

~~Unapproved~~**APPROVED**  
**Candia's Selectmen's Public Meeting Minutes**  
**August 24, 2015**

**Attendance:** Chairman Carleton Robie, Vice-Chair Boyd Chivers, Selectman Scott Komisarek, Selectman Craig Sandler, Selectman Susan Young, and Administrative Assistant Andria Hansen.

Chairman Robie opened the meeting with the pledge of allegiance.

**Approval of Previous Minutes: Public meeting minutes 08/10/15.** Selectman Sandler moved to accept the Selectmen's Meeting minutes of August 10<sup>th</sup>, 2015 as presented. Seconded by Selectman Chivers. All were in favor. Motion carried.

**The Board of Selectmen will hold a public hearing at their regular scheduled meeting on to accept quarterly grants and donations in accordance with RSA 31:95-b, III (a).** Chairman Robie announced that Candia Community Woman's Club donated \$1,000; David & Harriett Chalbeck donated \$100; and Candia Garden Club donated \$250 towards the Police Department ATV trailer. Selectman Young moved to accept quarterly donations for the second quarter in the amount of \$1,350. Seconded by Selectman Chivers. All were in favor. Motion carried. Chairman Robie announced the quarterly donation from the State of New Hampshire – Highway Block Grant in the amount of \$20,469.19. Selectman Young moved to accept the second quarter grant in the amount of \$20,469.19 from the State of New Hampshire. Seconded by Selectman Sandler. All were in favor. Motion carried.

**The Board to discuss abatement requests received.** Chairman Robie said there has been some abatement requests received. It was brought to his attention that they should be announced at a Selectmen's meeting, so everyone publicly knows that the Board abated someone's taxes. He agreed completely and they will be processed in a public meeting moving forward. It was noted that the reval company CNP (Commerford, Nieder, and Perkins, LLC) reviewed and made the recommendations on the abatements received. Chairman Robie announced the abatements received and the recommendations and Selectman Chivers read the remarks from CNP (see attached): **Owner:** Romeo Danais Map & Lot: 410-158-1, 410-158-2, and 410-137 Recommendation: Deny; **Owner:** Judith & Joseph Szot, Map & Lot: 410-081, Recommendation: Grant; **Owner:** Clayton P & Hiroyo Fisher, Map & Lot: 405-128, Recommendation: Deny; **Owner:** Linda Lamarche Moquin, Map & Lot: 408-018, Recommendation: Grant. **Owner:** Dean Maxwell Young, Map & Lot: 406-103, Recommendation: Grant. The Board accepts all of the recommendations from CNP.

**Dean Young to discuss recent abatement.** Citizen Dean Young asked if his wife could speak to this matter. Selectman Young recused herself from the Board and sat in the audience. Mrs. Young explained their abatement went from \$66,000 to \$24,300. She understood that the burden of proof fell on the taxpayer if they feel it is not a fair evaluation. She noted that the Board had copies of their past property evaluations (see attached). They are talking about a little piece of land (406-103) not the whole property. The assessment starting in 2003 it was \$3,350 and it is all in current use. In 2004 it was assessed at \$7,100 and since 2009 it's been assessed at \$9,100. Now in 2015 it is assessed at \$66,000. This is six times as much as it has ever been assessed.

