

**TOWN OF ENFIELD
ENFIELD BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING MINUTES DECEMBER 5, 2022**

TIME: 6:00 PM
LOCATION: Public Works Facility & Teams videoconference
74 Lockehaven Road, Enfield

PRESENT

Board of Selectmen: John W. Kluge, Erik Russell

Excused: Kate P. Stewart

Administrative Staff: Ed Morris, Town Manager; Alisa Bonnette, Assistant Town Manager

Members of the Public: Emily Curtis, Recording Secretary; Dr. Jerold Theis, Conservation Commission Chair; Lee Davis, Conservation Commission member; Celie Aufiero, Conservation Commission member; Dan Kiley.

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Kluge called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – November 21, 2022

Mr. Russell made a motion to approve the minutes for November 21, 2022, as printed. Mr. Kluge seconded. Vote unanimous in favor of the motion (2-0).

BOARD REPORTS

Members of the Board of Selectmen (BOS) gave updates regarding their respective committee assignments.

TOWN MANAGER’S REPORT

Mr. Morris presented the following updates to the BOS:

- He thanked Scott Johnston who served the highway department in the Town of Enfield for 22 years. He stated that he has been very dedicated, his efforts are appreciated, and we wish him well on his retirement.

Mr. Kluge stated his gratitude to Mr. Johnston for his dedication and service to Enfield.

- He introduced the new Highway Supervisor, Jeremy Clay, who started on November 28th.
- A full-time grounds position is open, and the interview process will begin soon. He added that applications are continuing to be accepted until the position is filled.
- There were concerns about the boil water order and information was put into the monthly newsletter. He stated that we will continue to work with the Department of Environmental Services to monitor and chlorinate on schedule as necessary, with the hope of reducing the chlorine until it is determined treatments are no longer necessary.
- Cushings and Sons Well Drilling has started drilling at a new well site which is located about 300 feet northeast of the existing marsh well.

- We continue to meet with our contractors and the MFAC has committed to a final floor plan for the public safety facility. He noted that the preliminary survey sitework has been completed and final borings will be completed at the end of the week.
- He stated that, regarding Whitney Hall, he is continuing to complete applications for the USDA loans. He stated that the current USDA interest rate is at 3.5% but he is also asking Mascoma for their loan rates as a comparison.
- He is working with a couple groups regarding a Watershed Management Plan to establish procedures to maintain clean water in lakes, rivers, and streams. He stated that it has been discussed to create a regional effort and reach out to other groups such as the City of Lebanon, the Mascoma Lake Association, Crystal Lake Association, and a few others in the area. He noted that, prompted by the algae bloom last summer, there have been efforts to make sure that we establish measures to maintain clean water in our lakes, rivers, and streams. He stated that he believed it was in the best interest of the town and surrounding towns to develop a comprehensive watershed management plan for the region.

With no further comments or questions, Mr. Kluge moved on to the next agenda item.

BUSINESS

Conservation Commission Warrant Articles

Article 1

Mr. Morris stated that there will be a change to Article 1 as he reviewed information in the Municipal Conservation Fund Guidebook which notes that the DRA states that an allocation to the Conservation Commission would have to be on an annual basis and not a perpetual allocation. He stated that allocating on an annual basis has been done in the past but has been replaced by a direct budget item in the annual budget for the Conservation Fund.

Dr. Theis stated that under the circumstances, which he was not aware that the budget line had been arranged with the town by a previous Conservation Commission member, he requested to withdraw the article.

Dr. Theis stated that the funds allocated would be used for the designation and management of a town forest including having signs put up, establishing a trail master program, and maintaining the trails. He stated that by having a warrant article to designate the town forest, it would have to come before the town as a warrant article to be changed by the residents.

Mr. Kluge inquired about the current setback on wetlands.

Dr. Theis stated that the current setback is 50 feet. He stated that only seven towns with prime wetlands have setbacks of more than 100 feet, but studies show a 100-foot setback only reduces about 70% of contaminants from reaching the wetland.

Lee Davis, a member of the Conservation Commission, stated that they are enthusiastic about education and getting school children involved. She stated that they are setting up an educational open forum with the Department of Environmental Services to discuss wetlands and their protection and are continuously trying to help improve the community.

Mr. Russell stated that he would like more information about Article 2 prior to funds being designated. He stated that he is concerned with the approach of putting money aside without having a clear plan. He stated the best approach is to plan the project and then allocate the funding instead of setting aside the funding and then figuring out the project. He added that the last sentence of the proposed article which states that the article has 'no tax impact' is not true as zoning articles always have a tax impact, even if

they are indirect. He stated that it is too soon to make a decision of designating the land on Methodist Hill as a town forest as there have been many ideas put forward and he is interested in hearing all the ideas before there being a decision made.

Mr. Kluge agreed that it is too early to constitute a warrant article as a decision has not yet been made regarding the Methodist Hill property.

Mr. Kluge stated that a lot of money would be accrued, and he did not believe that it should run into the Conservation Commission and stated he believes it should remain under the prevue of the Selectboard.

Dr. Theis stated that the Conservation Commission is requesting 50% and inquired how much that would amount to each year.

Mr. Morris stated that in the last three years in current land use, the town brought in: \$12,798 in 2019, \$46,448 in 2020, and \$48,000 in 2021.

