

**Town of Londonderry, Vermont**  
**Selectboard**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**Monday, December 6, 2021**  
**Twitchell Building - 100 Old School Street, South Londonderry, VT**

**Board Members Present:** Thomas Cavanagh, Vincent Annunziata, Taylor Prouty, Melissa Brown and James Fleming.

**Board Members Absent:** None.

**Others in Attendance:** Town Officials – Town Administrator Shane O’Keefe, Town Treasurer Tina Labeau, Town Clerk & Parks Board Chair Kelly Pajala, and Parks Board member Marge Fish. Others – Consultants Cynthia Gubb (6:45 PM) and Seth Bongartz (7:05 PM), Manchester Town Manager John O’Keefe (7:18 PM), and Bruce Frauman (GNAT).

**1. Call meeting to order**

Tom Cavanagh called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

**2. Additions or deletions to the agenda**

[1 VSA 312(d)(3)(A)]

Shane O’Keefe recommended removing this matter of the long-term lease for the solar array project from the agenda and also moving an executive session to the end of the meeting.

*Taylor Prouty moved to adjust the agenda by moving item 10.c., the Executive Session regarding real estate purchase or lease options to the last agenda item before adjournment, and by deleting item 10.d., the consideration of a long-term lease for the solar array project on the former septage field, seconded by Vincent Annunziata. The motion passed unanimously.*

**3. Minutes Approval – Meeting(s) of 11/15/2021**

*Vincent Annunziata moved to approve the minutes of the Selectboard meeting of November 15, 2021, seconded by Taylor Prouty. The motion passed unanimously.*

**4. Selectboard Pay Orders**

*Vincent Annunziata moved to approve the pay orders for payroll and accounts payable, seconded by Jim Fleming. The motion passed unanimously.*

**5. Announcements/Correspondence**

Shane O’Keefe mentioned that the amendment to the Town’s Traffic & Parking Ordinance, passed by the Board on 10/18/2021, which establishing speed limits on various paved roads in town, will go into effect on 12/17/2021 as there was no petition filed with the 44-day appeal period, which ended on 12/1/2021. Speed limit signs can now be put up.

He added that the Windham County Sheriff’s Office has assigned two officers to Londonderry and Jamaica starting the previous week, to include weekend coverage as well, and new officers are being hired as well to get back up to full staffing.

It was noted that Gary Barton agreed to handle annual preventive maintenance for the Town Garage HVAC unit.

The Town Administrator stated that the Town has applied for priority listing through the Agency of Natural Resources Clean Water State Revolving Fund for the north and south villages for future water and wastewater grants. This is for this year's priority list, he added, and another priority list application round will come up in a few months. At the next Board meeting the draft water-wastewater study will be presented as will a proposal for additional planning work, the cost of which will be covered by the State of Vermont.

He again mentioned that there remain two vacancies on the Energy Committee, and one for an alternate position on the Development Review Board, which are all being advertised.

Shane O'Keefe noted correspondence included in the Board's meeting packet was as follows:

- A notice of a 12/15/2021 DRB hearing on an application for subdivision of land across VT Route 100 across from the Transfer Station from Curtis and Mary Merrill. He asked Board members to let him know if there are any concerns that he can bring to the DRB.
- A letter of thanks dated 11/16/2021, from Neighborhood Connections for the Town's annual appropriation.
- The Windham County Sheriff's report for October 2021.
- The Town's signed letter of support for the Okemo Valley Regional Chamber of Commerce's recreational funding application, dated 12/15/2021

Tina Labeau mentioned that Transfer Station tickets for 2022 are now on sale.

## **6. Visitors and Concerned Citizens**

None.

## **7. Town Officials Business**

### **a. Parks Board – Discuss future parks projects**

Kelly Pajala reviewed a handout with the Board that covers the FY2023 budget and projects proposed for the coming year, noting that the budgeted items would generally be the same, subject to some inflation due to conditions, and some infrastructure improvements would be addressed this year.

The budget proposes that all Town parks property be mowed and plowed by a contractor instead of the Town Road Crew.

She mentioned projects proposed be paid from fundraising and dedicated non-tax funds such as the Pingree Park Fund (\$5,500 balance), the Memorial Park Fund (\$32,462 balance), and the Riverside Park Fund (\$81,029 balance). Projects include a multi-use recreation space at Pingree Park instead of the pump track approved a few years back, pond treatment/aeration and a small storage shed at Memorial Park, and general improvements to Buxton Park.

Pajala spoke at length about the proposed multi-use recreation space, to include skateboarding and biking, and mentioned that fundraising and grants of about \$30,000 would

be necessary for initial design and site work, The entire cost of the facility would be several hundred thousand dollars, she added.

