

Town of Woodstock Selectmen's Meeting Minutes Tuesday, October 17, 2023

Board: Gil Rand, Charyl Reardon, Scott Rice (Zoom)

Staff: Judy Welch, Cathy Riley

Public: Mike Zarnowski, Bill Waterhouse

Zoom: John Kenna (Text my Gov), Spencer Frandsen (Text my Gov)

Call to Order

Charyl called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm.

Approve & Sign Minutes/September 19, 2023

Gil motioned to accept and sign the minutes of the September 19, 2023, Selectmen's Meeting.

Charyl seconded the motion, and the vote was affirmative. Scott will sign the minutes in the Town office.

Agenda Items Requested by Residents

Mike Zarnowski/Central New Hampshire Climbers/Merriam Woods

Charyl introduced Mike Zarnowski, one of the Directors for the Central New Hampshire Climbers' Association.

Mr. Zarnowski was there to explain a letter they had sent to the Woodstock Conservation Commission ("WCC") regarding the group's efforts in purchasing a piece of property in Thornton for parking. He referred to a reply from the WCC Secretary, Jim Chesebrough, in which the group was notified that they were not allowed to use the names "Merriam Woods" or "Russell Craggs" to raise funds. Mr. Zarnowski wanted to approach the Board to get clarification.

Charyl stated that the WCC is still working out the management of the area and how the property will be used.

Mr. Zarnowski referenced the vote from this year's town meeting and that the group felt that the reply meant they were allowing recreation but not climbing. He explained that the Merriam Family donated the land to the public. The group feels the letter also said they could not discuss the area. Mr. Zarnowski added that they are trying to raise money to provide parking. He also stated that the town of Thornton was behind the project, as well as the National Forrest. He added that the group was concerned about the language that might be detrimental to the group.

Charyl explained that communication can be misunderstood in written form rather than public form and that the WCC may be concerned about publicizing the management plan prior to it being finalized.

Mr. Zarnowski wanted to clarify that the climbers were not making money or using the name commercially but rather were a non-profit raising funds.

Charyl stated that the Board would have to discuss commercializing the use of the name to raise funds with the Town's attorney.

Mr. Zarnowski expressed concern that the Rumney Climber's Association was asked for input while Central New Hampshire Climbers and other groups were also not permitted to provide input.

Judy asked for some clarification on the different groups, and which one was trying to purchase the property for the parking lot.

Mr. Zarnowski explained that it was the Central New Hampshire Climbers Association and that they were the ones who were told that they could not use the words "Merriam Woods" or "Russell Craggs" to raise funds.

Charyl added that they would get a copy of the letter from the WCC and forward it to the Town attorney.

Gil wanted to clarify that the WCC never said they would stop climbing on Russel Craggs.

Judy stated that a WCC public meeting was posted for October 23rd at 5 pm, but she then received a request for a meeting on October 25th, which was a working session with no public input. Judy thought that it was a separate meeting, but it was a change from the original meeting. It was suggested to Mr. Zarnowski that he send an email to get on the agenda since the public can stay and listen, but he was advised that the public would not be able to provide input.

Mr. Zarnowski added that they have a draft of the plan that is still being edited, but it looks scary as a climber. Gil stated there was still much more to work out, and Charyl said that Judy would contact the attorney to ask questions and email Mr. Zarnowski the response.

Mr. Zarnowski wanted to add concern about the logging plan. Judy explained that the WCC is working with a forester to maintain a healthy forest in that area.

Charyl said they would take everything communicated at this meeting, run it by the Town attorney, and see what she says about public input on the Master Plan.

The Board has not seen the plan yet and suggested that Mr. Zarnowski submit comments and suggestions via email and cc the town, which will be shared with the WCC members.

Paula King/Questions from LVLOA Residents/Gordon Pond Trail Relocation

Charyl stated that Paula King was not present but sent questions about the Gordon Pond Trail.

Charyl added that they have been trying to contact the Forest Service to get a session to answer questions and get input but have not succeeded.

Charyl said she hoped they would get back to Judy, but they may try to find other contacts if not. Charyl added that they will let Paula King know if they receive any reply.

John Kenna/TextMyGov

Charyl introduced John Kenna with TextMyGov. John wanted to introduce Spencer Frandsen, who would go through and explain the program.

Mr. Frandsen explained the program would help with municipality communications by being able to send out text alerts to residents regarding various items. These alerts may include notifications about emergencies, weather, and other pertinent town information. The Town will also be able to get texts from the residents. No app will be needed for the residents to communicate with the town.

Mr. Frandsen said that residents can easily sign up for alerts from the town by typing in "Woodstock" and a subject, and they will automatically be able to get a reply.

Mr. Frandsen explained that residents can also easily opt out by texting "STOP" anytime.