On top of that it has gone from 1.1 acres to .90 acres. This could be a different problem for a different Board. To prove that the assessment is not fair, first look at the increase of \$9,100 to \$66,000 in one year. The second thing is she thought if it jumped six times from what it originally was the abutters probably did also. She got copies of the abutter's properties (see attached). They picked five or six properties randomly, because they were close to the dump. Their land value went up six times the abutters decreased over the same period. They don't mind paying their fair share, but it seems silly that upon asking how the abatement went down from \$66,000 to \$24,300 when it was originally \$9,000 and the reason given was because the dump closed. There doesn't seem to be any common sense with that reasoning. If that is the case than the other surrounding properties would go up. If you look at the land on the surrounding properties that land value goes down. It goes down from last year to this year. Even with the recommended abatement it is still double of what it was before. They were told by the town's assessor that we could go to the BTLA (Board of Tax and Land Appeal) and appeal. They personally don't do things that way, they can if they have to but they would prefer to deal with it on the town level. This is just a common error and it is just common sense. She didn't know if anybody had any questions or comments. Selectman Chivers asked if it was in current use and the value was \$24,300. Mrs. Young said it was \$9,000 and they weren't even complaining about the \$9,000, when it jumped to the \$66,000 they complained now it is down to \$24,000. Chairman Robie clarified that this 9/10<sup>th</sup> of an acre isn't in current use. Mrs. Young explained they didn't divide it out. When it was deeded to Dean from his brother it was one "L" shaped piece. She wanted to look at the tax maps from 1980 which is when they built to current and see how things vary. This is one of her complaints about the tax maps. They couldn't find the tax maps from the 80's. Selectman Chivers asked if she owned the abutting land. Mrs. Young replied yes and the little piece was never taken out by them but by the town. Selectman Chivers asked if they made application for current use. Mrs. Young said they did, because when they built their house they had to take out three acres from current use. She explained some years they would get one tax bill and other years they would get three or four tax bills. They've tried to address this over the years to no avail. Selectman Chivers said just to make it easy if this property were in current use for less than an acre at the highest value it would be assessed for \$75 if it were in current use. They could merge it with the adjacent land, it would be in current use and the problem would be solved. Mrs. Young asked if it was taken out of current use in 2004. Selectman Chivers asked if they bought them as two separate lots and he had no idea why the property wasn't in current use. Mr. Young said he had one deed when the town redid the tax maps twenty years ago he ended up with four pieces of property that he got taxed on. He is now getting four tax bills which are cheap. They were in the area of his land. It has always been a tough area as far as surveying; they've had people work on it and never been able to solve the problem with the land. Now one of the tax bills has gone to \$66,000 and he isn't paying it. He would continue to pay on that little piece if it was doable. Selectman Chivers said it is doable put the piece in current use, you already have properties there in current use. Mr. Young said there is no separate deed to it. Mrs. Young said on the original deed the property goes right up to the river. She noted this part might be a Planning Board thing or a State thing. Mr. Young explained they have spent money on surveying before that was never able to solve the problem. Mrs. Young said even the Girard's said they weren't going to keep working on it. When Mary Girard gave her land to the Conservation Commission they had the land surveyed and even they gave up. She said they have better things to do than nick pick these little pieces of land. She didn't think common sense wise that it was fair whether that piece is in current use or not. As far

as assessment purposes there is no way that a \$9,000 piece of land is worth \$66,000 or even \$24,300 when surrounding land values have decreased since the dump has closed. She could see if everyone's value went up that would be understandable. It did just the opposite. This is why they didn't agree with the new assessment. This plus it was 1.10 and now it is down to .90 acres. She doesn't know how or why that happened. They need direction on where they should go from here. Selectman Chivers said the procedure is they make application by the date; if they don't get satisfaction here their next step is the Board of Tax and Land Appeals. Unless they want to develop the land in the short term, the best option is to put it in current use. Mr. Young said the property is under water it isn't going to get developed. Selectman Komisarek said if they merged it then it really wouldn't have any value and they wouldn't be paying any taxes. It is a buildable lot or its worth just about nothing. Either its wetlands and not buildable or it is a lot. If it was a buildable lot of record then it would have some tangible value. Mr. Young said it wasn't a lot because there is no deed with it. There are no boundaries with that. Selectman Chivers though they didn't need a deed to apply for current use. Mrs. Young asked if we don't agree with this assessment is there a way to look back in the records and say this is why we are saying this doesn't make sense. Selectman Chivers asked if they met with CNP when they came up with this assessment. Mrs. Young said they filed the abatement after they got their tax bill. Selectman Chivers said the Board acts on recommendations from the assessor and this recommendation went too long. They had a chance to argue their position before they came up with these numbers. Once these numbers get to print and come to this Board this is what they rely on. Mrs. Young said she was a little surprised that the application doesn't come with the abatements. Why doesn't the assessor include the application, so the Board can see the common sense and say this doesn't make sense? Why don't they put the supplemental information on there so someone can make an informed decision? Selectman Chivers said this is all they receive on the other abatements. He didn't see any harm to her. She can come in with an application for current use and it is adjacent to the other property in current use. Mr. Young said maybe this was the route to go, putting it in current use. Mrs. Young asked if this is what the Board would advise. Selectman Chivers said it is either that or take it to the Board of Tax and Land Appeals. Mrs. Young said she hates going up the chain, they will but this is just common sense. Selectman Komisarek said there a simple remedy and that is putting the land in current use. Mr. Young asked who grants current use. Selectman Chivers said this Board. Chairman Robie said if it qualifies. The assessor has to prove to the Board that it qualifies. Mrs. Young asked if someone could do some research where it went from one piece divided into all of these little pieces. Selectman Chivers asked how long ago that happened. Mrs. Young said they could find the tax maps of 1980 and the other ones are supposedly missing. Selectman Komisarek asked if there was multiple tracks on the deed. Mrs. Young said no it is one piece. Selectman Komisarek said this doesn't make any sense. Chairman Robie said if this is a lot of record that the town has, there has to be a deed at the registry. If there is no deed to it then they can incorporate it into their other land. If you go down to the registry of deeds and see if a little lot came off of the big lot and maybe no one ever claimed it. The mappers just can't draw in a lot. Mr. Young asked how the mappers would have that information, because they are the ones who did it. Chairman Robie said maybe it happened with someone related years ago and they subdivided a lot off and no one claimed it. There is a deed for it. Mrs. Young said there is a deed for the property but it goes right up to the river and it includes that. There are no separate parcels. If you look at tax maps five or six years back, you'll see we have five or six there is a 4 acre lot in the middle of the 50 acres. Mr. Young said

