**Minutes – August 20th, 2020**

**CALL TO ORDER at 6:00PM –Chairman Scott Hunter presided. Samantha Hewey, Caldwell Jackson, Dana Dillingham, Sharon Jackson, Butch Asselin, Elizabeth Olsen were present along with members of the public using Microsoft Teams virtual meeting.**

1. **ACTION ON MINUTES**
   1. **Action on minutes dated August 6th, 2020.**

*Motion to accept as written by Samantha Hewey and seconded by Dana Dillingham. Passed 5-0.*

1. **ADJUSTMENTS TO AGENDA –**
2. **Discussion and decision on disbanding the Thompson Lake Dam Advisory Committee**
3. **Discussion on request for extended use of the Station House Community Center by Oxford SACC.**
4. **To accept the donation from Tractor Supply for a tree and Walmart for 3 shrubs to the Station House Community Center.**
5. **To accept the resignations of Denise Landsperg and Jarek Mains from the planning board.**
6. **PUBLIC COMMENTS – Please state your name and Town that you are from for the record**

Scott Stone – 754 Main St. Oxford: Read his letter to the Editor supporting natural barriers at the outlets and a trial run of opening the Welchville dam to make sure they work as predicted. The cost being much more tax payor friendly than replacement of the dam.

Wanda Richard – Hogan Pond: The property has flooded several times due to improper maintenance of the Welchville Dam. In support of the removal of the Welchville Dam stating 1,722 dams nationwide have been removed in the US since 1912 bringing benefits to local communities and restoring river health. She felt that rebuilding a dam with no function would be misspent taxpayer dollars.

1. **OLD BUSINESS** 
   1. **To approve the Automobile graveyard and/or junkyard permit application for Ayotte’s.**

*Motion to approve by Caldwell Jackson and seconded by Sharon Jackson. Passed 5-0.*

* 1. **To sign the Personnel Policy**

*Motion to sign this already approved document by Caldwell Jackson and seconded by Sharon Jackson. Passed 5-0.*

* 1. **To sign the Quit Claim deed for R05-020-00B.**

*Motion to sign the deed by Samantha Hewey and seconded by Sharon Jackson. Passed 5-0.*

1. **NEW BUSINESS**
2. **Discussion and decision on the SRO Grant.**

*Motion to approve pending the School Board approval of $67,500 of funding for SRO by Samantha Hewey and seconded by Sharon Jackson. Passed 5-0.*

1. **Discussion on moving forward with repair/replacement of the Welchville Dam.**