Pajala and Fish spoke about a parks usage survey recently sent out to the community with over 100 responses so far, and will keep the survey open for a few more weeks.

## **8. Transfer Station/Solid Waste Management**

### **a. Updates**

Labeau mentioned that there might be an applicant for the part-time Sunday position.

## **9. Roads and Bridges**

### **a. Updates**

Taylor Prouty noted the following usage for the month of November 2021:

Salt – 63 tons                      Sand – 129 yards

Fuel (gallons): Vehicles – 670.8, Town Office Generator – 0, Transfer Station – 70

He mentioned that the grader repair work was done at the Highway Garage instead of up in Williston, and it's back on the road. And the 2016 International truck is off the road being repaired.

Prouty noted that lighting fixtures in the Town Garage need replacement, and Shane O'Keefe mentioned that he believed that Gary Barton would be handling that in December along with the HVAC work.

Shane O'Keefe mentioned that all but one item sold at the recent auction of surplus items in the cold storage building have been removed by the purchasers. He mentioned that surplus street name signs stored in the shed should also be sold off, and he'll come back to the Board with a plan for that.

### **b. Access Permit 2021-08 – Haven Hill Road, Parcel 043003.000 (Veech)**

Taylor Prouty mentioned that this permit was for a temporary logging access, and he saw no reason not to grant the permit, noting that the location would be put back to the way it is now after the logging operation.

*Jim Fleming moved to approve access permit application No. 2021-08, submitted by Jock Harvey for temporary access for logging purposes only onto parcel #043003.000, located on Haven Hill Road, seconded by Taylor Prouty. The motion passed unanimously.*

## **10. Old Business**

### **a. Discussion of use of funds from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)**

Shane O'Keefe noted that the Town had not received any new ARPA funding requests or inquiries since the last meeting. Labeau mentioned that she received information on use of ARPA funds for emergency operations and possibly other Town Office improvements.

**b. Town Office Renovation Project – Discuss bond vote**

Shane O’Keefe briefed the Board on the project and provided the Board with a synopsis of previous decisions on this matter, noting that on 12/7/2020 the Board voted to “*rescind the Board’s May 18, 2020 decision to schedule a bond vote for the Town Office renovations for the March 2021 Town Meeting, and instead hold off on scheduling such a bond vote until a later date*”. He explained that if the Board wished to pursue the bond at the annual Town Meeting in March, the time to begin consideration is now due to bond sequence requirements.

He noted that construction costs have escalated and the original project cost of ~\$950,000 is probably now as high as \$1.3 million, though funding opportunities for some of the project will allow the bond to possibly remain under \$1 million. Options for the Board he explained would be to vote to hold the bond vote at the 2022 Town Meeting, a special Town Meeting thereafter, the 2023 Town Meeting or not at all. He noted that there is no expiration of project bonding authority once approved by the Voters, so a project approved this next year can wait some time for the optimal time to bid and bond.

Cavanagh stated that he felt that waiting a year would allow the Town to get better construction pricing, and that using existing building reserve funds to address some immediate building repair and cleanup needs could also lower the project cost. Prouty added that waiting may allow the Town to better qualify parts of the project for federal funding.

Shane O’Keefe mentioned that immediate building needs include fixing the building’s side entry to the Clerk and Treasurer’s office, to include roofing, carpentry and insulation, and basement cleanup and exterior painting, all of which can be done next spring.

He added that bond rates are low, which could offset to some degree the increase in construction costs.

Melissa Brown agreed that getting some of the smaller work done ahead of a bond made good sense, and on the idea delaying execution of a bond after it is approved, she mentioned that residents would likely have an expectation that the funds would be spent.

The consensus of the Board was to hold off on setting a bond vote and to instead raise the issue again for discussion next October.

**11. New Business**

**a. Presentation on the proposed Northshire Community Field House**

The scheduled presenters were not in attendance. There was brief discussion about the project based on the information provided to the Board. Cavanagh mentioned that while the project budget suggests that the project is seeking \$628,000 from the Town, with a 2.1% bond the cost would actually be \$879,120. This comes to \$6.98/year per \$100,000 of assessed value. There was little support for the project expressed by Board members.

It was decided to move on with the meeting agenda.

**b. Consider sale of Town-owned property – Parcel 101001.000 [24 VSA 1061]**

Shane O’Keefe raised the idea of selling a parcel of Town owned property acquired through tax deed to get in back on the tax rolls. He noted that the agenda mistakenly indicated that the subject property is parcel #101001.000, when it should have read #103001.000. He added that it is an undersized lot for zoning purposes and unable to support any development, and should be sold subject to the condition that it conveyed to one of the four abutting property owners and that it be merged with the abutting lot for tax and zoning purposes. He also informed the Board that Town Treasurer Tina Labeau is an abutting property owner and for the sake of transparency the property should be sold by way of sealed bid opened publicly by the Board. O’Keefe mentioned the notice and procedure requirements of 10 V.S.A Section 1061.

