

APPROVED
**Candia's Virtual Selectmen's Public Session Minutes
June 24th, 2024, 6:30 pm**

Note: Individual roll call has been taken after each motion.

6:30 pm Chair Brien Brock opened the Public Session Meeting followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Attendance: Chair Brien Brock, Selectman Patrick Moran, Selectman Boyd Chivers, Selectman Russ Dann, Selectman Susan Young and Town Administrator Andria Hansen.

Approval of Minutes: Public session minutes of June 10, 2024. None noted.

Motion: Selectmen Dann made a motion to approve the June 10, 2024, Public Session Minutes as presented. Selectman Moran seconded. All in favor. Motion carried by a vote of (5-0-0).

Approval of Minutes: Non-Public session minutes of June 10, 2024. None noted.

Motion: Selectmen Moran made a motion to approve and seal the June 10, 2024, Non-Public Session Minutes as presented. Selectman Young seconded. All in favor. Motion carried by a vote of (5-0-0).

NEW BUSINESS

Masonic Hall: Rick Mitchell Trustee of the Candia Masonic Lodge Assoc. came before the Board stating the State of NH has decided that after several years of not being taxed, the Lodge has received a tax bill. He understands this Board cannot waive their taxes, but he is unsure if this is the proper way to receive financial relief on their first tax bill for 6 months which is \$2,200. He feels that is a lot of money they would need to raise. He asked if they could receive relief from the school portion since that piece of property does not send any children to school. Every year they are one of the sponsors of Dollars for Scholars and that is why they are here because they have a \$4,400 tax bill. They do a lot for the community as part of a non-profit, they sent in a list of around 35 charitable events that they sponsor and are the things they do in the Lodge, aside from Masonic and Eastern Star meetings. Anyone may use their Lodge free of charge, however donations are accepted. All for-profit organizations would be charged rent. He believes the Lodge is an asset to the Town of Candia and that is why he is asking for relief.

Selectman Young asked Mr. Mitchell why he thought the Lodge would not be granted financial assistance. Mr. Mitchell said he was told they were not allowed to receive financial relief or to abate their taxes from the Tax Assessor. Town Assessor Steve Hamilton from Whitney Consulting explained that last year the Masonic Lodge Assoc. had applied for an exemption, and he has reviewed all the documents provided. The way that the organization is structured as a paternal organization within a lodge and with the Grand Lodge as the sponsoring organization, those types of organizations do not qualify for an exemption. In a few communities the NH Board of Land & Tax Appeals revoked an exempt status that was granted to Masonic Lodges much like this one. There was one case that had to pay back taxes from previous years. Therefore, in order to avoid that potential outcome, last year he recommended denying the exemption and to start now on the path of taxation. They are performing a revaluation this year, and it is early in the process to know what the final value or tax bill would be for the organization. There is a process by which they are going to let them know what the preliminary value is and then will talk about that long before they receive the final tax bill. It is too early to know what their tax liability bill would be for this year. He does not recommend splitting up the rate and asked him to wait until they can look at the total tax liability first. Mr. Mitchell asked if he should pay the bill he received and come back in December to ask for an abatement. S. Hamilton said he recommends them to pay the bill, otherwise interest would accumulate.

Chair Brock said he recommends not paying the bill as they can deal with any interest that occurs from now until the final bill and would be able to make that part of an abatement.

Selectman Chivers asked why they were concerned about paying if the Masonic Lodge was not the owner. Mr. Mitchell said there was a correction made and now they are showing as the owners. S. Hamilton said there is a form Mr. Mitchell will need to complete and encourages him to be part of the informal process and to schedule an appointment to come in and talk to them.

Recycle Center – Waste Oil Tank: Selectman Dann stated one of the 500 gal. tanks at the Recycle Center that is intended for the disposal of oil only, has been contaminated when it was tested. The employees are very careful that this does not occur, and that it is always locked. The Residents are not allowed to pour anything into the tanks and are required to leave their containers of oil on the side for the employees dispose of. At this point it will need to be flushed out and cleaned for a cost of \$7,200. The Recycle Center has enough money in their budget to cover the cost, however if it happens again there would not be enough funds to cover it and they would need to shut down the tanks. They will be posting signs at the Recycle Center, Town Website and Facebook to educate and inform the Residents. If anyone has contaminated oil to dispose of, it would need to be saved until Hazardous Waste Day. Their only other option would be not to accept any oil from residents.

Standard Power Update: Chairman Kevin Coughlin of the Community Power Group introduced Emily Mann's from Standard Power. Last year the Board approved the Community Power Group into going this route and to obtain a fixed pricing for a few years for our Residents. It is an opt-out solution, and they are currently waiting for pricing to come around and Emily Mann suggested giving them an update.

Ms. Mann said they are getting close to the pricing for Community Power. Their prices will be compared to the utility default service rate, and it will be changing now for an August start. The Eversource process was delayed, and she was hoping she would have the new prices for them. The price is about 10.5% for default service. The NH Coop is not regulated by the Public Utility Commission, so they can change rates whenever they choose, but they often do change relative to the same schedule. Therefore, they do not have news for that and expect to hear back for their new rate, their current rate is 10.1 cents per kilowatt-hour so those are the current default rates and the rates they will be looking to be competitive with.

