

TOWN OF CUSHING
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Minutes of Meeting
February 10, 2020
Cushing Community Center

Selectmen Present: Chair Alton Grover; Selectmen Corey Jones, Laurie Haynes, Dan Staples, and Martha Marchut

Selectmen Absent: none

Staff Present: Town Clerk Lisa Young

Public Present: William N. Smith

1. Call to Order: Chair Alton Grover called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M. and a quorum was determined.

2. Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

3. Approve and sign the Warrant:

ACTION: Selectman Dan Staples made a motion, seconded by Laurie Haynes, to approve 2020 Warrants 55 and 56.

Discussion: Dan asked again why the warrant numbers didn't start over. Lisa explained that when we had to convert over to Sequel, new software program, there had been a few things wrong and that back in November, one thing that went wrong was a warrant issue. She continued to say when you close out for the new year it always goes back to number 1, that's when we contacted Trio to figure out why it didn't. They ended up determining there was a problem that when that warrant went funny back in November after switching over to new program, something happened and that's why it didn't restart, but to fix it at this point now would be really hard and end up being a nightmare for the auditor and they [Trio] recommend leaving it as is for the year. Laurie asked if it'll go back to number 1 next year, Lisa confirmed that yes it will.

Motion Carried 5-0-0

4. Review and approve the minutes of the January 27, 2020 meeting

ACTION: Selectwoman Martha Marchut made a motion, seconded Corey Jones, to approve the minutes of the January 27, 2020 meeting with the three corrections

Discussion: Dan said under 6a on the first line, it should read Dan said this was no reflection on him, meaning Alton. He also added that down about 13 lines something didn't read right. Corey pointed out that if you read up a little bit it all goes together but there are a few spots you just have to read a couple times. Dan agreed and decided to leave that spot as is. Martha found a place in the same area, the word event should be changed to even, and that 5 lines down from there it says, he says no all the time, and that should be changed to most of the time.

Motion Carried 5-0-0

5. Additions and Changes to the Agenda:

5a. Sherriff Dept. Serving Fee

ACTION: none taken

Discussion: Dan followed up after checking with the Sherriff about why they charge the Town the fee to serve something; he said the answer he got was that this is not a criminal offense, it's a civil offense so his deputies don't do it. He said the department has two people that serve civil warrants and they charge a fee plus mileage to do that, and the department just about breaks even on the costs to serve the civil warrants. He said if it was a criminal warrant on our end it wouldn't cost any money. Alton asked if it had been delivered. Lisa said she had not heard.

5a. Transfer Station

ACTION: none taken

Discussion: Martha said that Alton did ask when the transfer committee was going to meet and the only answer they got was soon. She added there were a few other things mentioned at the meeting they attended. One was that the landfill is closing on May 1st. The reason why costs are going up were in part due to employee's getting raises, the change to minimum wage, and the change in the status/costs of healthcare. Laurie questioned that back when they got the new scales and were told that we would be saving money, why have we never seen a savings from those scales; she added that even if expenses were higher, it should even out instead of having to pay more. Dan said the explanation for that also has to do with how much garbage is being sent there, the tipping fees, and not getting the benefits from recycling like we used to, so it all factors in. Martha also added they were paying more for each trip than what they were. Alton added that the recycling is now almost nothing, they don't get much for it now. Martha agreed, adding they are paying to get it to where it needs to go. Laurie asked if it was a lesser fee [with recycling]. Martha said yes, we've been through this before, it's a lesser fee but it's not free. Laurie said she understood that, but if we are sending it up there, it's less than sending garbage. Martha said yes, but it's still more than it used to be before we had to send it at all. Dan said it it's \$72 a ton vs. \$83. Martha said it's actually \$35 a ton with recyclables. Dan thought she was talking about the garbage fee. He said it did go down when they went with Fibrigh. Dan said there are so many variables, you really need to go to one of those meetings. Martha added another thing to be aware of is that the State is moving toward having all of the landfills in the State closed except for the certified ones, and that would probably have an impact. Lisa asked why, Dan replied because of State DEP. Laurie asked about how some places can put all of their recyclables in one bag and they sort them there, she feels it could save and wonders why it isn't offered here. Dan said it's called single stream recycling and Hamden has been doing that for a while.

