

TOWN OF DANBURY - Board of Selectmen

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, February 19, 2020 6:00 pm

Members Present: Jessica Hatch, Chair
Lyn England
James Phelps

Administrative Assistant Karen Padgett

6pm Jeff McIver – Consolidated Communications

Presentation of public private benefit findings in accordance with RSA 33:3 – see minutes attached

7pm Doug Colby

Checks/Applications/Signatures

- Payroll and accounts payable were signed . January bank reconciliations were signed.
- Jim motion to accept the minutes of 2/5 as written. Motion seconded by Jessica and passed 3-0.
- Lyn motioned to approve the following timber tax bills:
412-077 for Roche in the amount of \$1582.14
201-069 for Cook in the amount of \$94.53
Motion was seconded by Jim and passed 3-0.
- Jim motioned to approve a veteran’s credit application for the owner of 415-043. Motion was seconded by Jessica and passed 3-0.
- Jim motioned to approve the renewal of a License to Sell Pistols and Revolvers for Stephen Polizzi of White Mountain Armaments. The FFL license is current. Motion was seconded by Jessica and passed 3-0.
- Jim motioned to sign the 2020 data collection contract with the Town of Danbury assessing firm of Commerford Nieder Perkins. Motion seconded by Lyn and passed unanimously.

Doug Colby:

Mr. Colby came in to ask that the Board of Selectmen approve a revision to his building permit issued last April so that he can enclosed the porch on the side of the building. He feels that this does not change the footprint of the building and a building permit could be issued without site plan review. Jessica said that he had not been to the Planning Board for site plan review. He said that he will but enclosing the porch does not apply to that. Jim and Jessica advised him to go to the Planning Board to discuss with them the need for site plan review.

Deborah Aylward:

Ms. Aylward came to the Board meeting to see if the Selectmen are aware of new legislation that was passed last year about maintenance of private roads. According to her, the RSA made it a requirement for residential properties on private roads to have an enforceable agreement for maintenance. The agreement must have a default remedy to resolve disputes. She is thinking of putting together a workshop with an attorney who is knowledgeable about helping residents on private roads draft a maintenance agreement and wondered if the town is interested in helping to promote it. Jim stated that it may be something that is of more interest to the Planning Board. There are about 5 private roads in town.

Chief Martin, Danbury Fire Department

Chief Martin asked when the siding might be completed on the station. Jim responded, probably when the weather gets warmer. He remains concerned about the rafter structure in the middle bay that seems to have dry rot. He has workers lined up to do insulation and sheet rock, but they are on hold until the rafters are shored up. Jim will have someone look at it to see what needs to be done.

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The Fire Department has purchased an iPad with their own funds to use on site for EMS reports on scene. A data plan is needed, and this has not been planned for in their budget. The unlimited data plan is 39.99/month. The data plan will be taken out of computer support.

Old Business:

- New property owners of 416-086, Suzanne and Kenneth Marvin sent the Board a letter to unmerge their two lots on Davis Rd. These lots were merged by the town when the tax mapping project was done in the 1990's. The lots are separate on the deed. Per RSA 674:39-aa II. *Lots or parcels that were involuntarily merged prior to September 18, 2010 by a city, town, county, village district, or any other municipality, shall at the request of the owner, be restored to their premerger status and all zoning and tax maps shall be updated to identify the premerger boundaries of said lots or parcels as recorded at the appropriate registry of deeds, provided:*
(a) The request is submitted to the governing body prior to December 31, 2021.
Jim motioned to accept the request to restore the lots to their pre-merger status after April 1. Motion was seconded by Jessica and passed unanimously.
- The issue with New Canada Rd turnaround was discussed. Dan Hudnut, representing the property owners, was under the impression that our town attorney would be presenting a counter proposal for a balanced perpetual easement. He needs to know if the town will be working with the property owners or if they are on their own. Jim suggested doing a clean up now and a second one in two years, in return for a perpetual easement. Jessica and Lyn suggested throwing it back to town counsel to see what he advises. Lyn also suggested if a clean up is done to have it contracted out rather than having the highway crew do it.
- Jim motioned to award the contract for the trim on the fire station to LaVorgna Construction as proposed (cut and replace rotted trim boards and to wrap trim in white metal for \$9500). Motion seconded by Jessica and passed 3-0.
- Jim motioned to award the contract for the DCC steeple painting and repair to John MacPherson, JMAC Professional Painting Company, LLC. Motion seconded by Jessica and passed 3-0.

Selectmen Items

- Jim stated that Jim Buckwell, of the South Danbury Church, had approached Selectmen Phelps to ask if the Town of Danbury would be willing to be the recipient of the church building and land in the event the church no longer operated as such. This is a necessary step in the finalization of a grant for the church.
Jim Phelps made a motion to respond to the South Danbury Church that the Town of Danbury is willing to be the recipient of the property if the building is no longer used as a church. Motion was seconded by Jessica Hatch. The motion passed unanimously.
- The DCC would like to receive their annual appropriation in quarterly payments. None of the Board members had an issue with this. Karen will contact Kendra Braley, Director of DCC, and let her know that it will be paid quarterly on receipt for a request for payment.
- Jessica said that there is an issue in the Highway Garage breakroom with mold on the concrete walls. Lyn suggested having them get a small humidifier.