**Butch Asselin:**

* The selectmen haven’t addressed the Welchville Dam since March when we looked at the options that Dave Cloutier prepared at the request of the select board. As you probably recall Dave listed the pros and cons to doing nothing, replacing the dam or installing outlet stream grade controls. Replacing the dam is nearly $500,000 less than repairing. Replacement of the dam was estimated at $1.37 million including NRPA, DEP permitting, design and construction administration.
* Another option is driving in steel piles on the upstream side of the dam much like a cofferdam. Limited test bores were conducted of the streambed in 2016 and it does look like that could be an option. If the goal is a permanent solution, the sheet piles would need to be “marine-grade” to resist corrosion – this also would increase expense. Ballpark, sheet piles are roughly $1.50/lb. installed. Assuming 35 lb. /sf and a 25 ft. total height for sheet piles, you could expect an installation cost in the range of $200,000 not including permitting and construction administration.
* Another discussion was to place a rock berm down on the upstream side of the dam. A rock berm would be cheaper to install, but from a practical standpoint it would perform like the existing dam – water would pipe through the voids between the stones and it wouldn’t be effective at holding back water during the dry summer months. If the goal is a dam that will retain water upstream, you would need to add an impervious core of concrete or engineered soils – which would mean a project approaching the level of complexity and cost of the dam repair/replacement options from the 2016 MBP feasibility study. A large boulder alternative would require streambed foundation preparation (sediment removal?), difficulty to reach the design level and boulder stability during large storms.
* According to Myron’s 2016 report, there have been six incidents of flooding and dam damage since 1987.
* In November of 2019, Cloutier suggested the following studies be completed:
* Evaluation of groundwater impacts: analyze historic rainfall, river flows/levels, and groundwater extraction in the watersheds of Hogan Pond and Whitney Pond.
* Alternatives analysis to maintain pond levels would be to further evaluate the ponds outlet channel, including analysis of hydraulic capacity, channel bed erodibility and degradation potential, and feasibility of grade control or other structures.
* Bridge scour analysis and recommendations would be to conduct a scour analysis at the upstream Route 26 and Route 121 bridges to evaluate the potential for increased scour risk if the Welchville Dam were removed.
* Louis Staples provided some historical documents relevant to the dam that address flowage, deeds, and ownership of the dam. These were submitted to Bernstein Shur for review. The town did legally receive the dam from Consolidated Hydro Maine in 1994 with included flowage rights and the property on each side of the dam. DEP will be contacted for information. There are 211 shorefront properties around the ponds.
* In response to a letter that was submitted by Steve Heinz on July 30th to Sue Baker, who is the National Flood Insurance Program Coordinator for Maine, she indicates that based on a 1991 Flood Insurance Study for the town of Oxford, the flood elevation for Hogan and Whitney Ponds is caused by backwater. Any project undertaken cannot increase the elevation of the floodway. It was recommended in her letter that the town engage a professional engineer on what the net change would be for the floodway and/or elevations for all options the town is considering. If the town replaces the dam, without enlarging or reducing the size of it or changing the design, it will not require a full-blown H&H (hydrologic and hydraulic) analysis. If the town removes the dam, reduces, or enlarges it, it will require a full analysis. Once this analysis is complete and if there are changes, we must provide the data to FEMA for a Letter of Map Revision. The Letter of Map Revision is to change the flood map to reflect the new conditions. The cost for this is $9,000. Sue recommended that the town apply for a conditional LOMR with FEMA so that they know in advance that if a project is completed, a LOMR will be issued.
* It was suggested to wait and hear back from Bernstein Shur on the real estate.
* More studies may be needed to provide you with the best information possible for your decision making, focusing on an Alternatives Analysis such as installing grade controls, replacing the dam, or installing sheet piling. The analysis would benefit the environment, the town, and the property owners around the ponds. Having the analysis will help guide the decision process. Mary Costigan from Bernstein Shur also recommends an Alternatives Analysis be completed. Cloutier estimated a cost of $15,000-$20,000 for such a study. The potential for grant funding is low but there is a balance of $349,128.00 in the Welchville capital account.

Caldwell Jackson has received 9 calls in favor of keeping the Welchville Dam. He motioned to send surveys to the landowners surrounding Hogan and Whitney for input on keeping or dismantling the dam.

Samantha Hewey stated she has been getting some feedback but feels more information is needed to be fair to all properties. Asked the cost of the extended analysis. ($20,000)

Dana Dillingham is in favor of the grade control idea including the study to ensure the water levels stay at a good level.

*Sharon Jackson seconded Caldwell Jackson’s motion to send a survey to the landowners with all the information we currently have.*

Motion passed 5-0.

1. **Approval of a Toll Road on August 29th, 2020 from 10 AM to 1 PM by the Oxford American Legion Post. Location to be on King Street in front of the Post and at the end of Skeetfield Road.**

*Motion to approve by Samantha Hewey and seconded by Dana Dillingham. Passed 5-0.*

1. **Discussion and decision on disbanding the Thompson Lake Dam Advisory Committee**

*Sharon Jackson recommended disbanding the Thompson Lake Dam Advisory Committee until the Selectmen can work out where it wants to go and where it stands. Would like to hold workshops to set short and long term plans, complete a cost analysis, prioritize a project list and monitor the current project. Interlocal agreements should be reviewed and researched by discussing them with towns that are currently in them. Detailed revenue and expense reports of the dam costs should be reviewed. An agreement should go in front of the voters for approval. Once educated, the board can look at the need of an advisory committee.*

*Caldwell Jackson seconded.*

*Samantha Hewey felt that if the advisory committee were disbanded that Oxford would never get the Towns on board again. She felt that the advisory board should remain in place and the boards should continue to work on the agreement and plans together.*

