

Chesterfield Watershed Committee Interviews

TOWN OF CHESTERFIELD, NH

MEETING MINUTES

September 30, 2021
5:30 PM

Gary Winn called the meeting to order at 5:44PM. Also present were Fran Shippee, Kelli Hanzalik, and Jim Barey.

WATERSHED COMMITTEE INTERVIEWS

Winn reiterated that each applicant had four questions to review before appearing for the interview.

Charlie Paquette-Winn introduced Paquette as a town resident on South Shore Road and opened the floor to Paquette.

Paquette opened by stating that the issues of Spofford Lake are greater than one issue here or there and require broader assistance; noting that he believes the charge of this committee is to bring many issues to fruition.

Paquette stated on the question of compromise, he would say “no”, because he does not believe “compromise” is the appropriate word, but he is willing to work with other committee members to find common ground, noting that he does not feel that a compromise is the right approach.

In response to Question #3 Paquette stated he does not know the scope of the group so it is difficult to answer but he is a year-round resident, and he is more than willing to give his time so long as his time is handled in a productive manner. Paquette continued, stating he has been involved in organizations where everyone speaks for long periods of time without providing new perspective; but if this committee is respectful of everyone’s time, he is more than willing to put in whatever time is required.

Paquette stated he is not a trained person in this area, but he is a person of curiosity and willing to dig into issues; noting that he has been on many boards in which he did not have the specific skills necessary, but he always felt his leadership and willingness to dig into issues was more important than the specific knowledge on the industry or topic knowledge.

Paquette asked what the scope of this group will be. Winn responded that the board has not defined a specific scope yet ; but one of the first goals may be to identify if an ordinance is needed and what it would contain.

Hanzalik stated her perspective is more encompassing than finding whether an ordinance is needed, noting that the questions began with the Planning Board, asking the Board of Selectmen to decide on next steps. Hanzalik noted that this watershed committee should ask what has been done, what can be done from research and discussion, and return to the Board of Selectmen with

recommendations or possible solutions. Shippee stated her idea is that there may be more than one recommendation, there are several issues that affect the lake other than Steep Slopes. Paquette asked who will be chairing this committee. Winn stated his assumption that the chair would be chosen from the membership. Paquette asked what the Town's willingness to support the findings of the group would be, including those with significant financial impact. The board responded that it would depend on the recommendation and the price tag as well as the risk assessment, but they are open to all ideas and recommendations. Winn noted this group would hopefully be a bit more impartial than the Planning Board. Paquette stated in closing, he does not want this to be a burden on landowners only, without addressing the other issues impacting the lake.

Bayard Tracy-Winn stated Tracy is a Spofford resident on North Shore Road and opened the floor to him.

Tracy stated he has a strong opinion on this issue, noting that it centers upon the lake. Tracy continued, stating he believes the lake is important to several constituents here in town, and everyone in town: as a recreational hub for residents and non-residents alike; noting that to an extent it defines what Chesterfield is. Tracy stated that the lake is in trouble, declining in water quality; noting that the Spofford Lake Association (SLA) has done much in coordination with the Town to mitigate those problems. Tracy stated that the Town has been terrific over the past four years including agreements for lower salt on roads around the lake as well as initiating the Wastewater Management regulation. Tracy stated he is all in on helping the jewel of the town. Tracy noted that the SLA did not take a stand on the Steep Slopes ordinance, but it taught him that the town is now attuned to this problem. Tracy stated that in all of these, the board will need someone with strong opinions and the ability to stick behind those opinions.

Regarding question #2, Tracy stated that the SLA has 370 members, all with opinions, and you cannot always please everyone, but rather take a temperature of what is there and work off that. Tracy stated his availability is full time as a resident and only the SLA would conflict.

Regarding #4, Tracy stated he was on the Budget Committee for several years, currently president of the SLA and works with DES as well as the Board of Selectmen and NH Department of Transportation. Winn stated there may be an order of things to address, one of the things the committee will be asked is to recommend a full list of priorities.

James Hancock-Hancock opened by stating he is a resident of Welcome Hill Road.

Hancock stated that everything he says about this issue is nuanced, noting that Steep Slopes had an extreme lack of nuance. Hancock stated that Steep Slopes was the result of a small group of people who want to tell everyone in this town how to live their lives and enjoy their property. Hancock stated that this is a complex issue, and the roots need to be found. Hancock referenced living in Ontario Canada in a lake district in the past, and he has experience in similar issues that are now being faced here, as well as working in the past with the local municipality to find solutions. Hancock stated he believes science will be the forerunning source of information utilized to identify and solve the problems this committee faces, referencing that the lake he lived

on in Canada no longer has problems due to working with the local town council and making scientific improvements. Hancock noted that the committee and the town should look to punish those people who are intentionally harming the lake and assisting those who are unintentionally harming the lake.

Regarding Question #3, Hancock stated he works from home; he makes his own hours and can be extremely flexible for meetings.

