

Gilsum Selectboard Meeting

Monday, February 22, 2021
6:00 p.m.

Tim May, Mark Farkas, Sally Struble

Present: Tim May, Mark Farkas, Sally Struble

Minutes taken by: Sally B. Struble

Call to order at 6:00 p.m. Mr. May moved to open the meeting; seconded by Mr. Farkas; all in favor.

2/21/21 Selectboard meeting minutes: Mr. May moved to accept the minutes; seconded by Mr. Farkas; all in favor.

Emergency Operations Plan

Through Southwest Region Planning Commission
EOP is either expired or about to expire. See 2/21/21 letter from SWRPC.

Selectboard Rules of Procedure

The Selectboard discussed the Rules of Procedure adopted on June 15, 2020, and whether to re-adopt them, and post a copy at the Town Offices and hand out to people who regularly come to the BOS meetings.

Mr. May moved to re-adopt the June 15, 2020 Rules of Procedure and add the agenda structure adopted on December 21, 2020. Seconded by Ms. Struble; all in favor.

Discussion for Planning Board's Request for Tax Cards, which is on 3/1/21 Agenda

Bob Willard asked to be heard; approved by Mr. May. Mr. Willard asked why his property on Spring Street was taken out of Highway use and put into Rural Residential on his tax card. He said he had access to Route 10, until the State of New Hampshire put up a fence (or guard rail?).

Mr. Willard said he feels one person runs this town, and the Selectboard doesn't have "any balls" to stand up to them.

Mr. May stated that he spoke to an Avitar representative today, who said if Mr. Willard can prove he has access to Route 10, he can have Highway use designation. Mr. May said he'll call Avitar back tomorrow and discuss it further with them.

Bart Cushing asked to speak; approved by Mr. May. Mr. Cushing summarized the tax card changes on Spring Street that have caused concern for the Planning Board. Mr. May said the zoning has not been changed; the tax cards have been changed.

Things to do to get ready for next week's discussion:

- Mr. May will call Avitar tomorrow and discuss it with them.
- Ms. Struble will find out from the NH Municipal Association what the authority is of a Planning Board to do such an investigation. Please advise on RSA 647:16 And 674:1.

Mr. May asked that it be made clear to NHMA that the zoning wasn't changed, according to Avitar, just the tax cards were corrected. No town vote needed for that, according to Mr. May.

Ms. Struble stated that she had questions about what happened and talked about the appearance of impropriety, even if nothing illegal has occurred. It may be worth looking into just to set the record straight and if there was no wrongdoing, great. If there was wrongdoing, then the Selectboard will need to deal with it.

Mr. Farkas agreed that it looks like there is more transparency if the Selectboard looks into it.

Vicki Ayer said it's not about wrongdoing, it's about looking at the facts. Mr. May disagreed and said that there is a group of people who are out to get the Town Clerk. He feels some group other than the Planning Board should be looking into it: an objective third party, because there are so many bad feelings.

Mr. Cushing said the Planning Board has not had any agenda of impropriety and their minutes reflect that. Planning Board Chair, Craig Roach, has been professional about it, and doesn't discuss it outside of their meetings.

Question for Avitar: How do they decide what constituted Highway Use and what constitutes Rural Residential?

Betsy Cushing asked on what date the Selectboard authorized Avitar to go out and look at the Spring Street properties. Mr. May said they didn't need to go out. They realized there were mistakes and corrections needed to be made. Mr. May said Avitar was notified by the town that there were a couple of tax cards that were mis-labeled. They researched it and came back to say that there were 22 properties that needed to be changed. Mr. May said he thinks that when Avitar makes a change, the town office should notify property owners of any changes made.

Vicki Ayer's 91-A request for a written legal opinion given to the Selectboard

Mr. May thought town counsel was going to write a formal letter to Ms. Ayer regarding her request. Written legal opinions are not subject to 91-A, because they are covered by the

attorney-client privilege. Ms. Ayer disagreed. Ms. Struble will check with town counsel regarding whether he will be responding in writing to Ms. Ayer's request.

Videotaping Selectboard Meetings/Cheshire TV

Ms. Struble brought up fact that she feels the Selectboard meetings should be officially videoed and then posted on the town website and potentially on Cheshire TV. She stated that she had a conversation with David Kirkpatrick, the Executive Director of Cheshire TV, about how to get set up to do this. Mr. Kirkpatrick said he could give the Selectboard a quote for helping the Selectboard to get set up doing this. The Selectboard authorized Ms. Struble to get a quote from him.

Bait Shop

On Feb. 1, 2021, Steve Cantera said the Bait Shop on Spring Street is now selling snowmobile stickers and fishing licenses too and he will be looking for the Selectboard to issue a cease and desist order. Mr. May thinks the Selectboard should check with the NHMA about it, with the timeline from start to finish, to get advice on what the Selectboard should do, if anything.

Mr. May will do the timeline by the Selectboard's March 1, 2021 meeting. Ms. Struble will then contact the NHMA for advice. Mr. May said he will have to recuse himself from any decision making, since he was at the Planning Board meeting when the issue came up. He feels how the sign application process went might have some bearing on the situation.

Ms. Ayer asked if the Selectboard was going to get people onto the Zoning Board of Adjustment to deal with this situation. Mr. May said the last he knew, Heather Hurd (Bait Shop owner) wasn't interested in going to the Zoning Board. Mr. May stated that someone needs to determine who is currently on the Zoning Board.

Highway Department

Harlan Maguire stated that the Ford (5,000 miles on it) is stuck in park. They worked on it today and got it working temporarily. Mr. Maguire will talk to Claremont Ford about it.

Mr. Maguire stated that there is some pressure treated wood in the burn pile. Mr. May will contact MDS to make sure pressure treated materials don't go in with the burnable material.

Other Business

Betsy Cushing asked if the Selectboard could post on the town website openings for employment or positions on town board and committees. Mr. May thought that was a good idea. Mr. Cushing thought announcing openings on boards and committees at town meetings, with sign up sheets was a good idea.

Ms. Cushing wanted to know if the town got a refund of premium on the health insurance in 2020. Where would the refund show up? What happens to that refund? Mr. May said yes, and it goes back into fund balance retention. Ms. Struble will find out how much the town got back in 2020.

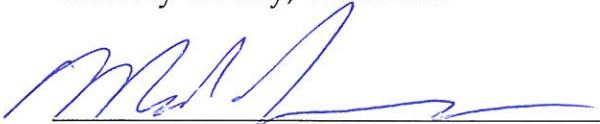
Adjourn

Mr. May moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:44 p.m.; seconded by Mr. Farkas; all in favor.



Timothy C. May, Chairman

These minutes accepted on: 3/1/2021
corrections noted herein.



Mark A. Farkas, Selectman



Sally B. Struble, Selectman