

Approved: 9/9/19

**TOWN OF WINCHENDON  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN MINUTES  
MONDAY, AUGUST 19, 2019 6:30 P.M.  
Town Hall, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Auditorium  
109 Front Street, Winchendon, Mass.**

Present:

Audrey LaBrie, Chair  
Barbara Anderson, Vice-Chair  
Michael Barbaro  
Amy Salter  
Rick Ward

Keith R. Hickey, Town Manager  
Linda Daigle, Executive Assistant  
Lindsay Kuchta, Recording Secretary

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List of Documents Presented at Meeting:

- Winchendon 2019 Fall Festival Flier (filed)
- CodeRed Text to Enroll Information (filed)
- All Alcoholic on Premises Liquor License Amendment Application- Toy Town Pub, Inc. (filed)
- Letter of Interest of Appointment to Recreation Commission- Lindsay Kuchta (filed)
  - Note of Recommendation from Chair Laura Gaydos
- Kenneth MacNeil Application for Appointment of Constable (filed)
- All Alcoholic Beverages Club License Application for Reconsideration-Snowbound Club, Inc. (filed)
- Building Inspector List of Department Activities June 28, 2018 through August 7, 2019 (attached)
- Application for Abatement of Water and/or Sewer Charges-392A Maple Street (filed)
- Application for Abatement of Water and/or Sewer Charges-126 Central Street (filed)
- Town of Winchendon Financial Policy-Purchasing/Procurement (attached)
  - Proposed Town of Winchendon Purchasing Policy (attached)
- Report of the Town Manager (attached)
- Minutes approved:
  - Monday, July 29, 2019 Regular Meeting

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*LaBrie called the meeting to order at 6:30 P.M. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.*

LaBrie announced for the public's knowledge that due to the heat and lack of air conditioning downstairs, the meeting was moved from the 2<sup>nd</sup> to the 4<sup>th</sup> floor in the Robinson-Broadhurst Conference Room.

No one announced they were audio recording the meeting this evening.

**1. SELECTMEN'S COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

- 1.1. Fall Festival Oct. 12, 2019- Barbaro noted the Town's Annual Fall Fest will be held on October 12<sup>th</sup> and will run from 10:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M. Any vendors interested in participating should reach out to Nicole at 978-297-3537; we are still looking for 9 volunteers for the bouncy houses, each time block is an hour. If you are interested in volunteering in the pumpkin painting booth please contact Lindsay Kuchta at 978-297-0085 extension 5 to coordinate the volunteer schedule.

- 1.2. CodeRed Text to Enroll- Anderson stated the CodeRED service the Town uses to alert the public with safety alerts now offers a text to enroll setup option. It is quick and easy to register from a smartphone; text the key word “Winchendon” to 99411 to receive a direct link to setup. Information will be posted on the Town’s website and the local access channel 8.
- 1.3. Winchendon Cultural Council Survey- Ward noted the Cultural Council is collecting information on what the community finds a priority for the next several years as a town. The only way to have a say in what the Cultural Council does is by doing the survey.

Additionally, Ward made the public aware of “Art in the Park” to be held on August 24<sup>th</sup> from 1:30 P.M. to 3:30 P.M. at the Winchendon Community Park by the house. Children up to the age of 10 are welcome, and any child 5 years old or younger must be accompanied by an adult.

LaBrie reminded all that August is coming to an end, and the school year starts for Winchendon one week from this Wednesday. She asked that everyone be aware of students waiting for their bus or walking to school.

2. **PUBLIC COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:** There were no public comments this evening.

3. **PUBLIC HEARINGS:**

3.1 All Alcoholic on Premises Liquor License Amendment – Toy Town Pub, Inc., 28 Railroad St.-

*Barbaro moved the Board open the Public Hearing for Toy Town Pub, Inc., seconded by Anderson.*

Barbaro read the Public Hearing Notice.

Labrie asked for further discussion, none was heard.

*By a vote of all aye the Public Hearing opened.*

John Thayer, the outgoing president of the Toy Town Pub and Lauren Belanger, the new manager came forward and introduced themselves.

LaBrie asked if Ms. Belanger was the sole stock holder and manager, to which Ms. Belanger replied yes.

Barbaro asked Ms. Belanger to tell the Board about herself and why she decided to take over the pub. Ms. Belanger replied she moved to the area about five years ago and as a hair dresser, it didn’t work out. She began to go out and try to meet new people at places like the Toy Town Pub; the community is so friendly and everyone she has met has been nice. Her father is also recently retired and moving up to the area to tag team in the business as it is a dream of theirs.