Hancock stated he has a scientific background, noting he has three patents in artificial intelligence, three patents in education and has worked extensively in education; he stated he feels he is one of the most qualified people to be able to go and look at data and science and interpret that information.

Brad Roscoe-Roscoe attended his interview virtually and opened stating he does have a strong opinion, with no preconceived notions or ideas, and a willingness to make compromises as long as others are willing to do so.

Roscoe stated he is retired and so is very flexible in availability; noting he does not want to be involved on a 3- or 4-year plan.

Roscoe stated he holds a bachelor's degree, a Master's degree, and a PHD in engineering.

Roscoe stated he knows how to analyze data, noting he has been on the Budget Committee, and is acting moderator for the Board of Selectmen.

Roscoe stated that once the data has been collected and analyzed, a compromise would be finding the best solution for the problems at hand, noting that Steep Slopes only looked at one avenue rather than taking a broader scope. Winn stated they would make available any information they have as well as data from other towns; there are a few resources available.

Charlie Donahue-Donahue opened, stating he is a resident of North Shore Road.

Donahue stated he was vocal on the Steep Slopes ordinance, he helped spearhead the defeat of that effort. Donahue continued, stating he did not like the way the ordinance was proposed, or the timing, and he could not figure out what it was trying to accomplish.

Donahue stated he thinks that past Steep Slopes ordinance issue did not contain any ability to listen or compromise and he does not want that to happen again. Donahue referenced working successfully with individuals with conflicted views and having the ability to meet a common ground.

Regarding Question #3, Donahue stated he would make the time to attend meetings of the Watershed Committee and for research, noting that the committee should rely on professional opinions.

Donahue stated in terms of what he must bring to the table, he hopes that this interview gives the Board of Selectmen some idea of where his skills lay. Donahue stated he believes he is a fresh face to town involvement and is creative, including that he is an independent thinker, although not a scientist.

Winn asked if Donahue would be willing to look at this beyond the watershed. Donahue responded that the Board of Selectmen set the direction and he is willing to look at anything with

a holistic approach.

Shippee asked if there was a version of Steep Slopes that Donahue could accept. Donahue stated he is not sure; he would like to speak with the experts first.

Ron Coburn-Coburn stated he has lived on the lake for 23 years and thoroughly enjoys the community. Coburn stated he has a background in engineering and has owned multiple companies but is retired and has time to do other things. Coburn stated he enjoys the lake; he is not qualified in water quality but qualified in management with skills in conflict resolution. Coburn stated he is not sure what he could bring to the committee, but hopefully management skills and common sense.

Shippee asked about time, Coburn responded he misses the challenges of business and thinks this would be an interesting community challenge as well as give and take. Coburn noted he is currently involved in two other businesses as a financial advisor and has a private charity but none of those would conflict with his availability.

Winn stated it sounds like Coburn is used to working with committees. Coburn agreed and he has enough experience to work with people.

Shippee asked if he had experience in the art of compromise; Coburn responded he does but does not always enjoy the outcome.

Hanzalik asked about Coburn putting in the time for research. Coburn responded that he would expect to do the legwork for the committee.

Bob Sugarman-Sugarman opened by stating he does have a strong opinion; he has familial ties to the lake and he and his wife are property owners on the lake. Sugarman stated that it seems delayed that the Board of Selectmen are now looking to form this committee since he believes the town needs to act decisively to form an opinion on the watershed.

Sugarman stated he has always surrounded himself with people smarter to get their perspectives and compromise on what needs to happen, noting that compromise is critical in a majority rules situation.

Sugarman stated he is the visionary of his company with no regimented schedule so his time is the committee's.

Sugarman stated that as a visionary, he spends most of his time doing research and what he can do for the Town includes those skills. Sugarman stated he is capable of delivering and communicating solutions and guarantees that he will be an awesome member of this committee if given the opportunity.

Shippee asked if he were here year-round. Sugarman stated he and his wife are here three months per year, but he goes back and forth so he is available year-round at any time other than the mornings.

Norm VanCor-VanCor attended virtually opening by stating yes, he does feel strongly that Chesterfield needs to have more oversight on some of the more dramatic aspects of wetland and stream control. VanCor continued, stating he does not believe anyone is excited about adding to

the laws and rules; but he has experience in handling environmental issues in town.

VanCor stated he is married so he compromises every day, and we live in a world of compromise.

VanCor noted that he would not have sent in his application unless he was available to attend meetings and research issues. VanCor continued, stating he believes involvement means active participation.

VanCor stated that the Board of Selectmen has his resume and so a competent outline of his skills; Winn noted the resume was well laid out. VanCor noted he spent most of his adult life involved in environmental areas as well as actively involved in all issues environmental.

Winn asked if VanCor had any particular thoughts on this committee's work on Spofford Lake versus and overall town approach. VanCor stated he has particular interest in the watershed that has a direct impact on the lake and if this committee makes recommendations, they should apply to the Town and not just the lake.