Dr. Theis stated that the amount could be reduced to 10% instead of 50% but noted that the warrant article did not need Selectboard support to go before the town meeting as a warrant article. He stated that the money would be used to develop volunteer services and compensate for the amount necessary to keep the trails open and maintained.

Mr. Russell stated that he would like to know more about the intended projects and expenditures prior to allocating money. He stated that there should be a clear plan on intended expenditures, how they would be managed and reported under the town, and he would not be ready to support any amount of money for a dedicated fund. He stated that an open-ended pool of money is not the best way to manage town funds.

Mr. Morris noted that something like trail maintenance could easily fit within the existing budget structure.

Celie Aufiero stated that the role of the Conservation Commission is to save money and pay for studies. She stated that a lot of towns get a percentage of the current use. She stated that the use of the funds goes through a process and the commission needs more funds to be ready to take actions such as purchase a piece of land or easement.

Dr. Theis stated that he has investigated area towns including Canaan who allocates 50% of fees to the Conservation Commission, or up to \$5,000, and the Plainfield Conservation Commission gets 100% of the current use. He stated that getting the funding reduces the ability to act expeditiously such as maintaining the trails or getting people to give lectures on environmental issues.

Ms. Davis inquired about the process for the Conservation Commission to spend the money.

Mr. Morris stated that the Conservation Commission would have authority to spend the allocation and would not need to have Selectboard approval to expend the funds but would need to go through the Public Hearing process just as the Selectboard does.

Dr. Theis stated that the Conservation Commission could vote to decline the funds, and there are situations that could be worked out should the article pass.

Mr. Morris stated that the Selectboard did not have to vote for their recommendation of the article at this meeting and it was brought forward for discussion purposes only.

Ms. Aufiero stated that the conservation fund is the only fund set up by the state that can do this for conservation.

Mr. Russell stated that he would like more information regarding the proposed Article 2 as there are certain ideas that could be implemented within the regular budget, but he sees where other items such as the purchase of land would not fit within the regular budget. He added that knowing the intended purpose of the money being saved would still be important and relevant information to have.

Dr. Theis stated that he submitted a list of information regarding tasks associated with the suggestion of having a trail master for the Town of Enfield. He noted that the article relative to the setback was only relevant to prime wetlands and not all wetlands. He added that there are only a few prime wetlands in Enfield, but they are important to maintain as pristine as possible for the environment as well as the fact they are a water source for the town.

Mr. Kluge stated that he would appreciate a map with more information about where the prime wetlands are located.

Dr. Theis stated that there are maps that show the Prime Wetlands in the Natural Resources Inventory completed by the Conservation Commission in 2021.

Proposed Personnel Policy Amendment – Vacation Accrual

Mr. Morris presented an amendment to change the annual allotment of time at the beginning of the calendar year to a monthly accrual. He stated that there was also an amendment that added an option for an employee to be able to buy back vacation time in the event of a hardship situation. He noted that all the proposed changes have been discussed with town employees prior to being brought forward to the Selectboard.

Mr. Russell made a motion to authorize the Town Manager to implement the amended vacation policy as presented at the Selectboard Meeting on December 5, 2022, starting on January 1, 2023. Mr. Kluge seconded. Vote unanimous in favor of the motion (2-0).

2022 Town Report: Dedication & Cover

Ms. Bonnette stated that it was time to start thinking about the dedication and the cover of the Town Report, with the goal of having a decision made by the first meeting in January.

Mr. Morris invited members to email their ideas to Ms. Bonnette to discuss them at the next meeting.

Water & Sewer Rates (set public hearing date)

Members of the Board of Selectmen set the Public Hearing for 6pm on Monday, December 19th.

Mr. Russell requested to have a summary of the water and sewer debt at that time.

Acceptance of Donations

Enfield Center Town House Fund - \$1,000

Mr. Russell made a motion to accept the funds with gratitude. Mr. Kluge seconded. Vote unanimous in favor of the motion (2-0).

Mascoma Lakeside Park Fund- \$100

Mr. Russell made a motion to accept the donation with gratitude. Mr. Kluge seconded. Vote unanimous in favor of the motion (2-0).

Follow-up to Year End Transfers with Trustees of Trust Funds, if needed

Members of the Selectboard were informed by the Trustees of Trust Funds that there were no current issues to be addressed.

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

Members of the BOS signed documentation as presented by Ms. Bonnette.

- **2022 Equalization Municipal Assessment Data Certificate**
- **Solar Exemptions (Hamilton, Ricard/Barrell)**
- **Veteran's Tax Credits & Exemptions (Foote-Demers, Ward, Sailsbury, Austin)**

OTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Mr. Kluge requested comments from the public.

Mr. Kiley stated that, for clarification regarding the wetlands setback and reference to having clean drinking water, there is a 750-foot protection area around wells.

Mr. Kiley stated that there is a .11% increase proposed for the school budget this year, which is good news as that is a substantial chunk of the overall tax rate.

With no further comments, members of the BOS moved on to adjournment.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS – NO ACTION REQUIRED

- Tax Collector's Report – November 2022
- Town Clerk's Report – November 2022

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Russell made a motion to adjourn at 6:51 pm. Mr. Kluge seconded. Vote unanimous in favor of the motion (2-0).

The meeting was adjourned at 6:51 pm.

John W. Kluge, Chair

Katherine D. P. Stewart

Erik Russell
Enfield Board of Selectmen