there has been a lot of work done on that land. They've talked about this and it has never been able to be resolved. Chairman Robie thought when the land got filled in maybe it pushed that water over and maybe it came up at the east end of the bridge and encompassed the land that might have been there. That brook got pushed quite a ways. Mrs. Young said on someone else's survey that was done his land goes up behind the Sarra's and Bakers which they know it doesn't, it stops. Chairman Robie said the mapper's note on the map that there are areas that are in contention. Mr. Young said they didn't mind paying the tax bill because it was cheap, but now that is a lot of money to pay for that piece. Mrs. Young said it doesn't matter how much money it is, it just doesn't make sense how the reval company arrived at that figure. Chairman Robie said if they measured out the lot it would prove if lot is under water or not. These numbers should be pretty good, Betsy Kruse did a survey and her numbers are good. Mrs. Young said her survey says she has 15 acres and they have 5 acres on the maps. Chairman Robie said if they measured the land it would be close. Mrs. Young said they measured their piece and it is not what the tax maps say. Chairman Robie said she would need to have that verified with Surveyor Jim Franklin. Mrs. Young clarified that the Board was recommending that they put it in current use. Selectman Chivers noted the deadline was April 15<sup>th</sup>. Chairman Robie said years ago they thought this piece was in current use and then it was taken out of current use. Mr. Young said the whole piece was in current use his deed says 15 acres more or less. There should be 12 acres in current use and three acres with his house. We all know how more or less works. Mrs. Young said the lines don't add up to 15 acres and now they're getting taxed on 50 acres. She thanked the Board. Selectman Chivers said they were sorry they couldn't help them, but there is relief available. He asked Chairman Robie if there is any action that should be taken. Chairman Robie said they've granted them the abatement, but he doesn't have the answer to Mr. and Mrs. Young's question. Mrs. Young said she could appeal that (at the BTLA), but she didn't want to spend a lot of money to get this thing settled. It's common sense if you just look at the paperwork. Sometimes things that are common sense and should be a real quick fix is not as easy as it should be with government. She said they would take the Board's recommendation under advisement.

**The Board to consider signing Workers Compensation Program agreement.** Chairman Robie explained Primex is our workmen's comp insurance carrier. Every year Primex sends us an agreement to sign and this year they sent a two year which will cap the increase. If we stay with them they are guaranteeing that the increase will not go over ten percent. If they don't agree to that after the year is up the premium could go up. He wanted to know if the Board wanted to enter into a two year agreement with Primex. Selectman Chivers asked if they ever shopped around to find out if the premiums were lower. Chairman Robie said they haven't recently. He thought the workmen's comp rate was set by the State of New Hampshire. He knows they have a good record for very few claims. He would recommend that they stay with Primex and sign the agreement. Selectman Young asked how much was the workmen's comp. Chairman Robie said he didn't have the premiums, but it changes according to the payroll. Selectman Sandler asked if Primex also furnished training. Chairman Robie said they did. Chairman Robie moved to sign the two year worker's compensation program agreement for 2016/2017 with Primex. Seconded by Selectman Chivers. All were in favor. Motion carried.