There was discussion of other surplus Town-owned properties that could be sold. The Board briefly discussed establishing a minimum bid and the consensus was that it should be \$2,500.

*Taylor Prouty moved to authorize the Town Administrator to solicit sealed bids for the sale of the Town-owned property known as parcel #103001.000 for consideration by the Selectboard, such sale to be conditioned on merger for tax and zoning purposes with an abutting property, and further subject to all applicable provisions of Title 24 V.S.A. Section 1061, seconded by Jim Fleming. The motion passed unanimously.*

**c. Appoint Forest Fire Warden position [10 VSA 2641(a)]**

Cavanagh noted the recent passing of Forest Fire Warden Jim Twitchell, and Shane O’Keefe mentioned that he had spoken with Jim’s son Melvin, who presently serves as Deputy Forest Fire Warden, and he states he would be honored to be appointed to fill the vacancy. It was noted that the term extends only to 6/30/2022, after which time a new appointment must be made.

*Taylor Prouty moved to appoint Melvin Twitchell as the Town’s Forest Fire Warden subject to concurrence by the Commissioner of the Vermont Department of Forest, Parks and Recreation pursuant to Title 10 V.S.A. Section 2641(a), seconded by Vincent Annunziata. The motion passed unanimously.*

**d. Consider participation in the National Opioid settlement**

The Board reviewed documents related to the national opioid settlement, whereas several entities have settled litigation and will make payments to participating states and municipalities throughout the country. Shane O’Keefe mentioned that Town is eligible for ~\$240/year for years 1-10 and ~\$170/year for years 11-18, all of which must be spent on eligible drug-prevention activities, and he suggested that the funds could go to The Collaborative. If the Town does not participate the funds will go to the State of Vermont, which has similar spending restrictions.

There was discussion about whether it is worth the long-term administrative effort it will take. There was interest in keeping the funds local instead of releasing it to the State.

*Jim Fleming moved that the Town of Londonderry opt in to and participate in the national opioid settlements as described by the Vermont Attorney General’s Office, and authorize*

*the Town Administrator to execute any documents necessary to ensure this participation, seconded by Vincent Annunziata. The motion passed unanimously.*

**e. Executive Session – The appointment or employment or evaluation of a public officer or employee per 1 V.S.A. 313 (a)(3)**

*Taylor Prouty moved to move to enter executive session to consider the evaluation of a Town employee, pursuant to Title 1 V.S.A. Section 313(a)(3), and invite the Town Clerk and Town Treasurer to attend the executive session, seconded by Vincent Annunziata. The motion passed unanimously.*

The Board entered executive session at 6:59 PM, and came out of executive session at 7:09 PM.

**f. Consider employee compensation matter**

*Jim Fleming moved to adjust the hourly rate of pay for Bonnie Cobb to \$17.00, effective this pay period, seconded by Vincent Annunziata. The motion passed unanimously.*

**a. Presentation on the proposed Northshire Community Field House**

Consultants Cindy Gubb and Seth Bongartz, and Manchester Town Manager John O’Keefe, gave a presentation on the proposed Northshire Community Field House on behalf of the Right Track Foundation, Inc., which is a philanthropic foundation of the Drunsic family. Gubb mentioned that the Field House would be located at the existing Dana L. Thompson Recreation Park in Manchester, and the project has been in the works for approximately 2 years. The presentation included a detailed explanation of the proposed building plans, uses and programming opportunities, and provided as follows:

Focus areas of the facility: Facility that serves a multi-town footprint. Promote health, fitness and social interaction across town lines. Diverse programming for all age groups. After-school, weekend, vacation weeks, summer programs for youth. Leagues, clubs, and other activities. Building lifetime habits of healthy living.

Other benefits are: Enhances the vitality of the entire region. Recruitment asset for local businesses. Additional asset to our local schools. Attraction for our lodging properties.

Field House Facts: Approximately 67,000 square feet. Solar panels. Energy efficient building (VT Commercial Building Energy Standards). Central location with easy access. Convenient parking to building. Access to sewer & water. No cost for land. Minimal infrastructure needed.

Field House amenities: Three multi-use courts which can be configured for basketball, volleyball, pickleball, indoor soccer, Futsal (indoor soccer). Dedicated pickleball court. State-of-the-art 45 foot climbing tower. 200-meter indoor track with indoor track & field. Batting cage for baseball practice. Fitness area with cardio deck and weight machines. Locker rooms for team sports. Multipurpose rooms for activities and programs.