6. Unfinished Business:

6a. Protocol

ACTION: *Selectman Dan Staples made a motion, seconded by Laurie Haynes, to accept the written protocol for less than \$1,000 expenditures*

Selectman Dan Staples made a motion, seconded by Laurie Haynes, to amend the motion to eliminate the last paragraph

Selectman Dan Staples made a motion, seconded by Laurie Haynes, to rescind the 1st and 2nd motion

Motion Carried 5-0-0

Selectman Dan Staples made a motion, seconded by Martha Marchut, to accept the policy for expenditures less than \$1,000 with the elimination of the last paragraph

Discussion: Martha said everyone has a copy of the thing she wrote; she said the one thing she was re-thinking was that the last paragraph is not necessary. Dan agreed, adding we have five Selectman in this Town and if there's a problem in the office and they can't get a hold of one of us, there's a big problem. Martha asked Lisa if it would be called a protocol, policy, or procedure. Dan said it would be a policy that they would now go by.

Motion Carried 5-0-0

5b. 2020 Spirit of America Foundation award recipient

ACTION: Selectman Dan Staples made a motion, seconded by Laurie Haynes, to honor Alton Grover for his many years of service and name him Cushing's 2020 Spirit of America Foundation award recipient

Discussion: Martha asked if anyone had any recommendations. Dan asked if the Board recommends or if anyone can make a recommendation and send it in. Lisa read the paperwork does read the Board of Selectman. Martha you can do it based on something that comes from the Board though. Corey mentioned John Olson, Lisa said its big on volunteerism, but she doesn't know. Laurie mentioned Shirley Stenberg, noting she volunteers her time on a board, and that she delivers soup to the sick and is an amazing person. Dan recommended Alton for all of the years he has been serving, Martha agreed, Laurie too. Dan said it's a way to honor someone who has been doing a lot of work for a lot of years and would be good to give them this award while they are still here with us.

Motion Carried 4-0-0, Alton abstained

7. New Business:

7a. Tax rate for unpaid taxes and abated taxes

ACTION: Selectman Dan Staples made a motion, seconded by Alton Grover, to set the tax rate for unpaid taxes at 6%, and abated taxes at 2%

Discussion: Dan recommends keeping the rates the same as they have been for the past few years. He said they could choose to put them up to 9%, but if people are having a hard time paying now, why make it worse for them. The Board agreed.

Motion Carried 5-0-0

7b. Cemetery Board

ACTION: Selectman Dan Staples made a motion, seconded by Martha Marchut, to appoint Terry Melanson and Taylor Stenger members of the cemetery committee

Discussion: Lisa said a while back they needed a member and Guy Barter was interested and voted into the position. Since then Lisa said she has had two more people that would like to join. Lisa said in

the ordinance it says there needs to be at least three members but asked if there can be more. Dan said why not. Laurie said they would appreciate the help. Lisa asked how long you want the terms to be, adding right now there are only three members and terms are staggered. Dan suggested doing it like Selectman, stagger them for three-year terms.

Motion Carried 5-0-0

7c. Budget Committee

ACTION: none taken

Discussion: Dan informed the Board that he had spoke with Terry Melanson today about the position on the budget committee currently held by George Mele. Dan added that George has not attended for the past three years. He said it's one meeting a year, the Selectman make the budget up, and the committee is basically a review committee, you come in and ask questions and either recommend or don't, and it doesn't take a lot of time. Dan said Terry is willing to do it. Lisa added it would have to be written in on the ballot at Town election as it's an elected position. Dan said he is bringing it up because he has a person willing to serve, and if you think he would be a good person, you might want to write in his name.

7d. State Snowmobile money reimbursement

ACTION: Selectman agreed state snowmobile money should be in a separate fund

Discussion: Lisa said every year we get reimbursements from snowmobile sales from the State and that right now it goes into the general fund. She added that it's really meant to be going towards trails and stuff and wonders if we should start a separate account for that. Dan said that vehicle excise goes back to the roads, water excise goes back into the landing fund, so why wouldn't you do the same, it sounds like a no brainer. Laurie asked if there are snowmobile trails that as a Town and a community we maintain. Lisa said no and in a lot of towns it goes over people's properties and you need permission. Dan added that people do it on their own. Laurie asked why would you put money in a fund for trails if it's just going to sit there and keep growing because we don't do anything. Dan said if there is a fund you can use towards it, don't you think when people find out they'll use the fund. Laurie said if it's known that it's available then yes. Corey said that if someone had a bridge or something that needed to be redone, they could come to the Board and see about using that. Lisa agreed.

