dam Inspection: Mr. Dalessio advised the Mill Pond Dam Inspection is scheduled for September 23rd, 2021.

Houghton Brook Bridge: This is moving along. An email was received from Fuss & O'Neill. It is expected to be completed in 2022.

Brownfields Project: Mrs. Pschirrer reported that they took down the red building last Monday. The next day they started the digging; there is a huge hole with safety protection around it. They hauled away about four dumpster loads of soil. They will continue to test the soil. There will be a period of time when no work is being done.

NEW BUSINESS:

NH DES Inactive Landfill: Ms. Mayberry stated the mowing bill was \$2,000 because it required equipment, we did not have readily available. Mr. Dalessio advised it involved a lot of manual labor. He will talk to Mr. Rau about being sure it is budgeted for next year. Mr. Dalessio would like it to be in the Highway Contracted Services account. Mr. Kreissle had it in the Landfill Monitoring account. Mr. Dalessio mentioned the building on that property is being used by the Recycling Center. Ms. Mayberry

will ask Mr. Kreissle to put the Landfill mowing bill in the Highway Contracted Services next year and will talk to Mr. Hoy about what they use the building for because the property is being monitored.

Purchase Order Highway Department: Mr. Dalessio moved to approve and sign Purchase Order #678010 for Tenco in the amount of \$63,460.00 to purchase new equipment for the Highway Department truck. Seconded by Mrs. Pschirrer. With Mr. Dalessio, Mrs. Pschirrer and Ms. Mayberry in favor, the motion was approved.

RECESS SELECTBOARD MEETING:

Mr. Dalessio moved to recess this Selectboard meeting. The Selectboard will enter into a Hooper Trustees meeting. Seconded by Mrs. Pschirrer. With Mr. Dalessio, Mrs. Pschirrer and Ms. Mayberry in favor, the motion was approved at 8:01 PM.

The regular Selectboard meeting resumed at 8:02 PM.

NON-PUBLIC SELECTBOARD SESSION:

Mrs. Pschirrer moved to enter into a Non-Public Selectboard Session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3 II to discuss (c) Reputations and (d) Acquisition, Sale or Lease of Real or Personal Property. Seconded by Mr. Dalessio. With Mrs. Pschirrer, Mr. Dalessio and Ms. Mayberry in favor, motion approved at 8:03 PM.

The regular Selectboard meeting resumed at 8:12 PM.

Mrs. Pschirrer moved that the Minutes of the Non-Public Selectboard Session of August 26, 2021, will be sealed. Seconded by Mr. Dalessio. With Mrs. Pschirrer, Mr. Dalessio and Ms. Mayberry in favor, the motion was approved.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mr. Dalessio moved to adjourn this Selectboard meeting. Seconded by Mrs. Pschirrer. Ms. Mayberry asked if there was any discussion. There was none. With Mr. Dalessio, Mrs. Pschirrer and Ms. Mayberry in favor, the meeting adjourned at 8:13 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Regina Borden, Recording Secretary


Cheryl Mayberry, Chair


Steven Dalessio


Peggy L. Pschirrer

(Note: These are unapproved Minutes. Corrections will be found in the Minutes of the September 2, 2021, Selectboard meeting.)