*Dana Dillingham suggested suspending the committee for now stating that more would be accomplished with the other boards for now.*

*Scott Hunter was in favor of putting the committee on hold until the boards worked something out.*

*Dana made a motion to suspend meetings of the Thompson Lake Advisory Committee.*

*Seconded by Sharon Jackson. Passed 4 – 1 (Samantha Hewey).*

1. **Discussion on request for extended use of the Station House Community Center by Oxford SACC.**

SACC is asking to extend the use of the Center until at the very least Sept. 8th but would also like the board to consider letting the contract continue if the school should not reopen or was shut down due to the virus.

Patty Hesse, Rec. Director, stated she was ok with SACC continuing thru the end of September, but has expectations to have the normal groups start meeting again in October.

Dana Dillingham asked about the children. 21 out of the 26 are from Oxford.

The selectmen questioned if alternatives had been looked at or if the school would allow them back in upon opening. The answer was yes.

*Motion to approve the extension until September 8th, 2020 by Samantha Hewey and seconded by Sharon Jackson. Passed 4 – 1 (Caldwell Jackson).*

1. **To accept the donation from Tractor Supply for a tree and Walmart for 3 shrubs to the Station House Community Center.**

*Motion to accept by Sharon Jackson and seconded by Samantha Hewey. Passed 5-0.*

1. **To accept the resignations of Denise Landsperg and Jarek Mains from the planning board.**

*Motion to accept by Caldwell Jackson and seconded by Dana Dillingham. Passed 5 – 0.*

1. **DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORT**

Mike Ward presented information on the speed sign on King Street. Avg. speed was 29.67. Some data was lost. Some speed near 50 mph. Sign will be put back up next week.

Elizabeth Olsen stated the clerk’s office will be installing a drop box next week for absentee ballots per the Secretary of State guidelines.

1. **TOWN MANAGER’S REPORT**
   * Toured Casco town office with Sharon, Scott, and Lois.
   * Company that sold the town the compactor is coming tomorrow to look at the ram. It is not long enough to push the trash into the trailer. To close the trailer doors, some of the trash must be emptied onto the ground.
   * Submitted another grant to the Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund to help offset the cost of the fish screen replacement.
   * After the next Planning Board meeting, they will not be able to meet due to a lack of quorum. If you know of anyone who is interested, please have them contact the town office.
   * The town was not awarded any grant funds to offset the cost of the dewatering facility, so he will be moving forward with bond counsel and the bond back to fund the project.
   * Conditional offer of employment made for the Finance Officer position. Undergoing background check and drug screening. She will be at the next SB meeting for introduction.
   * Applications for the vacant deputy clerk’s position have been coming in steady. Close is August 31st.
   * DECD has approved the second amendment to the Walmart TIF.
   * The SB will be setting the mil rate at the next meeting.
2. **SELECTMEN ITEMS**

Sharon Jackson announced that the Andy Valley Champions were Oxford coached by Josh Wyman and Chris Delamater. She stated that the historical trophies are now housed at the Oxford Historical Society and would like to have current trophies displayed for 1 year at the Town Office and then moved to display at the Oxford Historical Society.

*So moved by Dana Dillingham and seconded by Caldwell Jackson. Passed 5-0.*

Caldwell Jackson mentioned that some of the cemeteries have not been mowed.

1. **SIGN WARRANTS – 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23**

*Motion to sign the warrants by Samantha Hewey and seconded by Caldwell Jackson. Passed 5 – 0.*

1. **To enter in executive session to discuss a personnel matter pursuant to M.R.S.A. Title 1, Chapter 13, Section 405 (6)(A) Town Manager position.**

*Motion to enter executive session by Samantha Hewey at 7:38 and seconded by Dana Dillingham. Passed 5 – 0.*

*Came out of executive session at 8:17 PM – Motion by Caldwell Jackson and seconded by Samantha Hewey. Passed 5-0.*

*Motion to adjourn at 8:17 PM by Caldwell Jackson and seconded by Samantha Hewey. Passed 5-0.*