**The Board to authorize payment of payroll checks and accounts payable checks. The Board to authorize payment of payroll checks and accounts payable checks.** Chairman

Robie announced the grand total of payroll and accounts payable checks for August 20<sup>th</sup> and August 27<sup>th</sup> was \$126,462.51. Selectman Chivers motioned to accept accounts payable and payroll checks for August 20<sup>th</sup> and August 27<sup>th</sup> in the amount of \$126,462.51. Seconded by Selectman Sandler. All were in favor. Motion carried.

### **Other Business**

**Old Deerfield Road Bridge:** Selectman Young thanked Road Agent Lewis for fixing the bridge on Old Deerfield Road. It looks wonderful and she appreciates it.

**New Baler:** Selectman Sandler noted the baler was disconnected today and will be operational tomorrow. He asked if Road Agent Lewis took the old one out. Road Agent Lewis said no and he thought that Chuck found someone to do it. Whoever was going to take all of the fluids and dismantle the old one had a ramp truck and was going to haul it away. Chairman Robie asked if they knew who hauled it away. Road Agent Lewis said he didn't.

**Warrant Articles:** Selectman Chives said budget season is coming up and this Board should decide now if they are going to have any warrant articles that are going to cost the town money. They flush out this budget on September 19<sup>th</sup>. This is not all of the money that this town is capable of spending. He thought it was important to know if they were going to have any warrant articles. Is anybody on this Board thinking about warrant articles? Selectman Sandler said there was a possibility he supposed to do the repairs that are necessary at the recycling center. It shouldn't be more than \$15,000. Chairman Robie thought that was something they should incorporate in the operating budget. They don't need a warrant article to repair our buildings. Selectman Chivers asked if he had any ideas for warrant articles. Chairman Robie said he isn't a warrant article person. The warrant articles come in after they do their budget. They always get their operating budget approved or not by the Budget Committee and then the warrant articles have another deadline that they have to be in by for approval or not. The warrant articles are reviewed by the Selectmen before they go to the Budget Committee. At this point they need to work with their liaison and department heads and work on an operating budget for the town. The warrant articles are the citizen's choice, they put them out there and the residents make that final decision. Selectman Chivers said as a Board they could also have warrant articles and did he foresee any. Chairman Robie said the only ones that he could foresee are the charitable warrant articles. Selectman Chivers added the road reconstruction article also. Road Agent Lewis noted he mentioned something last year to the Board about salt storage to hold more loads of salt. It was hard for them to get salt last winter. They talked about pricing out another building down there just to hold the salt. He will get those numbers together by December or January. It will be a decision for the Board to make to put it on the warrant or not.

**Budgets:** Road Agent Lewis asked the Board if they wanted the Department Heads to flat line their budgets or do a two or three percent increase. He asked if there was any direction the Board would like to give. Selectman Young said she hoped that everyone was watching their budgets. Road Agent Lewis said the roads are in tough shape and he is in limbo on how much to increase his budget. Chairman Robie said he knows they lowered the budget last year to give our voters the opportunity to buy a piece of property. They are going to make it through this year. Our community is suffering from a lot of neglect and we are going to have to increase our budget

