**TOWN OF LIVERMORE**

**Board of Selectpersons**

**MEETING MINUTES**

**November 23, 2020**

**6:30 PM**

**BOARD:** SCOTT RICHMOND, TRACEY MARTIN (via Zoom),MARK CHRETIEN, BRETT DEYLING, BEN GUILD (via phone)

**DEPT HEADS/EMPLOYEES:** AARON MILLER, RENDA GUILD, MARY CASTONGUAY

**PRESS/PUBLIC:** PAM HARNDEN, ROBERT TWEEDIE, TIM SMITH ROBIN STAPLES, MICHAEL STAPLES, GARY CROUSE (via phone)

1. Call to Order
2. Pledge of Allegience
3. Ron Smith, RHR Smith Auditors VIA Teleconference

At the request of the Administrative Assistant Auditor Ron Smith spoke to board members regarding the pre-audit.

Smith reported the past year’s tax assessors’ certificate was problematic, saying it was a result of “bad math” and not paying attention to details. He expressed concerns with the town’s bank reconciliations, balance sheet accounts, tax liens and payroll liability. He pointed to a notice of levy issued by the Internal Revenue Services for not paying the employers’ taxes on time.

Ron suggested taking a deeper look into the “math behind the numbers” as far as payroll liabilities and compensation being paid.

He said it would take two to three days because three “seems to be a lot more issues this year.”

Mark said that the board must do this. Scott, Tracey and Ben agreed.

Ron said matters of concern include revenue, expense, payroll, taxes and liens. He added that he is hoping that he will be able to give an evaluation on what will need to be done with those areas of concern.

Brett noted that former treasurer Amy Byron resigned today and asked Ron if he will need anything from her. Ron responded saying that he will need access to the town’s financial data and the board’s blessing. Mark told Ron that he has that approval.

1. Treasurer Resignation

Aaron informed the board that Byron submitted her letter of resignation today, which read: “Please consider this letter my notice of resignation. I will drop off my keys and credit card this afternoon.” Aaron noted that Byron dropped off her keys and half of a shredded credit card.

Mark motioned to accept Byron’s resignation, seconded by Scott; 5-0.

Scott motioned to appoint Mary Castonguay to fulfill Byron’s term, seconded by Mark. Tracey asked about salary. Mary has been paid half her deputy treasurer stipend that covers through the end of December. Scott said the town will probably not have a deputy treasurer for the second half. Mary said she will take $20 an hour until the next budget.

Renda said that the town should not go without a deputy treasurer in case something happens to Mary. The board voted 5-0 to appoint Mary as treasurer.

Whereas the treasurer position is elected, Mary has the authority to appoint her deputy treasurer. Mary said that she would like to appoint Aaron as deputy treasurer. The board unanimously agreed to support Mary’s appointment. The board also agreed to pay Aaron the deputy treasurer’s stipend to perform those duties.

1. Approval of Minutes

Voted to approve October 26, 2020 and Oct. 29, 2020 minutes; 5-0.

1. Holidays on closed office days

Aaron reported that the town’s personnel policy says the Town of Livermore shall observe and pay all regular town employees Veteran’s Day in accordance to the holiday schedule observed by the State of Maine. He suggested the board change the policy to reflect such holidays when the town office is closed. Veterans’ Day fell on Wednesday this year, a day when the office is not open.

Brett said that the board discussed this last year and that any day there was an observed holiday and the office is closed, it was not a paid day for the employee. Brett suggested reviewing the minutes from the first or second meeting of the new year and report back. Scott agreed.

1. Therrien Quit Claim Deed

Brett, Scott and Mark signed a Quit Claim Deed to Melanie Therrien, 135 Turkey Lane, Lot 52, Map R-02 after receiving full payment of back taxes, interest and fees.

1. Abatements

Scott motioned to deny a tax abatement application from Yvonne Adams of 16 Center Rd., seconded by Brett; 5-0.

Scott motioned to accept Berry-Timberlake RE Investment LLC’s abatement application, seconded by Mark; 5-0. The assessors approved a tax abatement for $34,313 in valuation ($523.27 tax dollars) for the 2020-2021 tax year due to removal of oil storage tanks.

1. Butterhill Rd. Snowplowing

In response to a proposed turn-around agreement sent to Sherry Estes and Mark Luse, landowners at 380 Buttherhill Rd., the town received a counter proposed “Municipal Snow Blow Agreement” from the landowners.

Estes and Luce proposed allowing access to the owners’ driveway beginning at the end of Butterhill Rd. in exchange for plowing and sanding services of the owners’ entire driveway. The proposal also sought to have the town agree at the end of the winter season meet with the land owners to inspect the driveway and promptly repair any damage caused by the town. Scott said that he will not sign the Estes/Luce proposed snowplow agreement. Brett agreed.

After speaking with a surveyor who drafted a nearby subdivision plan, Scott said that he believes two 4x4 posts installed at that location should be removed as it is his opinion they are located in a town Right of Way. Scott suggested that the town’s attorney look into the matter and draft a letter asking both 4x4 posts be removed.

1. Other

Tim Smith asked about mowing and debris cleanup at cemeteries.

Scott responded that there is nothing in the current contact about fall cleanup, adding that the cemeteries are mowed all summer and mowed before Memorial Day.

Tim said that this year does not look as good as it has in the past and would like a selectman look at the cemeteries. Scott says that he visits once a month to see that the maintenance is completed.

1. Public Comment

Robin Staples said she has been concerned about the recent articles in the paper and asked “How did it get this far? What I heard on the phone from Ron was this has been repeated for three years.” Mark said he has pushed for an appointed Treasurer in the past.

Brett added that if there is a bill missing from the warrant, the board would not necessarily know if it has been paid.

Robin asked what would happen if there is a lot of money owed? Where would it come from? Brett said that town isn’t going after the former treasurer for what the town owes and that would be oversight by the board.

Robin asked how the town’s commitment has been an oversight three years in a row? She questioned what would the board do if there was something done illegally.

“Then she is on the hook,” Brett said. “If there was an illegal act we will determine that.”

Robin said that the town needs better checks and balances. Renda said that since Aaron has come on board he has been implementing more checks and balances.

Brett said he believes having an administrative assistant who is also the treasurer is a bad idea, adding that it appears that these positions should be separate and it will likely be brought up again to appoint the treasurer in the future.

1. Snowblowing

The town received a proposal from Brad Buzzell to snowblow the north sidewalk of the bridge between Livermore and Livermore Falls. He proposed snowblowing the bridge for the sum of $150 for two snowblowings up to 11 inches. Any additional snowblowing will be an extra $100 per snowblowing. Maintenance and fuel for the snowblower will be the town’s responsibility.

In the past the town paid $90 per two snowblowings up to 11 inches. Since this a proposed increased, Mark suggested checking with Livermore Falls as they are supposed to reimburse the town 60-percent of that cost.

1. Animal Control Officer

Aaron reported that the Animal Control Officer Rich Burton is seeking a pay increase to $550 per month, plus yearly training costs, business cards, a bullet proof vest ($1,100-$1,400) and official photo ID. Since he also serves the town of Canton as ACO, he said that he will check with Canton to see if they will fund a portion of the cost of the vest. Burton has served the town for nine years and hasn’t received a raise during that time, he said.

Scott said that we are currently in the middle of the fiscal year and there is no extra money.

“If we had money in the budget we would be willing to give a raise,” he said. “We are sorry but the funds are not available and we will look at budgeting next year.”

1. Adjourn – Brett motioned to adjourn at 9:07 p.m., seconded by Mark; 5-0.