VanCor stated that once the board decides on the membership it would be appropriate for the Board of Selectmen to name a chairman with a clear direction with what they are looking for so that the chairman can call the first meeting and there is no need for voting.

Dan Syvertsen-Syvertsen opened, stating he has strong opinions on education and outreach over legislation and that the lake needs protection. Syvertsen continued, stating he does not want to reinvent the wheel; the Watershed Plan should be a part of any recommendations going forward. Syvertsen stated he is more than willing to compromise, noting that the direction the committee should look for is to protect the lake, through helping landowners develop well or preventing development. Syvertsen continued, stating that Camp Spofford was one of the hot spots for runoff and he compromised on the best course of action going forward to mitigate runoff. Syvertsen stated his availability is open if he has notice and can plan for it; he does not do well with last minute plans, noting that he would prefer if this committee was focused with a short-term commitment.

Syvertsen stated he favors education and outreach because that is what got him interested in the first place. Syvertsen noted he does his research and learns well.

Shippee asked what he would do about people that education and outreach does not work for.

Syvertsen stated the first step should be education and outreach, but regulations are sometimes necessary.

Hanzalik asked about availability for at home research. Syvertsen stated he thinks it is part of his job to be aware and educated on the lake and so he has no problem in putting aside time during his workday to get this research done.

Syvertsen asked if the Board of Selectmen know of any kind of time commitment on the committee. Winn responded there are no parameters yet. Syvertsen asked about the expectation regulation of going to the next town meeting. Winn stated they are not looking at the town meeting deadline at all; there is no way to do justice to the project in that timeframe.

Barbara Girs commented that a takeaway from these interviews might be to limit the purview of this committee to the lake at least to begin with because that is what is in danger and brings more money and happiness to the town. Girs stated she believes the board missed an opportunity to ask what each applicant has done for the lake lately.

Winn asked the board if they were able to make decisions tonight. Hanzalik stated she would like to put time on the agenda next meeting for further thought, noting they should establish a scope or incremental steps for expectations and output for the committee. Hanzalik continued, stating she also would like to discuss whether they should select a chair. Shippee asked if there was a number, they had discussed for the committee membership. The board discussed reasons for keeping membership at five members or going to seven, as well as the scope and charge for the committee. The board decided to have the primary focus to address the health of the lake over trying to open a Town wide discussion. The board discussed having the committee answer Board of Selectmen's questions and check in on a regular basis. Winn stated sometime between now and next week the Board of Selectmen should come up with a scope to adopt at the next meeting and get the committee up and running. The board will forward thoughts on that scope to Alissa Thompson.

TAX RATE

Winn noted that the board needed to discuss the unassigned fund balance line. Hanzalik asked if there was a deadline; Winn responded that ideally, they should decide tonight. Hanzalik stated she is not sure what "keeping the tax rate down," means from Thompson's email without further information. Winn explained that they have some control over the tax rate with that money. Winn noted that the longer the Board of Selectmen takes to make this decision, the longer it takes for the tax bills to go out. Shippee stated it would be beneficial to see this report from the last five years for a historical perspective. The board would like to know what the current fund balance is and will be discussing this further tomorrow during the CMP walkthrough.

OFFICE RESTRUCTURE

Gary Winn moved to approve the restructure of the office staff as proposed; Tricia Lachenal to be reassigned to the Selectmen's office as an Administrative Assistant; a secretary to be hired for Planning Board and Zoning Board of Adjustment; and a secretary to be hired part-time for 23 hours per week in the Selectmen's Office. The motion was seconded by Fran Shippee.

Discussion: Shippee and Hanzalik stated they like the idea of the restructure a lot and that it provides the most benefit to the town, not just monetarily but to cover all duties needing to be accomplished. Hanzalik stated she likes the idea of combining the land use boards as well as bringing on an individual with experience in taking minutes for those boards. Winn stated if a new hire was made to fulfill the same position as Barey, they would not be able to hire for a high enough rate. Winn noted that there will be less training of new employees with this restructure. Shippee noted that Lachenal is requesting to remain at 35 hours per week. The board discussed

*the restructure, noting that it appears more efficient and cost effective.
The motion passed unanimously.*

Gary Winn moved to enter Non-Public session under RSA 91-A:3,II(a) for the purposes of discussing matters pertaining to the dismissal, promotion, or compensation of any public employee. The motion was seconded by Fran Shippee and passed unanimously.

Gary Winn moved to seal the minutes from Non-Public session 1. The motion was seconded by Kelli Hanzalik and passed unanimously.

ADJOURN

Fran Shippee moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:59PM. The motion was seconded by Kelli Hanzalik and passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Jim Barey
Board of Selectmen Secretary

Approved by:



Gary Winn, Chairman

11/3/2021

Date

Fran Shippee


Kelli Hanzalik

Date
11/3/2021

Date