7e. Fire Station repair receipt question

ACTION: Selectman approved paying the repair bill

Discussion: Lisa said she received an invoice a while back and wants to know what to do with it. Dan asked if anyone had come in and asked for an explanation of why it had not been paid yet. He said he has told them several times that they couldn't do anything because there wasn't any money there. Lisa said no hurry was written on it the bill, but it was dropped off. Dan said it can be paid now, it's a new year, but they never listen. Laurie said moving forward they can't do that. Corey said it could be set up that they need to come to us for permission. Alton said they were told three times they couldn't do it before they did it. Laurie suggested having them come to us [Select Board], Dan wished her luck with that. Lisa said it would be another policy. Corey said if they have to come to the Board to spend it, and then they spend it without the Board's approval, lay it on the line that we're not paying it, they can figure out how to pay it. Dan said he has no problem because they have an account for that, but when the account gets down and you tell them there's little or no money left in it and they continue to spend like they did before, that's where he has a problem. He added they can do whatever they want until they get

it down close to \$0, then they need to stop. Corey agreed, he's all for it and they've made the Fire Station better than it's been in a long time, but they need a plan for what little they should do each year. Dan agreed, and said in all fairness, it did need to be done, but it goes back to protocol. Laurie said they need to be responsible; we all need to balance our checkbooks and they need to do the same. Alton said he got a call last night that there is a water leak around the electrical box again, and what happened a few years ago was the sealant they put around a pipe had cracked, and now it has happened again. Alton said he was going to have Larry stop and look at it and he thinks he may have been the one that fixed it before. Corey said at some point it should be brought up about re-sealing the front of that building as it was mentioned quite a while back. Alton agreed.

7f. Town Meeting Warrant

ACTION: Selectman Dan Staples made a motion, seconded by Alton Grover, to accept the 2020 Town Meeting warrant

Discussion: Dan said there were two ordinance changes in the Georges River Regional Shellfish ordinance. Dan said one was a one-word change that has to do with addressing an issue with the Board about moving out of Town without notification. Dan said you can lose your license and he thought the change they wanted to make was too harsh, so at the end they added at the discretion of the joint board and he was okay with that. The other change was due to one time when a guy that came in and threatened lives of a few people, so now anyone that is rude or in a threatening manner to the administrative town they will automatically lose their license for a month, a second offense would be loss for a year. Dan added in the 11 years he has been on the Board this is the 3rd time the Town budget to be raised and appropriated has gone down.

Motion Carried 5-0-0

8. Comments from Citizens: Nick asked about the landfills closing and where the trash will go. Martha answered the trash that has to go to a landfill will go to one of the State certified ones. Nick asked if it'll cost more, Martha answered probably. Laurie added that Fiberright does stuff with the trash, and that not all of it ends up in landfills. Nick then asked about the protocol that was discussed and voted on. Dan said the policy that anything under \$1000 wouldn't go out to bid because it would cost the Town to advertise it, he said it was there was never written, it was just followed, but Corey felt that for transparency and stuff it really should be a policy written up, so we did. He asked Nick if he would like to read it, Nick said yes and asked for a copy. Laurie said in a nut shell, it says if it's not an emergency the whole Board needs to be aware of it, and it needs to be a vote; if it is an emergency one of the Selectman can deal with it and then inform the others. Nick then asked about the Boston Cane, and the oldest person [John Olson] has now passed away. Alton said there is a new one, the guy that lives in Corbett's rental house on the town line. Nick asked if there is a ceremony and if it has been done as he feels it's an important tradition that should be kept. Dan agreed, they said there has not yet been a ceremony. Alton asked if Nick knew here the cane was, as it had been lost about 20 years ago. Nick said in 2015 there was a cane at John's ceremony, he has pictures of it. Alton said it must have been a different one. Dan said Laurie was going to make a certificate up and then it would be presented it at a ceremony. Nick said they [recipient] didn't keep the cane, they took the photo and then gave it back and got the certificate. Lisa agreed that's how they've done it and they do have a cane here for the pictures. Nick asked how the new snowmobile account will work, if you have land and a trail and it needs some grooming, can you get some of those funds. Dan said it would be a good idea to come up with a policy to see how you can distribute those funds. Nick mentioned that the Town portion to be raised and appropriated is such a small amount in terms of the school budget, and he understands the school is on the July to June fiscal year, but thinks that budget vote should be on the November ballot when people actually get out and vote because not many people vote in June. Dan said they do that for a reason, and

he is just as frustrated about it. Nick asked about primaries and town election and being voted on the same day, Nick asked if that had passed or not. Dan said no, they'll be separate.

9. Adjourn

ACTION: Selectman Dan Staples made a motion, seconded by Laurie Haynes, to adjourn at 6:55 p.m.

Motion Carried 5-0-0

Respectfully submitted,

Samantha Jones
Recording Secretary