



Selectmen's Public Hearing & Meeting
Tuesday, October 18, 2022
4:45 pm

Board: R. Gil Rand, Charyl Reardon

Staff: Judy Welch, Kevin Millar

In-Person Public: Jim Chesebrough, Kristen Durocher, Donna Wyre, Sally Waterhouse, Mark Sellingham, Helen Jones, Glenn Libby

Zoom Participant: Scott Rice

Public Hearing #1/New Hampshire Department of Safety Grant

Charyl called the public hearing to order at 4:48 pm.

Charyl explained that pursuant to RSA 31:95-b, a noticed public hearing was necessary to take public comment on the accepting and expending of unanticipated revenue from the New Hampshire Department of Safety, Office of Highway Safety Grant.

The Town will receive \$19,800 to be used toward Highway Safety.

Charyl opened the floor to public comment.

Charyl closed the Public Hearing at 4:49 pm with no public comments.

Public Hearing #2/ Highway Block Grant Monies

Charyl called the next public hearing to order at 4:50 pm.

Charyl explained that pursuant to RSA 31:95-b, a noticed public hearing was necessary to take public comment on accepting and expending unanticipated revenue from the Highway Block Grant in the amount of \$25,197.64.

Charyl stated that this is a one-time highway payment, separate from regular quarterly payments, made available to towns in the State's fiscal year based on the passage of Senate Bill 401, effective July 2022. SB401 directs NHDOT to divide and distribute \$30 million in one-time payments between all NH municipalities based on the Highway Block Grant Aid A's distribution methods.

Charyl noted that this money will be brought in as revenue and expense on Thornton Gore Road this year. This money cannot be transferred to the capital reserve; it would end up in the General Fund.

Charyl opened the floor to public comment.

Charyl closed the Public Hearing at 4:51 pm with no comments from the public.

Select Board Meeting

Board: R. Gil Rand, Charyl Reardon

Staff: Judy Welch, Kevin Millar

In-Person Public: Jim Chesebrough, Donna Wyre, Sally Waterhouse, Mark Sellingham, Helen Jones, Glenn Libby

Zoom Participant: Scott Rice

Charyl called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm

Approve & Sign/Highway Safety Grant Application

Charyl motioned to enter into Highway Safety Grant with NHDOT and authorize Selectman Rand to sign on the Board's behalf. Gil seconded the motion and the vote was affirmative.

Accept Highway Block Grant Monies

Charyl made a motion to accept the unanticipated revenue from the Highway Block Grant in the amount of \$25,197.64. Gil seconded the motion, and the vote was affirmative.

Approve & Sign Minutes/October 4, 2022

Gil made the motion to accept the minutes from October 4, 2022, Charyl seconded the motion, and the vote was affirmative.

Glenn Libby/Candidate for Grafton County Commissioner in District 2

Glenn Libby, candidate for Grafton County Commissioner for District 2, introduced himself and apologized for not being present for the agenda on the October 4, 2022 meeting. He gave his background leading up to his interest in becoming the next Grafton County Commissioner.

Charyl then allowed questions from the public.

Jim Chesebrough asked what the role of a County Commissioner was and how he sees his role as Commissioner of this County.

Candidate Libby then proceeded to say that the role was similar to the Select Board, but on a larger scale. The Commissioners oversee the County nursing home, the County jail, the Registry of Deeds, the Sheriff's Department, all Constitutional Offices, and the Ancillary Services.

Candidate Libby was thanked for coming by and presenting.

Mark Sellingham/Short Term Rental Tax

Mark Sellingham noted that he had public discussions with people about the Room and Meals Tax. He stated that hotels and motels are required to collect a Room and Meal Tax on behalf of the State of NH. Mark understands that the State then distributes proceeds from this tax to municipalities based on the number of residents. Mark questioned if this tax is applied to short-term rentals.

Scott explained that the Room and Meals Tax does apply to the short-term rentals. Scott feels that the formula the State uses is very unfair to municipalities such as Woodstock.

Mark added that he would appreciate more education on the subject to better understand the difference between a small town versus a larger city.

Gil feels we would have to start by seeing how many people are using the short-term rentals.

Scott added that he feels that these short-term rentals should still register with the town.

Mark stated that certain towns do charge fees, but not necessarily tax.

Charyl brought up Franconia (since they are similar to our town). Franconia is working on regulations to address short-term rentals with their legal counsel. Charyl stated that she would be keeping a close eye on how that is being done. Charyl also stated that we would not be able to impose a tax because we do not have zoning that goes along with that, but maybe a fee can be imposed that has to be paid each year.

