

TOWN OF WILTON  
SELECTMEN'S MINUTES  
WILTON FIRE STATION

Date: November 6, 2017  
Time: 6:30 P.M.  
Place: Fire Station  
Present: Chairman William F. Condra, Selectwoman Kellie-Sue Boissonnault and Selectman Kermit R. Williams. Town Administrator Scott Butcher. Recording Secretary Caitlin Martin.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Condra at 6:32 P.M.

**Public Comment**

Chairman Condra opened the floor to public comment first. Joe Torre brought up his concerns over damage to Old County Farm Road & Bridge. He also wanted to register his disagreement with the new policy to get on the Board of Selectmen agenda. Chairman Condra said they would discuss the policy at the following Selectmen's Meetings, but wanted to be clear that the policy was driven by confusion at Selectmen's Meetings when what was expected to be the topic of discussion was not the subject that was actually brought to the table. Chairman Condra would have the Board review the policy for further dialogue next week.

**Speed Limit on Isaac Frye Highway**

Hearing no further input, Chairman Condra moved on to first item – the speed limit on Isaac Frye Highway. Paul Levesque repeated his concerns – that there are kids on road, lots of curves, driveways, etc., and 30 miles per hour is too fast for the road. Police Chief Brent Hautanen submitted a memo to the Selectboard indicating that he agreed with Mr. Levesque and was in favor of reducing the speed limit. The Board was in unanimous agreement regarding reducing the speed limit. There was a brief discussion about the technical procedure involved in making the change.

**Ambulance Service Rapid Response Vehicle**

Ambulance Chief Steven Desrosiers had a suggestion to decrease response times from the Ambulance service. He had found a rapid response vehicle from a municipality in upstate New York which was being sold via online auction for about \$5,000 at the time of the meeting. Chief Desrosiers felt this was a “diamond in the rough” opportunity to add this vehicle to the Town of Wilton's readiness by moving money around within the existing 2017 budget, without allocating new funds. The thought would be that a paramedic would take this vehicle with a rapid response kit when they are working on call, and if needed, would proceed directly to the scene to begin providing aid while the ambulance caught up.

There was a lot of discussion between the Select Board and Chief Desrosiers about the technical aspects involved, including other budgetary concerns. Chairman Condra expressed his opinion that the Ambulance Chief look into budgeting for this vehicle in 2018 and buy it that way, rather than move money around to buy it in 2017. Chief Desrosiers stated that he felt this was too good a deal to pass up, and other similar vehicles would cost thousands more. Selectwoman Boissonnault expressed that she was torn – on the one hand, she could see how it was needed and solved a problem, but on the other hand, wished there was more time to consider and think it over. There was a discussion about the logistics of having a rapid response vehicle, and possible other solutions.

**Motion:** Selectman Williams made a motion to authorize the Town Administrator to place a bid on behalf of the Town for this particular vehicle as discussed. Selectwoman Boissonnault asked to amend

the motion to limit on the auction amount. There was some discussion about the limit that should be placed, and what the Kelly Blue Book value was for this vehicle. Other inherent costs were discussed, such as re-lettering, stocking, transporting it from its current town to Wilton, etc. Selectman Williams amended his motion: to authorize the Town Administrator to bid on behalf of the Town for this particular vehicle as discussed up to a limit of eight thousand dollars. Selectwoman Kellie-Sue Boissonnault seconded the motion. Selectman Williams indicated that Town Administrator Scott Butcher identify which part of the Ambulance Budget this would come from. Selectman Williams and Selectwoman Boissonnault aye, Chairman Condra no. Motion carries 2, 1. Selectman Williams asked Chief Desrosiers to look for something similar for next year in the even this auction exceeds the allotted monies.

### **Sewer Chairman Chris Carter**

Chairman Condra explained to Sewer Chairman Carter that the Board of Selectmen had received two written complaints about Chairman Carter's interactions with Water Supervisor Michael Bergeron. Chair Condra stated (quote) "I am concerned that this is coming toward a hostile work environment."