Barbaro wished Ms. Belanger well.

*Anderson moved to close the Public Hearing for Toy Town Pub, Inc., seconded by Barbaro. With a vote of all aye the Public Hearing closed at 6:37 P.M.*

*Barbaro moved to approve the All Alcoholic on Premises Liquor License Amendment for Toy Town Pub, Inc., seconded by Anderson.*



Anderson wished Ms. Belanger best of luck.

*By a vote of all aye the motion carried.*

#### **4. APPOINTMENTS/RESIGNATIONS:**

- 4.1. Recreation Commission Appointment - Lindsay Kuchta- Lindsay Kuchta came forward. LaBrie welcomed her back to town and asked her why she was interested in serving on the Recreation Commission to which Ms. Kuchta replied she is a crafty person and would like to bring more child friendly activities to town. Ward asked what sort of new ideas Ms. Kuchta was looking to bring to the Commission to which she replied more community involved activities such as a Scarecrow contest. The Board thanked her for stepping forward.

*Barbaro moved to appoint Lindsay Kuchta to the Recreation Commission for the remainder of the vacant term expiring on June 30, 2020, seconded by Anderson with a vote of all aye.*

- 4.2. Constable Appointment – Kenneth MacNeil- Kenneth MacNeil came forward on behalf of his application to become a Constable. LaBrie asked what a Constable does to which Daigle replied they do Civil Process. Mr. MacNeil added he handles domestic situations such as child support or non-payments on land. LaBrie then noted the Police Chief has approved the application, and is in favor of Mr. MacNeil's appointment; she then asked if the Board had any questions.

Anderson asked Mr. MacNeil if he had a background in law enforcement to which he replied yes.

*Barbaro moved to appoint Kenneth MacNeil as a Constable for a term expiring June 30, 2022, seconded by Anderson with a vote of all aye.*

#### **5. PERMIT/LICENSE APPLICATIONS:**

- 5.1 All Alcoholic Beverages Club License Application for Reconsideration - Snowbound Club, Inc.- LaBrie asked if anyone was present for the application reconsideration to which Daigle replied she did not ask the applicant to be present as there were just a few extra documents the ABCC had requested from the Club Members or Officers; one being the updated Articles of Organization and the other CORI forms for the officers and directors. Typically these CORI documents are not required for clubs with no ownership, but with about fifteen members, it will take a little time to collect. She is asking the Board give her permission to forward the application to the ABCC as soon as the documents are submitted; she does not want to hold up the license as the Board doesn't meet for another three weeks.

*Anderson moved to approve the additional documents as discussed this evening be forwarded to the ABCC for their "Reconsideration" for the Snowbound Club, Inc.'s All Alcoholic Beverages Club License Amendments Application, seconded by Barbaro, all aye.*

*Anderson moved to authorize the Executive Assistant to forward these documents to the ABCC, seconded by Barbaro, with a vote of all aye.*

#### **6. BOARDS/COMMISSIONS/COMMITTEES/DEPARTMENT**

- 6.1. Update from Building Commissioner/Zoning Enforcement Officer Geoff Newton- Geoff Newton came forward and noted he is in his third year with the Town of Winchendon. It has been a busy three years; there have been several issues with farm animals, he has caught up and maintained the residential inspections that were not being done previously, as well as ironing out court cases of various sorts. Mr. Newton provided a list of activities for this year for the Board broken down by Inspections, Court Cases, Educational Matters, and other miscellaneous things needed.

Additionally, Newton noted his job has been made easier with the help of Town Manager Keith Hickey, DPW Director Al Gallant, and Fire Chief Tom Smith. In time, he would like to see the miserable dilapidated buildings in town demolished and cleaned up to alleviate the safety issues they cause. He is hopeful to see two of the buildings down before winter.

Mr. Newton also touched upon the issues with the tower at Old Murdock Senior Center; it is not dangerous now, but in time it will need to be pin pointed to save the building as it is a nice relic.

Hickey noted he and Mr. Newton received a quote from a historic preservation company to do some repairs or at least refasten some of the loose bricks on the tower. He would like to spend some time with Mr. Newton to ensure the proposed work is reasonable. Additionally, Hickey stated he believes there is an escrow account with available funds. He has reached out to the Senior Center Director Sheila Bettro to ensure she is okay with spending those funds.