somewhere along the lines here. He noted that Road Agent Lewis mentioned the roads and he drives on the roads. He and Selectman Komisarek looked at Moore Park and they have two buildings over there that need a roof and both need paint. They've been neglected since they have been built. The pavilion is a beautiful building that the Vallee family built for this town. It gets used by a tremendous amount of people and it needs some work. The recycling center needs some work. They can't keep putting up buildings and not maintaining them. The town office is still in pretty good shape, they have a fund for the roof and septic system. They had a warrant article they didn't contribute to last year for three or four specific things to do with this building in case they fail. A tree went through the roof three or four years ago and they got the front of the roof redone. The back of the roof needs to be re-shingled. They are going to have to increase the budget to get the things that they need. This goes along with visioning and master planning. At this rate our property values have decreased and they haven't built a whole lot of anything new to increase the revenue. The values go down and the taxes go up. They need to look at that stuff on the planning side. Our office asked for a copier and there wasn't money. The copier company now says they can't service our copier after July 2016 because it is obsolete. There are little things like this that just come to a point and we need to address them. It's nice to flat line budgets and they did that for the past ten years. Through the recession of 2008 they flat lined and they scrimped and saved. They have to move the ball here and not make too much of a tax impact.

**Health Insurance Premium's:** Selectman Chivers asked how much the health insurance premiums are going to be for 2016. Chairman Robie said they won't have that number until after the first of the year. They are talking a 30% increase in health insurance costs. Selectman Chivers asked how they anticipate that when they go over the budget next month. Chairman Robie said it is very difficult. They have to tell the Budget Committee that they don't have that number before they approve or not approve our budget. If you know that your insurance premiums are going up 30% and we have a \$100,000 health insurance premium, and you put \$30,000 to do something and the next week they whack you with another \$30,000. It turns out being \$60,000 and you go back and say maybe we won't fix that roof. The next generation of this town is going to have to fix the framing, because the roof leaked or you have to take the building down.

**Hourly rate increase for the Highway Department contractors.** Selectman Chivers said last winter they authorized the Road Agent to increase the hourly rate for all of our contract drivers to correspond with the state rate. They did this in two stages. They gave them half the increase that would have been required to bring them to the state rate last year in the beginning of the winter. Should they instruct the Road Agent to incorporate the second half of that rate in the 2016 budget as they committed themselves to for the contract drivers? Road Agent Lewis explained that the state rate never kept pace with the private rate so the private rate was about \$20 behind the state rate. All of the town's around us were paying more than our guys, because our guys were still making the state rate. The state hasn't changed their rate, because they don't hire that much equipment. They hire some snow plower's and that's it. This is where they changed the rate it was to keep pace with the private rates. They risk is our contractor's going to Chester from Candia or going to some other town because they can make \$20 to \$35 more. They were trying to get their rates up to speed to keep the people they have. Selectman Chivers said the question is this Board authorizing the Road Agent to incorporate the second half of that raise

that we indicated that we would give these contract drivers last winter. Road Agent Lewis said that is a decision the Board has to make. Selectman Young said he can tell us what he thinks he needs and why. Chairman Robie said they can wait on that and hopefully he will consider the price of fuel and everything else. Road Agent Lewis said he could survey the other towns also to see what they are paying this year. Selectman Komisarek asked how much was the increase last year. Road Agent Lewis thought it was \$10 per hour. They end up paying in the \$60 range. He thought their highest paid truck was \$70 and the other towns were between \$90 and \$95. The trucks have to supply their own fuel, insurance, driver, truck, plow, and sanders. They supply everything all they do is call them. A new truck replacement cost is between \$150,000 - \$160,000. Selectman Chivers asked if he got a price for salt this year. Road Agent Lewis said yes he just started getting the prices and it's up about \$3.00 to \$5.00 per ton. He'll probably stick with the same supplier they had for 25 years. Selectman Chivers asked about the road reconstruction article. Road Agent Lewis said he'll probably keep it at \$150,000. Selectman Komisarek said at this rate they are losing ground on the roads. Road Agent Lewis said they have been behind for about four or five years, since the year of the floods. They are on target with reconstruction; it's the paving they are behind on. He noted he'll do the road side mowing after Labor Day.