Chairman Carter asked exactly what was said.

Selectwoman Boissonnault read the details of the incident on October 26<sup>th</sup>. In summary, on the morning of October 26, 2017, following a joint meeting of the Water and Sewer Commissions with the Granite State Rural Water Commission, Chairman Carter arrived at the water trailer where Mr. Bergeron was working and proceeded to shout and gesticulate toward him. Mr. Bergeron stated that Mr. Carter threatened his job and stated that if the situation happened again "[Mr. Bergeron] would be sorry."

Chairman Carter responded that he had acted this way because he felt that Mr. Bergeron had misrepresented a problem with the sewer pumps. Because Mr. Bergeron brought up the issue in public meeting, Chairman Carter felt irate, and justified in showing that he was irate by going to the water trailer and speaking to Mr. Bergeron as he did.

Town Administrator Scott Butcher described the second event, which occurred on November 6<sup>th</sup> at about 7:30 A.M. Chairman Carter confronted Mr. Bergeron a second time while Mr. Bergeron was coming out of a manhole. Mr. Bergeron states that Mr. Carter threatened his job. This time Mr. Bergeron was happy that another town employee was there (Ken Pellerin) but he felt threatened and intimidated. Chairman Carter's threats made it impossible for him to do his job due to being so rattled. Scott Butcher stated that this now the second incident. His concern is that Chairman Carter is an elected official. Michael Bergeron is an employee. The Board of Selectmen's responsibility is to protect employees. Town Administrator Scott Butcher has also been threatened by Mr. Carter back in August. All three incidents reported to Police. Scott Butcher had a conversation with labor counsel less than two hours prior to the meeting. Labor council's recommendation is that Chairman Chris Carter have no interaction with town employees moving forward, if Wilton Sewer Commission wants help, the other two commissioners will have to facilitate that request.

Chairman Carter asked if this an issue with anyone else.

Chairman Condra stated that the Board was here to deal with Mr. Bergeron's expressed fear of you. A long conversation ensued, with various Selectboard members attempting to help Chairman Carter see that his behavior was not appropriate or acceptable. Chairman Carter adamantly refused. He repeated many times that he felt that intimidating and shouting and swearing was appropriate because Mr. Bergeron was a water employee and had no business in Sewer affairs. Selectwoman Boissonnault stated (quote) "You have a different demeanor. This is not the only time that your anger or ire has been raised." Chairman Carter responded (quote) "that's who I am." Later, Selectwoman Boissonnault stated (quote) "You are an

elected official. You have to be the bigger person. This isn't the only place it happens." Chairman Condra ended the conversation.

### **Town Administrator Update**

TA Scott Butcher described many events from the previous week, including winding down the Safe Routes to School project. The Town should be getting reimbursement shortly. The next step is to look for grants for improvements. Mr. Butcher also visited the High Mowing campus, and sees lots of potential there to collaborate for mutual benefit.

### **Old/ New Business**

Selectwoman Boissonnault wanted to better understand the relationship between the Library and the Town. A discussion followed regarding RSA 202A. There was some concern about transparency, to which two library trustees in attendance (Nikki Andrews and Mary Ellen Brookes) objected strongly. Selectman Williams spoke at length about how the Library does not owe the Town transparency – the Town gives money to the Red Cross, but we do not demand the Red Cross explain how the money is spent. Ms. Andrews and Ms. Brookes offered for any of the Selectmen to come to a Trustee meeting, which are open to the public, and noted that they report their budget in the Town Report, the same as the rest of the Town. In Selectman William's opinion, the notion that the library is not being transparent is a conspiracy theory.

