

## **Gorham, NH Select Board**

### **Meeting Minutes of October 7<sup>th</sup>, 2019**

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Present: Selectmen Michael Waddell, Judy LeBlanc, Adam White, Town Manager Denise Vallee, Berlin Daily Sun Edith Tucker, minutes taker Paul Robitaille

Meeting was called to order by Chairman Michael Waddell at 6:00 pm.

The board took a motion to seal the minutes of the previous non-public meeting on a motion by Adam White seconded by Judy LeBlanc, all voted in favor.

Town Manager Denise Vallee then read a press release announcing the hiring of Philip Cloutier of Androscoggin St. Gorham NH as the new full-time Fire Chief and EMS Director to begin full time work on October 14<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Waddell then said that at the last meeting the board had passed over the awarding of the contract for the second phase of the snow storage project. Mr. White then made a motion to award the bid for the second phase of construction to Couture Construction for \$185,895.00. Ms. LeBlanc seconded and all were in favor.

Mr. Waddell said that the Gorham Water & Sewer Commission had been asked to help the town with the snow storage project but declined any assistance to the town. Mr. Waddell then asked the cost of the project so far and Town Manager Denise Vallee then replied, the cost is \$399,698.00.

Mr. Waddell said that Couture Construction is already on site as they were the low bidder for the first phase of the project. They are making good progress, but it will be tight to finish the project before winter.

Ms. Vallee then brought up the subject of an affirmed economic development committee for the Town of Gorham. A small group of people had met that are interested on serving on this committee. The members of this proposed group are Ms. Vallee the Town Manager, Kathy Frenette the Finance Director, David Backler the Superintendent of Schools, Jesse McReady, Budget Committee and Paul Robitaille, Planning Board Chairman. Ms. Vallee and Mr. Robitaille both spoke on the immediate focus of the group. After discussion, the selectmen voted to support the formation of said group. Motion made by Judy LeBlanc, seconded by Adam White, all in favor.

Ms. Vallee then spoke about a technical assistance grant for recreation economy for rural communities written by Jesse McReady. Gorham was one of ten communities awarded this grant nationwide. While there is no funding with this grant, the technical assistance available is invaluable. A group of experts will help the town formulate a comprehensive recreation plan. They will host a day and a half long work session to help us formulate and Ms. Vallee said that the focus is to connect our recreation trails to our Main St. and then to focus on increasing the access to the Androscoggin River from the downtown, along with the possibility of a bridge across the river in the downtown area. While there is no money attached to the grant, the technical assistance may lead to the ability to apply for financing in the future.

Mr. Waddell then spoke about the relicensing of the hydropower dams in Gorham and the allowing of recreation on their land for the public's benefit such as biking, fishing, hiking and picnicking. These activities could all be a benefit to the re-licensing of the dams. It could take 3-5 years for the process for re-licensing to proceed.

**Town Manager Denise Vallee reported on Stony Brook Project:** The town received the approval from FEMA last Thursday for the revised mitigation of the culverts so that work can proceed. The town portion of the box cutting gravel and compacting has all been completed and the base layer of asphalt had been laid down. A change order for the culverts was approved at the last selectman meeting of \$7,500. A motion was made to approve \$20,395.00 to complete the mitigation of the culverts of which FEMA will pay 75%. Motion was made by Adam White seconded by Judy LeBlanc, all in favor.

**Libby Pool:** The wetlands permit was received on Oct. 3<sup>rd</sup>. The town will need to wait 30 days to see if there is any comment from the Army Corps of Engineers. Weather permitting, that project could start Nov. 3<sup>rd</sup>. if not possible, the work will be completed by the Public Works Department in the spring.

**Public comment.** Ms. Tucker asked about contracts signed at a previous meeting. Ms. Vallee will find the information for her.

**Selectman's report:** No one had anything to report.

**Town Manger's Report:** Internet/Phone Project- Ray's Electric was the only bidder for that project. Town portion would be \$5,000.00 to run all the fiber optics into each building. Library portion would be \$750.00, and \$1,450.00 would be Water & Sewer's portion. The project should be completed by the end of October.

**Solar Project:** The town had conference calls with the CDFA and the USDA regarding the project. The interest rates from the agencies was found to be high. David Backler, school superintendent and Ms. Vallee are speaking to local banks to see what the interest rates would be. A portion of the project could be funded through the USDA Facilities grant program.

**Gorham Paper & Tissue:** the mill has been making its weekly \$10,000 payment for taxes owed and they have finished paying off the taxes for 2017. They now owe for 2018 and a portion of 2019 which is just under \$525,000.00. They are continuing to make weekly payment to whittle down their past due amounts. This is the most current they have been in some time. The mill has received their title 5 permit from NHDES which is good through 2024.

**Farmers Market:** The last farmers market will take place this October 10th on the common. There are three indoor markets scheduled to take place at the Gorham Recreation Center on Nov. 17<sup>th</sup> Dec. 8<sup>th</sup> and Dec. 15<sup>th</sup> from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

**Fire Station:** The ceiling in the fire station kitchen has collapsed and needs to be repaired. Bowman Builders has given a quote to the town of \$881.98 to replace the ceiling. The quote is under the insurance deductible of \$ 1,000.00. The town has money in the special insurance fund that would cover this. Motion was made by Mr. Adam White to use the money to repair the ceiling. Seconded by Judy LeBlanc, all voted in favor.

Motion was made to approve the minutes of Sept. 5<sup>th</sup> and Sept. 23<sup>rd</sup>. Motion by Ms. LeBlanc, seconded by Mr. White, all in favor.

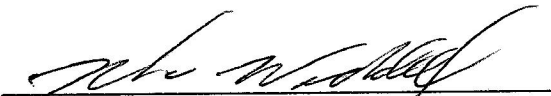
Motion was made to approve the minutes of Aug. 26<sup>th</sup> with corrections. Motion by Ms. LeBlanc, seconded by Mr. White, all in favor.

Ms. Tucker asked questions regarding the Police personnel buying their weapons. Ms. Vallee will get those figures to her.

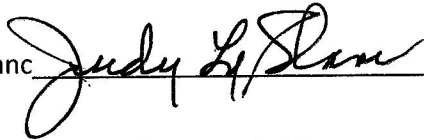
Ms. Vallee spoke about a letter to the BTLA regarding mediation, a date will be scheduled.

Ms. LeBlanc made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mr. White, all in favor. The meeting was adjourned by Chairman Waddell at 6:35 P.M.

Michael Waddell



Judy LeBlanc



Adam White



Approved: 10/28/2019