

**Minutes of the Waterboro Board of Selectmen
at Waterboro Town Hall
February 20, 2018
6:00 p.m. - Special Meeting**

PRESENT: Selectmen Dennis Abbott, Tim Neill, Gordon Littlefield, Ted Doyle and Dwayne Woodsome. Also in attendance were Gary Lamb, Christine Torno, Sharon Abbott, Jack Seery, Brigit McCallum and Leo Binette.

1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairman Abbott opened the meeting at 5:59 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. PUBLIC COMMENTS

3. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Discuss/vote on Special Election Municipal Warrant for the purchase of property from John L. Malone.

Dwayne Woodsome made a motion to approve the Special Election Municipal Warrant for the purchase of property from John L. Malone and set for a special election for March 27, 2018 from 11:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Ted Doyle seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

Gary Lamb read the following regarding the purchase of the property:

- For several years the Waterboro Board of Selectmen has been interested in acquiring a 37 acre parcel owned by John Malone. It is behind and uphill of JD's Package Store on Route 5 and is identified as Tax Map 8/ Lot 44-2-1. A couple years ago Selectman and staff investigated the property for a potential business park, but the high price of nearly \$400K prevented any real negotiations.
- Fast forward to July 2017, when a fast moving fire destroyed three popular South Waterboro businesses. On that day, our Fire Department drained much of the 280,000 gallon Water District storage tank in less than 2 hours. For the rest of the day firefighters had to rely on tanker shuttles and an enormous mutual aid response from our neighbor towns to put an estimated 600,000 gallons on that fire. From this incident, many citizens learned that we not only have insufficient fire suppression water storage, but we also have only one water storage tank that has not been drained, scraped and painted for 25 years. Such maintenance should occur at least every 10 years. However, the Water District has understandably been reluctant to do this because we would then have zero fire suppression water and low residential pressure for several weeks during this maintenance work.

- Beginning in 2015, the Water District embarked on an engineered strategic plan with goals for a much needed new well source and storage tank. Each of these could cost the District over one million dollars. The Water District realized costs for a new storage tank could be reduced if the tank could be constructed on Town owned land. Consequently, discussions with Selectmen started in 2014 and in 2017 a concept easement was approved for a new water tank site uphill and to the southwest of our transfer station on Bennett Hill Road. This initial location on town land abuts the Malone property which has higher ground and is an even better tank location.
- Since this easement discussion with Selectmen, John Malone reduced the price for his land to \$275,000 and made the offer known publicly at a January 2018 Board of Selectmen meeting. Selectmen then conducted a short executive session, and then in public session the same evening voted 5-0 to direct the Town Administrator to pursue the acquisition with Mr. Malone for \$275,000. A purchase and sales agreement was then signed by both Mr. Malone and Waterboro Selectmen in early February.
- Since Waterboro has a healthy fund balance, Selectmen decided to ask voters to approve this transaction using cash from our unassigned fund balance (presently at over \$2,000,000 of uncommitted funds in addition to our \$1.1 million emergency fund). Doing so means there will be no future principal and interest payments and no increase to our property tax rate from this purchase. We will also be working with the Water District to see what they will pay the town for an acquisition or easement for the tank location, access road work costs, etc.
- By charter we must have a special election as we want to promptly close on this property before our usual June election timetable. Selectmen chose March 27, 2018 as the date for this special election which will be held in Town Hall at 24 Townhouse Road. If approved by voters, the property's closing will occur before April 15th.
- Waterboro Selectmen feel strongly that this acquisition is a wise move and provides the necessary assistance our Water District needs to provide adequate fire suppression and drinking water to our growing Town. It will also result in 25-50% cost savings in pipe installation when compared to trenching the pipe 1000 feet through the woods to the transfer station and then about 2000 feet down the edge of Bennett Hill Road to Route 5/202. In addition, some or all of this purchase price can be recouped over time with potential land sales or leases to future commercial interests. As we all know, this area around the intersection of Routes 202 and 5 has seen tremendous commercial growth in recent years. That growth will continue as Waterboro's population will exceed 10,000 residents in the next decade or two. It is smart and less expensive to prepare for such growth now rather than wait for a crisis situation of too little water availability for future businesses who want to locate here. As usual, we encourage absentee voting for all elections. Absentee ballots will be available

starting February 21 in Town Hall and the special election will be held March 27, 2018 at Town Hall, 24 Townhouse Road from 11am to 7pm.

Leo Binette expressed his support for this purchase as it would be a great asset to the Town.

4. ITEMS NEEDING SIGNATURE

- a. Special Election Municipal Warrant

5. ADJOURN

Tim Neill made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:15 p.m. Ted Doyle seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

These minutes were approved by the Waterboro Board of Selectmen on February 27, 2018.

_____/s/
Dennis Abbott

_____/s/
Dwayne Woodsome

_____/s/
Gordon Littlefield

_____/s/
Tim Neill

_____/s/
Ted Doyle