Operating Strategy: Town of Manchester will own the Field House. Executive Director oversees Rec Park & Field House. Nonprofit board oversight. Self-sustaining operating budget. Operating costs covered by memberships, court usage fees, facility rentals, tournament fees, equipment rentals, sales. Energy efficient design reduces operating costs.

Excess income to fund capital reserve, scholarship. Guarantee for breakeven operating budget for 5 years.

Financing the Field House:

- Cost of construction: \$13.25 million.
- Financed through public and private investors: Right Track Foundation - \$3 million committed & Town of Manchester - \$3 million (through public approval process)
- Balance of \$7.25 million: One-time capital contributions from mountain & valley towns; Business contributions; and Private donors.

Participating Towns = Partners: Towns that contribute to the capital costs are partners in perpetuity.

- No annual contribution
- One representative on Field House nonprofit board

“Community Field House Partners” access resident rates:

- Resident memberships: \$125 single/\$200 couple/\$250 family, Students: 6 – 13 \$20/year, 14 – 19 \$50/year
- Nonresident memberships: \$375 single/\$500 couple/\$750 family, Students: 6 – 13 \$120/year, 14 – 19 \$200/year
- Residents have priority for memberships, reservation times; nonresidents memberships based on availability

Timeline: Town meeting March 2022 – Advisory votes in towns within footprint of market area to approve further consideration. Spring/summer 2022 – Bond vote to approve capital contribution to Field House. Private fundraising ongoing. Construction late summer/fall of 2022 when funding is in place or pledged

Bongartz explained the methodology for municipal contributions. According to the proposed funding plan the cost to the Town of Londonderry would be \$628,050, which at a 2.1% bond interest would cost it \$29,304 per year, which translates to \$6.98 per \$100 of property value for taxpayers. Cavanagh reiterated that the overall cost to the Town, with interest, would be \$879,120.

There was considerable back-and-forth between the presenters and the Board. Annunziata inquired about possibilities for provision of childcare at the facility. In response to an inquiry on the cost of ballots for the bond vote, it Bongartz suggested that bond votes could take place during the November 2022 election. Discussion took place about project viability if town's do not participate.

The presenters recommended that the Board include the following non-binding article to the annual Town Meeting warning: *“Shall the voters indicate support for the concept of a regional fieldhouse at the Dana Thompson Recreation Park in Manchester, with the understanding that towns would participate in its construction costs under a formula based on a combination of grand list, population and distance, in exchange for a special use status for those who live or own a second home in the Town of Londonderry. This article is advisory in nature and does not bind the town to further action.”*

Pajala informed the presenters that the Town holds its Town Meeting votes from the floor, and for any bond vote on the November General election ballot, the State will be mailing out ballots and there will be a local programming cost to add articles to the ballot.

Annunziata suggested that the project would be good for Manchester, but it's not something the Board can justify at this time due to bigger local concerns that these funds could go toward. He stated that affordable housing and childcare are greater regional priorities.

Concerns about coordination of use of the facility by various schools was discussed.

Gubb, Bongartz and John O'Keefe left the meeting at 7:58 PM.

**g. Executive Session – The negotiating or securing of real estate purchase or lease options, per 1 V.S.A. 313 (a)(2)**

*Jim Fleming moved to enter executive session to discuss negotiating or securing of real estate purchase or lease options, pursuant to Title 1 V.S.A. Section 313(a)(2), and invite the Town Administrator to attend the executive session, seconded by Vincent Annunziata. The motion passed unanimously.*

The Board entered executive session at 7:59 PM.

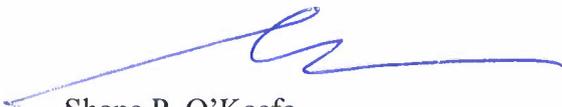
The Board came out of executive session at 8:14 PM. No decisions were made.

**12. Adjourn**

*Jim Fleming moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Taylor Prouty. The motion passed unanimously.*

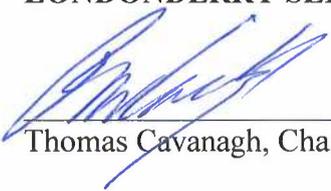
The meeting adjourned at 8:15 PM. The next regular meeting of the Selectboard is scheduled for December 20, 2021.

Respectfully Submitted,

  
Shane P. O'Keefe  
Town Administrator

*Approved December 20, 2021.*

**LONDONDERRY SELECTBOARD**

  
Thomas Cavanagh, Chair