Ms. Mann said the reason why they use Community Power is to provide a stable rate over a number of months and greater than 6 months. The Town can choose the term length and the rate before they sign the contract for the constituents to launch the program. They present those to them, and they monitor the market all the time. They have provided indicative pricing to the Town and the process is confidential to protect a blind bid process, but the Select Board can see all the pricing in a non-public session, and the final bid will be public. This is the pricing process that will occur in the next few weeks. They will get the approved detail rates for the 2 utilities and the final pricing for a Candia Program, and they will make recommendations for that. There are options in the plan that are about a renewable default if they cannot beat the utility default rates with the renewable product, then they will recommend the basic product. Therefore, when they have all the numbers, they will make their recommendations and it looks like it would be in July. The Selectboard is required to approve any updates to the plans. She has some minor updates and would like them to look it over. The time has passed, and now they have started working with the company Good Energy, however they have not provided services to the Town, and they have asked to be removed from the plans. There are 3 references to Good Energy in that plan. Candia and 27 other communities have benefited from their partnership with Good Energy. They still work with them all the time in bringing the programs they launched. Discussion ensued.

Once they have the contract signed, they can finalize all the materials that have the real numbers on it. They will send all the material to the Town and then they will do an outreach campaign. They can have any meeting the Selectboard suggests. There is a direct mailing to all Candia residents in stating, all residents are eligible and if they do nothing they will automatically be enrolled into this program. If they like the program,

there is no need to do anything. Customers on competitive supply receive a different letter stating they are welcome to opt in, however they would not be enrolled into the program. Discussion ensued.

Motion: Selectmen Dann made a motion to accept the updated changes received from the Community Power Group. Selectman Young seconded. All in Favor. Motion carried by a vote of (5-0-0).

Town Clerk Update: Town Clerk Donna Hetzel came before the Board to explain why she is asking to purchase Pole Pads and what its purpose is during voting. She explained that Pole Pads are an electronic checklist for the Pole Workers to use and it makes checking-in much faster for everyone at Voting. The Pole Pads are also very useful at the end of the night to assist them with the checks and balances from the ballot machines and the hand counts that are usually very time consuming. They are specially programmed iPads that can print all their information out and it does not communicate with any other communities. The State of NH still requires them to continue keeping an up-to-date checklist. Selectman Young said her thoughts are to wait, and to put this into next year's budget and then purchase the ballot machine after the November 2024 Election. Town Clerk Hetzel said she has received notification from the State informing her they will be giving every Town \$3,500 per machine toward the cost of Ballot Machines until June 30th, 2026. Normally each Ballot Machine costs \$7,000 and they will need two of them. Town Clerk Hetzel said these would be for the upcoming elections of which the Pole Pads would be most useful, she would go by what the Selectmen decide on. Selectman Moran said he agrees with Selectman Young in that the Voters had approved the purchase of the Ballot Machines, therefore he believes that the best way is to utilize the money on what it was intended for at the time of Voting. Discussion ensued.

Motion: Selectmen Young made a motion to hold off on purchasing the Ballot Machines until after the November 2024 Election and not to spend money on the Pole Pads until next year for the March 2025 Elections. Selectman Dann seconded. All in favor. Motion carried by a vote of (5-0-0).

Policy Update: Town Administrator Hansen said they have the Returned Check Policy. They updated the the Electronic Payment, because many people use their credit cards, and the same rules will apply. If there are insufficient funds when customers use their credit cards, they will be charged a \$25 fee.

Motion: Selectmen Young made a motion to approve the updated Returned Check and Electronic Payment section. Selectman Moran seconded. All in favor. Motion carried by a vote of (5-0-0).

Highway Department: Selectman Chivers said before Candia's Highway Department begins mowing there will be a Roadside Clean-up in Candia. It was posted on the Town of Candia's Website and will start on July 1st. Bags will be available for Residents at the Recycle Center and Town Hall.

Moore Park: Selectman Young mentioned the new swings that were ordered for Moore Park have been delivered. The Rest Rooms are being repaired and they may need to purchase 2 new toilets and sinks.

Canceling July 8th Meeting: Chair Brock asked the Board if they would agree to canceling the July 8th, Board of Selectmen's Meeting. No one objected.

MOTION: Selectman Moran made a motion to cancel the July 8th, 2024, Board of Selectmen's Meeting. Selectman Young Seconded. All in favor. Motion Carried by a vote of (5-0-0).

Public Input: Kevin Coughlin of the Candia Planning Board was nominated from the Planning Board to become the Representative for the Town of Candia to the SNHPC (Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission).

MOTION: Selectman Moran made a motion to approve the appointment of Kevin Coughlin as the Candia's Planning Board Representative to the SNHPC. Selectman Young Seconded. All in favor. Motion Carried by a vote of (5-0-0).

Dick Snow (resident) said that he has brought a matter to the Board in the past regarding Moore Park and the Safety Facility Committee is considering adding an addition to the Town Hall. He explained that Mr. Henry Moore wanted the land to be a park for the Residents and that it is to be taken care of by the Selectmen. Chair Brock said that has ended and they are no longer considering adding an addition to the Town Hall.

Kevin Coughlin commended Police Chief Mike McGillen for spending his entire Father's Day in helping someone to find a family member that was missing. He said this person thinks very highly of Candia's Police Department.

7:32 pm - Selectman Chivers moved to enter into a Non-Public Meeting under RSA 91-A:3, II (a) & (c). Seconded by Selectman Moran. All in favor. Motion carried by a vote of (5-0-0).

8:20 pm – Selectman Moran moved to re-enter the Public Meeting. Seconded by Selectman Chivers. All in favor. Motion carried by a vote of (5-0-0).

8:20 pm - Selectman Chivers made a motion to adjourn the Public Meeting. Seconded by Selectman Dann. All in favor. Motion carried by a vote of (5-0-0).

Linda Chandonnet
Recording Secretary