Mark also asked what the ratio of standard rooms such as hotels and motels to bed and breakfast establishments was.

Charyl says they do pay 8 1/2% just like hotels.

After Mark stated that it feels unfair that the short-term rentals do not pay, Charyl said that she agrees and that it is the Legislature level, and that many towns feel that they should be getting a bigger cut.

Charyl quoted that "based on Senate Bill, SB121, 56% of the town share of meals and rooms tax revenue still distributed based on population, but 44% distributed back to the towns that had raised it, based proportionally on how much revenue they generated. Charyl feels that this is definitely one of those things that our towns and others need to pressure our Senators and State Reps on.

Mark would just like to see more details; Charyl suggested utilizing the Department of Revenue website.

Approve Check Requests/Woodstock Firefighter Fund

Clark's Trading Post/Lobster Fest Supplies/\$860.42

Gil motioned to approve the check request for \$860.42 payable to Clark's Trading Post for Lobster Fest Supplies. This money is to be withdrawn from the Woodstock Firefighter Capital Reserve Fund. Charyl seconded the motion, and the vote was affirmative.

Old/Other Business/Brought forth by the Board

No old or other business was brought forward by the Board.

Public Participation

Charyl opened the meeting for Public Participation, based on the motion that was approved in the last meeting, letting the public ask questions on any of the agenda items, or ask questions that they can take and put on the next agenda.

Helen Jones then proceeded to ask if there was any more information on the sewer and water.

Charyl replied that they have not received any information at this time.

Judy Welch added that she could provide some information. Judy said that budget MS737 form is completed through the Department of Revenue Portal and cannot be manipulated.

Judy stated that in Woodstock, you can see the appropriated money for the water and sewer funds, less the capital reserves. She stated that the warrant articles for capital reserves are entered individually and appear in a specific location on the MS737 form which gives the perception that the citizen's property tax dollars are raising money for the water and sewer capital reserves. This is the form that is published in the Annual Town Report. Judy explained that in September she is required to file a MS434 form with DRA which revises revenues and moves these appropriations to specific their specific funds. Judy noted that it is very confusing to citizens because this form does not appear in the Annual Town Report. Judy then reviewed the actual forms with Helen and pointed out how the capital reserves are accounted for and explained how the water and sewer capital reserves are pulled out.

Judy explained that there are basically three funds operating within the General Fund.

Helen then brought up that Scott had said that the sewer fund had a deficit. Helen asked if the new rates address this; Judy replied that any unassigned fund balance would be applied to that.

Helen then wanted clarification on funds that are given to the Budget Committee at the end of the year and whether that goes into the trust funds.

Judy stated no, and clarified that it goes into funds but if there is extra, it goes into an unassigned fund balance that are within each fund. She also explained that what Scott was referencing at the last meeting, was that we had unassigned funds that can be used for big capital projects, and they can use that like a capital reserve.

Judy noted that the sewer fund is in a deficit and that water has about \$580,000 that is in unassigned funds.

Charyl added that is why the sewer bill went up so much.

Helen stated that she understands how that works now, and it is good for everyone to understand.

Judy offered to walk any taxpayer through the process and explain the forms. She encouraged taxpayers to stop by the office anytime they have questions.

Charyl then asked if there were any other questions from the public.

Mark wondered if there were any answers, from the town's legal counsel, relating to the questioned asked about the road leading to Merriam Woods.

Charyl answered that she is still working on that but NHDOT shows that the from Route 175 to Avery Farm Road is a Class 5 town owned road, and from Avery Farm Road out to Waterville is a Class 7 federally owned road. Charyl reached to a District Ranger with the United State Forest and has been in contact with a forest surveyor to see if they have any documentation relating to the Class 7 portion of this road.

Mark stated that it is not just the residence, but also all the parking on the weekend for snow touring, cross country skiing and dog walking.

Charyl said we have a lot of town land access up there also, so we need to have it clarified and properly classified so we can maintain it and receive whatever funds we are supposed to receive to maintain it.

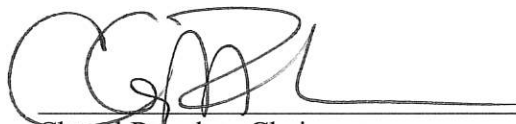
The Board also wants to find out exactly what the federal term is for the Class 7 road.

Adjournment

Charyl motioned to adjourn the meeting at 5:45 pm. Gil 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: 003948** and entering **Meeting ID: 935 0216 8673 Password: 003948**.

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, Chairman

November 29, 2022
Date

Scott Rice



R. Gil Rand