Selectman Williams referred back to the Town Administrator report, specifically to the issue of Chevrolet Caprice for the Police Department. TA Scott Butcher elaborated that he and Police Chief Hautanen were pulling together numbers and exploring alternatives such as a Tahoe. The Tahoe will be much more expensive to purchase, and then it still needs to be equipped. The gap is more than anticipated. Chief Hautanen is working on it, but more and more it seems that the Town should get the Caprice this year. If the Town chooses to pass on the Caprice, it will have to pursue a different, likely more expensive vehicle.

**Motion:** Selectman William made a motion to authorize the Town Administrator to pursue a lease with an opt out option for a Chevy Caprice for the Police Department at Macmulkin Chevrolet. Selectwoman Boissonnault seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carries.

Selectman Williams wanted to discuss another item from Town Administrator report regarding the timeliness of Attorney Little's response on town affairs. There was some discussion about the pros and cons of the Town's current legal counsel, and the pros and cons of pursuing a new bid, possibly a bigger firm with more flexibility. Selectman Williams and TA Scott Butcher will be attending the NH Municipal Association Conference next week and will connect with several firms there.

TA Scott Butcher brought forward another piece of old business – a request from the Budget Committee to reduce raises by .5%. They missed the window last year. The Budget Committee feels the Town is over generous and needs to be more competitive. There was some discussion about various departments, such as the Ambulance department, where wages are not competitive and raises will need to be higher. Selectman Williams does not see how .5% is going to really effect the bottom line. It will not make a significant difference to taxpayers, but it does send a message to employees, that the Town doesn't value them. Selectwoman Boissonnault suggested a compromise – to allow the .5% cut to appease the Budget Committee but to give it back to the employees as a benefit through the retirement 457(b) match. She suggested increasing the match to 1 for 1 up to a 3% match. TA Scott Butcher agreed that the current match system is pretty pathetic. The employee has to put in 8% to get a 3% match from the Town. Selectman Williams noted that the budget accounts for a 3% match on all eligible employees anyway, so the Board could make a policy change without affecting the budget. Chairman Condra agreed that they have talked about this before and is in favor of the 3 for 3 match, but wants to close out the discussion on the .5% raises. He continued that the previous Board put that in there because they felt the Town

employees deserved it. Chairman Condra suggested that the Board decline the request of the Budget Committee. He applauded the Budget Committee for their due diligence, but he does not see how this benefits the Town. Chairman Condra also would like to see the policy change on the 457(b) to the benefit of the employees.


**Motion:** Selectman Williams made a motion that the Board respectfully decline the request to adjust the salary scale. Selectwoman Boissonnault seconded. All in favor. Motion carries. Selectman Williams would like to see the data that Budget Committee is making their request from. Chairman Condra asked TA Scott Butcher to get that data.


Tracy Ewing asked a technical question – if the Board is going to change the policy from 8% to 3%, won't that blow the budget? The Board and TA Butcher explained that the 8% is the employee contribution. The budget accounts for at 3% match from the Town for all eligible employees already, because an employee may change their retirement contribution at any time and the budget needs to be able to bear it.

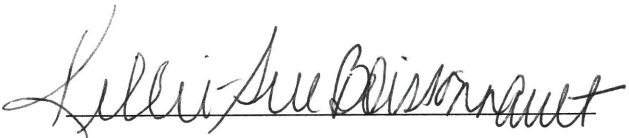
Selectman Williams inquired about CivicLive. TA Scott Butcher was still waiting on Attorney Little. TA Scott Butcher is going to review the contract himself and get moving.

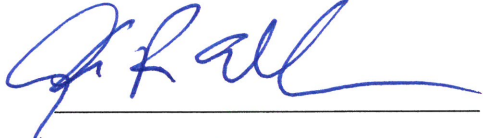
A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 P.M by Selectman Williams, seconded by Selectwoman Boissonnault, followed by a unanimous vote with all in favor.

Respectfully submitted;

  
Caitlin Martin,  
Recording Secretary

  
William F. Condra, Chairman

  
Kellie-Sue Boissonnault

  
Kermit R. Williams

11-20-17  
Date Signed