

TOWN OF TEMPLE, NEW HAMPSHIRE

SELECT BOARD

MINUTES OF PUBLIC MEETING

Tuesday, July 23, 2019

Town Hall Annex

6:30 PM

Select Board members present: G. Willard, B. Ezell, and K. Caisse

Meeting called to order by Ezell at 6:30 PM

- **Chairman's Comments**

- Ezell reminded the public that the SB is not supposed to take new business from the floor, and that he committed a procedural error a couple of meetings ago. He asked people to contact the SB assistant by email or telephone to be placed on the SB meeting agenda.
- Ezell announced the hiring of a new town bookkeeper, Julie Dean, who is the girlfriend of SB member Caisse. He said there had been some concern expressed at the last meeting regarding her candidacy for the position and that he had contacted the New Hampshire Municipal Association and the town's attorney and neither had seen a problem with hiring Dean. He had also talked with the Budget Advisory Committee Chair Gary Scholl, who also saw no problem. Ezell explained that his decision had been based upon qualifications and Julie Dean had the municipal experience among two qualified candidates interviewed.

- **Public Comment**

- Tedd Petro asked if there had been an issue with the new bookkeeper hiring. Heidi Jordan commented that the public had not made an issue when a past selectman had appointed his spouse to numerous committees. Ezell said this situation is different, given that there is an employee/employer relationship with the SB, but Caisse had recused himself from the matter and the town has auditors, a treasurer and two other SB members involved.
- Gary Scholl noted that Caisse had been exercised good procedure with his recusal and wondered if it made sense to incorporate this procedure into the town's employee manual since the manual was going to be examined for possible changes.

- **Old Business**

- Municipal Building space revisions
 - Clifton-Waite reported that Caisse had disassembled and removed the roll-top desk from the second floor of the municipal building, and that he has asked office personnel to estimate how much additional storage and file cabinet space they might need for their records. Road Agent Kent Perry indicated that his assistant, Betsy, would like a file cabinet for the planning board.

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- Marsh litigation
 - **Ezell announced that the SB has signed the complaint and that the town attorney is now handling the matter. He said the SB would announce when they learn of any court date. Clifton-Waite said that the town attorney had indicated the first set of deadlines involved about 75 days of time.**
- Public Parking outside the Congregational Church
 - **Caisse said this is an ongoing matter.**
- Cemetery Funding
 - **Caisse reported that he had brought up the matter at the recent joint meeting of the Capital Improvements Plan Committee and Budget Advisory Committee. He said they will review in September their recommendation.**
- Tree Cutting on Town land off Hadley Highway
 - **Road Agent Kent Perry said the town property abutting Dick and Sandy Benotti's property at 82 Hadley Highway had previously been a field, and now trees have grown up, some of which have wrapped their roots around the Benotti's septic system atop a 12-foot drop. He suggested the town hire a professional tree surgeon, and perhaps log additional town land to make it worthwhile or profitable for the town. Caisse mentioned that the town's energy committee had begun looking at the installation of solar panels at the municipal building and a consultant had said the tall pines on the south of the fire station would need to be cut down. He suggested putting the projects out to bid, perhaps just for the wood or perhaps with a small revenue stream for the town. Sandy Benotti said some of the trees appear to be hardwood. Caisse said there is actually a mix of soft and hardwoods by the municipal building. Caisse asked Perry to loop Town Forester Allan Oxman into the conversation.**
- North Cemetery tree cutting
 - **Perry said former Road Agent Tim Fiske had been looking into the situation during the past year, and that Perry had involved the Town's Cemetery Trustees. Currently, the huge old ash trees by the cemetery are dropping pieces that the town then clears. Perry said it would be a large job involving seeking and getting access from the property owner to remove any trees.**
- **New Business**
 - Town Employee Manual

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- Ezell explained that the retirement of former Road Agent Tim Fiske had triggered a review of the employee manual, which has vague language on vacation and sick time, as well as accruals of and payout for time off. Historically, the town has awarded leave to employees on their anniversary date. He said he had talked with an accounting firm, which saw no problem in doing full accrual and payout at the anniversary date; however, this needs to be approved and put into the manual. Caisse suggested that each SB member review the manual and then update the document in pieces; in the meantime, he recommended the SB not change their practice when awarding Tim Fiske his accrued and unused vacation time. Ezell concurred, saying that the amount involved isn't that large. Willard noted that the employee manual had grown since his first time on the SB in 2014 when it was just 26 pages. He said the current manual had borrowed heavily from the Peterborough Town Employee Manual. Caisse motioned to pay Fiske his accrued and unused vacation time in full, Ezell second, all in favor. Ezell asked Gary Scholl to have the BAC provide them with any comments on the manual. Scholl suggested the SB make some decisions and then ask an attorney to draft their goals into legal language. SB discussed changing the time and date of the next meeting due to some scheduling conflicts. Willard motioned that the Select Board will hold its next meeting on Monday, Aug. 12 at 5 p.m., Caisse second, all in favor.
- Email for bookkeeper
 - Ezell said the email for the new bookkeeper would remain bookkeeper@templenh.org for records retention purposes and that he would confirm its working status with an email. Scholl asked about the new bookkeeper's hours and Ezell said Dean is flexible with those. Caisse said hours would typically be after 3:30 p.m. Scholl said he would touch base with her.
- State PA-28 form
 - Clifton-Waite explained that the State wanted the Town to confirm that it won't be using the state property tax inventory form (PA-28) for 2020, and the SB signed the letter to the NH Dept. of Revenue Administration.
- Committee Reports
 - Caisse reported that the Wilton Recycling Center had hired a new manager and that she will be assuming her duties shortly. The Wilton Ambulance Advisory Committee (AAC) is meeting on July 31, at which time the AAC will finalize some matters and recent quarterly numbers. He said the AAC will be bringing some new ideas to the Wilton Select Board and that they've been working well despite the chief being out on sick leave.

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- **Ezell and Willard said their committees had not met.**
- Minutes
 - **SB discussed the July 9 minutes. Caisse motioned to accept the minutes from the July 9 SB meeting as amended, Willard second, all in favor.**
- **Other Business**
 - Vouchers
 - **SB circulated vouchers for signature. Ezell commented (earlier in the meeting) that payables manifest should be reorganized for simplicity, to avoid missing signature placement. Caisse suggested having one list of all payables and having the supporting stubs with bills while eliminating other material. Ezell said other towns work with summaries. Scholl said the system appears archaic. Caisse said it is difficult to determine where and what to sign. Ezell suggested the new bookkeeper design a new system. Caisse suggested signing a summary list, rather than individual bills. Ezell suggested involving the auditors to avoid any problems.**

Meeting Adjourned: 7:09 PM. Motioned by Willard, Ezell second, all in favor.

Next Select Board Meeting: Monday, August 12, 2019, at 5:00 PM in the Town Hall Annex.
Meeting minutes respectfully submitted by Paul Clifton-Waite, Assistant to the Select Board.