LaBrie mentioned there may be grants available for the preservation of the building to which Hickey replied Planning Director Tracy Murphy has reached out to Massachusetts Historic Society in search of emergency grant funds. Candidly, Hickey noted he would rather spend grant funds on a more permanent fix rather than a temporary fix.

Barbaro stated since the Board last talked with Mr. Newton, he has done outstanding work such as going through multiple units for inspections, ensuring customers don't leave the office confused, and personally greeting customers. Barbaro noted Mr. Newton's work is respected and thanked him for all he does; he looks forward to many more years of Mr. Newton working with the Town.

Ward noted he is impressed with the list of what is being done and stated there must be no down time.

Anderson spoke of the dilapidated buildings on Lincoln Ave Extension, and stated as she drives around town she notices a lot of vacant buildings that could be addressed. Mr. Newton noted the buildings Anderson speaks of likely contain asbestos and lead which is a financial item with current regulations. The concern with demolishing these buildings is what contaminants might be put into the air. It is easier to obtain a property shortly after it is abandoned as opposed to buildings that have been sitting vacant for at least twenty years. The treasurer is working hard to get these properties to tax title; the court process takes about three years, it is not a quick moving process.

After further discussion, the Board thanked Mr. Newton for his time.

***Barbaro moved to take 8.1 Application for Abatement of Water and/or Sewer Charges out of order, seconded by Anderson with a vote of all aye.***

- 8.1 Application for Abatement of Water and/or Sewer Charges – 126 Central Street.- Hickey started off by clarifying the Tax Collector informed him the Water and Sewer Commission is able to abate any amount they deem appropriate.

Jillian Sackett came forward on behalf of the application for abatement of water and/or sewer charges for the Universalist Church. Ms. Sackett noted at the beginning of the abatement process, she was notified there was no need to worry about interest and penalty charges. Additionally, Ms. Sackett took the time between meetings to see how other abatements were handled and noted an abatement in the amount of \$16,000 that was given in May of 2019.



Anderson noted the abatement was granted for that individual as the water never went down the drain; it is a different animal and is unfair to put this on the back of other water users. She continued she is more comfortable putting the Church on a payment plan, and waiving all of the interest and fees on that bill as they are necessary to the community as a church.

After further discussion, a motion was made.

*Anderson moved to waive any past, present, and future interest and fees that might occur for water and sewer for the property located at 126 Central Street for this current bill, seconded by Ward, Barbaro opposed, all others aye. By a vote of 4 to 1 the motion carried.*

## 7. NEW BUSINESS:

7.1. Application for Abatement of Water and/or Sewer Charges – 392A Maple Street- Heidi Tatro and Janet Brooks came forward on behalf of their application for the water charges at 392A Maple Street. LaBrie started off by offering her condolences to the applicants as they just lost their husband and father. Ms. Tatro spoke for her mother, stating the house was empty for some time and only checked on briefly as the late Russel Brooks was in the hospital. While the family was away, the water tank went and caused a substantial leak. The water bill typically comes to \$60 a quarter, but this bill came in at \$1,337.53.

Ward recognized the Tax Collector would support a payment plan of \$135.00 a month over a year, and asked Ms. Tatro and Mrs. Brooks if they are agreeable to that or if it is something they can handle. Ms. Tatro replied they would appreciate a payment plan, but there are many things that haven't been determined since the passing of her father.

After further discussion, Hickey noted there may be other resources available in the community to help with the outstanding balance on their water bill; he cannot promise he will find anything but he will do all he can to provide assistance. If the Board is not going to approve or deny the abatement application, he asked that they give him time to work out other possible options.

Ms. Tatro thanked everyone and said they would wait to hear from Mr. Hickey.

*Barbaro moved for a five minute recess, seconded by Anderson. With a vote of all aye all aye the Board entered recess at 7:25 P.M.*

*The Board reconvened at 7:32 P.M.*

7.2. Proposed Amendment to Town of Winchendon's Purchasing Policy- Hickey started off by noting the current and the proposed Purchasing Policy is in their packets. Within the policy is a requirement to request purchase orders for any purchase at or above the amount of \$350 per Mass General Law. He is primarily looking to modify the amount required to get a purchase order to \$1,000. Hickey also felt the Purchasing Policy was missing some information and went through policies from other communities until he found one that would suit the Town, and arranged the language to make it Winchendon friendly. Hickey noted he would be happy to answer any questions the Board may have.