Mr. Frandsen informed the Board that the contract would be for two years and could be canceled with 60 days' notice. After the initial two-year contract, the agreement will revert to year to year. He also explained the annual fee for the package will be brought down from \$3,000 per year to \$2,000. Additionally, the one-time setup fee of \$1,500 will also be waived. The \$2,000 will remain for each subsequent year, with two years locked in. Mr. Frandsen added that if there were an increase due to costs, it would be a maximum increase of 5%. He also explained that it included 25,000 texts per year to send to residents, with most towns using only 15% of the allotted amount per year. Any unused texts will roll over to the following year.

The Board agreed that this is a great communication tool going forward and voted to sign the contract with TextMyGov.

Charyl made the motion, Gil seconded the motion, and the vote was affirmative.

Renew Ice Castle Agreements

Clark Farm Road Maintenance Agreement

Charyl stated that there were no changes to the Ice Castles Clark Farm Road winter maintenance agreement.

Charyl asked for a motion to sign the winter maintenance agreement with Ice Castles for Clark Farm Road, contingent on proof of insurance as outlined in the agreement. Gil made the motion, Scott seconded the motion, and the vote was affirmative.

Water MOU

Scott would like to renew with an 8% increase due to the increased cost of producing water and the significant impact on the system. The attached reflects the increase.

Charyl stated that next was a MOU for the water supply for Ice Castles

Judy noted that there were no changes for usage and amounts, but there was an 8% base rate increase to allot for the cost to produce the water and the significant impact on the system.

Charyl stated that this MOU expires in July, and rates will probably be raised for them next year.

Scott wanted to note that the water studies are close to being finished.

A motion to accept the MOU contingent on the COI and acceptance of the 8% increase was made by Charyl. Gil seconded the motion, and the vote was affirmative.

Voting Devices

The SOS requires a formal vote by the Board of Selectmen to update the Town's voting devices.

Judy explained the two new voting devices approved by the ballot commission, which Judy and Ken Chapman have followed since the beginning. Two of the four devices were approved by the Ballot Commission. The Town can choose which machine to use after it goes to the Federal testing lab.

Judy added that the Secretary of State requires a formal vote from the Board to switch from the LHS AccuVote Dominion Machine to the Voting Works machine and enter a contract with them. Judy explained the contract would be contingent on the machine passing all the federal testing and requirements. Judy noted that a new machine would cost approximately \$7,500. This would include centrally located support within a 20-minute drive if there were any issues.

Judy stated that the Ballot Commission will not authorize this machine for use in the Presidential Primary. She added that it will be used in March if it gets all the certifications.

When asked by the Board if there would be any re-coup of the cost, Judy answered that she planned to approach other municipalities regarding purchasing the Town's old voting machines.

Judy stated that Voting Works will be coming here on November 9th to do a demonstration for other towns. Judy noted that the Moderator and Assistant Moderator favored moving to this new system.

Charyl made the motion to switch from the LHS AccuVote machine to the Voting Works machine and sign the contract in the office, contingent on certifications being received. Gil seconded the motion, and the vote was affirmative.

Judy opened the discussion and provided an update on the LHS Poll Books. Judy noted that a formal vote from the Board is required to move forward. Charyl made that motion, Gil seconded the motion, and the vote was affirmative.

Old/Other Business/Brought forth by the Board.

Fire Department/Wreath Fundraiser

Anne Englert would like approval to hold the Fire Department Annual Wreath Fundraiser at Soldiers Park on November 25th from 10:00 am to 12:30 pm.

Gil motioned to allow the fundraiser; Charyl seconded, and the vote was affirmative.

Public Participation on Agenda Items

Bill Waterhouse asked Scott if he had a chance to talk with the engineer about the possible soil containments near Morris Street. Scott advised that he would try and chat with the engineer tomorrow. Judy stated that she recalls conversations about this and suggested contacting NHDES.

Bill questioned the adverse opinion in the auditor's section of the Town Report. Judy explained that according to GASB, actuarial valuations of the total liabilities are required. A few years ago, the Board met with the auditors to discuss this adverse opinion and looked into the cost of hiring an actuary to meet the GASB requirement. They determined the benefit of an actuary did not outweigh the cost and chose to receive the adverse opinion.

Adjournment

Scott made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:03 pm. Charyl seconded the motion, and the vote was affirmative.

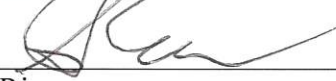
The public could participate remotely over Zoom by going to www.zoom.us, using the Zoom App on a cellphone, or on a landline calling 1-646-558-8656 Password: 432845 and entering Meeting ID: 840 0082 0895 Password: 395022.

Those wishing to hear the recording of the whole meeting may access it by using this link:
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCxMH7OFC8H3KqBhYHsBr53g>



Charyl Reardon, Chairperson

November 14, 2023
Date



Scott Rice

R. Gil Rand