FYI/REVIEW

- Ballots
- Legislative bulletin
- Aylward letter

At 8:25 Jim motioned to adjourn, seconded by Lyn. Motion passed and meeting adjourned.

The next meeting of the Board of Selectmen will be on March 5, 2020 at 6:00pm.

Respectfully submitted, Karen Padgett, Administrative Assistant.

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BROADBAND 2/19/2020

At 6pm Jessica Hatch opened the Selectmen's meeting. During this meeting information regarding the public private benefit findings for the purpose of obtaining a bond will be presented. Also, those present had the opportunity to ask questions of the representatives of Consolidated Communications.

All Board members were present, along with the following members of the Broadband Committee:

Kris Martin, Nikki Quartulli, Linda Wilson

Approximately 10 members of the public were present.

Jim Phelps asked Jeff McIver and Mike Cannon of Consolidated Communications to tell those present what they are proposing for town wide broadband and how it works.

Mr. McIver stated it is a similar model to that of the Town of Chesterfield. The proposal is for every person in town to have the opportunity to have up to 1GB symmetrical broadband speed of fiber optic cable. Every mile of the town will have fiber optic.

If the town is in favor of Consolidated moving forward with the proposal, the town would secure the bond. The bond would cover all the areas of the town that do not meet the minimum federal standard of 25down/3up. It would cover from the network source to the poles. Consolidated will pick up the cost of running the fiber optic to the homes.

Areas underserved will be covered by the bond. Consolidated will cover the rest of the town.

The bond amount is 1.2 million dollars and it is a 20-year taxable bond. The bond will be paid for by a build recovery fee of up to \$15 added to the bill of users. If you do not sign up for the fiber network, you will not pay for the bond. There will be no money for the bond raised through taxation. The bond cannot be paid off early. Consolidated makes the bond payment. They anticipate that for the first 3-4 years the fees will not cover the bond payment and they are prepared to eat that cost.

Once the network is built, it belongs to the town. Consolidated is responsible for the maintenance. Any operating costs, upgrades are covered by Consolidated. When the 20 years is up, the town has three options: operate the network on their own, put out another RFP to see if another provider would like to operate the network, or renew the contract with Consolidated to operate the network.

If you have conduit in place at your property, the fiber will be run at no cost to you. If you need the fiber buried, that would be at your cost.

Jim asked why the town has to get the bond, not Consolidated. Linda Wilson explained that private companies such as Consolidated Communications cannot bond for infrastructure. Last year the state passed legislation that enabled towns to enter into public private partnerships in order to bond for broadband infrastructure.

Pricing of different bundles were discussed. The prices are competitive, and specials are offered. Phone, internet and streaming options are available.

Jim asked if the price would change if it had to be put off until next year to vote on the bond. Mike stated that the price of fiber is pretty stable and they would not anticipate the price increasing.

Jessica Hatch moved to accept the Consolidated Communications whole Town proposal upgrade and bonding of \$1.2 million dollars for the purpose of providing availability of fiber optic broadband for the entire town. The motion was seconded by Lyn England and passed 3-0 by roll call vote.

Jessica Hatch moved that the Board of Selectmen accept the values within the public benefit of Broadband Improvements to Danbury with the date of February 19, 2020. The motion was seconded by James Phelps and passed 3-0.

It was noted that the values were researched from the web in a good faith effort. It does not include the economic development factors.

Public Benefit of Broadband Improvements to Danbury

February 19, 2020

From data available at the City-Data website (link below), in 2017, the Median price of all housing units in Danbury was **\$171,966**.

<http://www.city-data.com/city/Danbury-New-Hampshire.html>

A recent study commissioned by the Fiber to the Home Council Americas (FTTH) and conducted by researchers from the University of Colorado at Boulder and Carnegie Mellon University found broadband Internet connections have a positive impact on home values. Specifically, fiber optic broadband that produces download speeds of 1 gigabyte per second can add about a 3.1 percent increase to a home's value.

The home value improvement breaks down to a **1.3 percent improvement simply for offering access to fiber broadband**.

Using this median assessment and the effect on prices for simply offering access to fiber broadband, one can calculate the effect on total property values in Town as shown.

Approx # of households	median home value	%effect on prices	Total property value change
725	\$171,966	1.3%	\$1,620,780

Therefore, if the Town takes out a bond of \$1.2M to offer fiber optic access to the entire town then the benefit to the Town would be an increase in total assessment value of approximately \$1.6M. This does not factor in the higher increase in value that 1GB of download speeds would add to a home's value. This increase in total assessment would create additional tax revenue of approximately \$38,000. Hence there is a net benefit to the Town, even if one ignores other Economic Development factors. Also, in addition, the bond will be repaid by subscriber fees, not a property tax increase.

Note: A best effort has been made to use realistic and representative numbers for this estimate. The fact that the benefit to the Town is 16% greater than the Town investment indicates that even if there are some small errors in the numbers used in the calculation, that there is margin in making this conclusion.

Other public benefits include:

- Expanding economic opportunities, such as the ability to telecommute, attracting new home-based business, and increasing the market reach of existing home-based business.
- Direct access to education and health care for rural residents who are otherwise forced to travel long distances for college courses and medical treatment.