The Board expressed their concern with raising the limit to \$1,000 as they felt it was a little high, but agreed to meet in the middle at \$500.

*Anderson moved to approve the amended Purchasing Policy presented to the Board this evening as amended to \$500 this evening, seconded by Barbaro with a vote of all ayes.*

8. **OLD BUSINESS:** There was no Old Business this evening.

9. **TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT:**

9.1 Financial Updates; Personnel Updates; Project Updates; Miscellaneous Updates-

1. Financial Updates-

- a. Eric Kinsherf was assisting Town Accountant Joanne Goguen with preparing for the year end close on August 13<sup>th</sup>. Eric will be back during the week of August 26<sup>th</sup> to assist in closing the year.

Hickey added there shouldn't be any surprises and he expects to have the Free Cash number firmed up a bit in the next few weeks.

- b. I would like to bring a proposed timeline for a fall Town Meeting for the Board's consideration at the September 9<sup>th</sup> meeting. Some of the articles I anticipate requesting are transferring ownership of the Poland and Streeter Schools to the Redevelopment Authority, funding the Town's portion of the Robbins Road culvert replacement.

Hickey then noted the topic was brought up at Town Meeting but defeated as there wasn't enough information regarding the project. The Veteran's group who is looking to invest in the property would like to make a presentation to the Board to show some of the schematics as to how they would like it to look once its redeveloped; it will answer a lot of questions and address concerns as to how the property would be used for the future.

2. Personnel Updates-

- a. Callie Knower was hired as the new Assistant Town Accountant. Callie will begin work on Monday, August 26<sup>th</sup>.

Hickey noted a few people were interviewed for the position and Ms. Knower was the best candidate.

3. Project Updates-

- a. The police sally port project remains on time and within budget.
- b. All of the street paving for 2019 has been completed with the exception of Front Street. Front Street from Tannery Hill heading west (away from the Town Offices) to the end of Front Street will be paved in the near future.
- c. The Grove Street and Lincoln Avenue sidewalk replacement project is underway. The sidewalk work will be completed before the beginning of school.

The Robinson-Broadhurst Foundation granted the Town \$100,000 to fix the sidewalks, but with the sidewalks being in such bad shape we were only able to do one side of the street.



- d. The Winchendon Community Park Committee has advertised, interviewed and chosen an Owner Project Manager (OPM) to assist in the planning and future improvements to the park. The committee will work with the OPM to develop a proposed site plan for presentation to Robinson Broadhurst and the Board of Selectmen.

Additionally, Hickey noted the Committee intends to meet again this week to discuss final thoughts about the project and will try to sign the contract shortly. A presentation will be made to the Robinson-Broadhurst Foundation as they are funding the project to ensure they support it and the OPM will work with the architect to provide schematics of what the committee desires and recommends; plans will then be presented to the Board for their consideration and comments. The project will go out to bid and construction will start next spring.

4. **Miscellaneous Updates** –The next Tri-Board meeting is scheduled to be hosted by the School Department. A tentative date of Thursday, September 19<sup>th</sup> has been proposed.

10. **MINUTES:**

- 10.1 Monday, July 29, 2019 Regular Meeting- Anderson mentioned a correction she would like made on the minutes on page five.

*Anderson moved to approve the minutes from Monday July 29, 2019 as amended, seconded by Salter. With a vote of Salter, Anderson, Ward and LaBrie aye, Barbaro abstained. The motion carried by majority vote.*

11. **COMMUNICATIONS:** LaBrie noted the next meeting is scheduled to be held on September 9<sup>th</sup>.

Hickey added the Grout Park Rededication is scheduled for October 12<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 A.M. so people have the opportunity to come see the park and can recognize the Grout family for all of their service to our community and country.

12. **AGENDA ITEMS:**

13. **EXECUTIVE SESSION:** *Anderson moved to enter into Executive Session under Exemption #2 to conduct strategy session in preparation for negotiations with non-union personnel and to reconvene into Open Session for the sole purpose of adjournment; seconded by Ward. By a roll call vote of Salter, Barbaro, Anderson, Ward and LaBrie aye, the Board entered Executive Session at 7:51 p.m.*

14. **ADJOURNMENT:**

Respectfully Submitted,



Lindsay Kuchta  
Recording Secretary