Selectman Komisarek mentioned Selectman Chivers said the contractors were being paid under the going rate. He was wondering with regard to the police and you look at Hooksett and Auburn who make a higher rate, are they seeing this pent up need to compensate people? Have we been suppressing wages to keep the budget down? Selectman Chivers said that was a hard question to answer unless you survey the other towns. They don't have much of a turnover in their police department. He didn't know if that was any indication and it could be the labor market too. He thought Selectman Sandler would be more knowledgeable on the police wages than him. Selectman Komisarek said they aren't getting the turnover so that means people are relatively happy. Selectman Chivers didn't think they pay the people at the recycling center enough for the responsibility they have and what they do for this town. It was noted that the tax rate is \$21.20 and the total assessed value of the town is 402 million. Selectman Komisarek asked if they are seeing upward pressure over the next three to five years. Chairman Robie said there is no growth the 402 million is stagnant. House lots were valued at \$125,000 in Candia for a buildable house lot. He knows of lots that were \$150,000 ten years ago and now they are valued at \$87,000. There is no revenue there. Citizen Joyce Bedard of Patten Hill Road thought she heard when Auburn switched schools to Pinkerton their property values went up 20%. If this goes through there is hope for us. Chairman Robie said Auburn is a growing little attractive town and people are willing to spend \$150,000 for a house lot. In Candia you can't sell them so the value goes down. Mrs. Bedard said the high school choice is huge in people's decision not to move here. Selectman Komisarek heard that Auburn's decision to switch to Pinkerton had a dramatic effect on Auburn in that it was much more in demand. He is the mindset that Pinkerton would increase the property value. This is what he read. Citizen Fletcher Perkins said to think that their property values will increase because they go to Pinkerton isn't going to work, they need development. Selectman Komisarek said they now have residents that are leaving Candia because it has gotten so bad. He knows people that went to Central years ago who said they got a great education but things have changed. He noted with the heroine epidemic things are rapidly changing. Citizen Fletcher Perkins said ten years down the road it will be at Pinkerton just like Central. Chairman Robie said it already is, probably worse. Citizen Fletcher Perkins

said any place you go you're going to have this problem. Selectman Komisarek said they have Hooksett and Auburn that switched to Pinkerton. He asked if he has been to Central lately. Go to Manchester if you don't have your concealed carry permit you should. They are asking our kids to go into this environment and it is real. Things have changed dramatically and they need to be sensitive to families that are telling us that they don't want their kids going there and they feel so strongly they are leaving. They have the oldest population in the county and now they have families moving out of Candia. If you look at Pinkerton and it is cost neutral why wouldn't they want to give that to the residents? Citizen Fletcher Perkins said they don't have the area or mentality that Auburn has, meaning how they are building and how big they've planned. If they want to have that rise and draw people into town, they need subdivisions available. They need change to be able to do that. The mentality in this town has to change. Selectman Young said besides changing education they have to control their tax rate. It can't all be on the town side. There are people that can't afford their taxes. They need to reel in and be efficient. Our infrastructure is dwindling away and they need to get together and work on that as a group. Selectman Komisarek said they are on a barebones budget now. You have to look at the revenues side. Is there anything left in the operating budget, it is amazing they run this town on what we've got. Do they know what his budget is for parks and rec? He has a volunteer from the police department painting the bleachers. Selectman Young said they still have to control the spending everywhere school and town. Chairman Robie said the town has controlled their budget very well for the past 7 or 8 years. It hasn't changed it has gone from 2.1 million to 2.3 million. The infrastructure has been neglected. They need to address some areas and they need to get on board with the School Board and they need to get on Board with us. He loves Candia the way it is and he wants to stay here. Selectman Komisarek said when you talk with the School Board they are alarmed by the plummeting enrollment. He didn't think this was cyclical. They are looking at their budget and they are looking at declining enrollment and may have to let a teacher go. There has to be some type of intelligent targeting on how they are going to increase enrollment at the school. Selectman Young said it was all about compromise. Citizen Russ Dann of Tower Hill Road said the town has to turn around and find a bigger dollar to draw from. They talk about the school. There is transportation, special education and tuition. They can't cut it. If you get three special ed students in and ten families move out so they can go to another school, it doesn't solve that dollar and cents. This isn't an easy cut here and there. The town needs to sell this town and it is the only way you are going to get good dollars, you need to have business in town. They need to grow; it is a bigger nut to tax. He noted that Chester Turnpike was just resurfaced and he really wanted to thank the Road Agent. They got through with no problem and the residents on the road are really appreciative.

Selectman Chivers motioned to adjourn 8:13 p.m. Seconded by Selectman Komisarek. All were in favor.