

**TOWN OF DUNBARTON
BOARD OF ASSESSORS
MINUTES OF MEETING
June 20, 2017**

Present: **Mary LaValley, Chairman**
 Bryan Clark
 Jacques Belanger

Town Officials: Michael Kaminski, Chairman, Board of Selectmen
 Robert Martel, Selectman
 Line Comeau, Town Administrator

Public: George (Skip) Sansoucy, PE, LLC, Utility Assessor
 Pete Kavanaugh, Granite State Power Link (GSPL)

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm by Chairman Mary LaValley.

Mary LaValley made the motion to enter non-public per RSA 91-A:3 II (d) at: 6:33 pm. The motion was seconded by Jacques Belanger.

Roll Call Vote: Mary LaValley - Aye
 Bryan Clark - Aye
 Jacques Belanger – Aye

Motion carried.

The Board entered non-public session with Utility Assessor, George Sansoucy present.

No decisions were made and no votes were taken during non-public session.

Mary LaValley made the motion to exit non-public per RSA 91-A:3 II (d) at 7:25pm. The motion was seconded by Jacques Belanger.

Roll Call Vote: Mary LaValley - Aye
 Bryan Clark - Aye
 Jacques Belanger - Aye

Mr. Sansoucy stated that moving forward all discussion on this matter is public information.

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Assessors resumed at: 7:26 pm.

Present in the public meeting were:

Town Officials: Michael Kaminski, Selectman Chairman
Robert Martel, Selectman
Line Comeau, Town Administrator

Public: George (Skip) Sansoucy, PE, LLC, Utility Assessor
Pete Kavanaugh, Granite State Power Link (GSPL)

For the record, it was noted that the meeting was being recorded to transcribe the minutes, in the absence of the recording secretary.

General Business:

Invoices: The following invoices were reviewed and approved for payment:

- George Sansoucy, P. E. LLC for Utility Appraisal Services regarding Dunbarton's share of Fairpoint Appeals in the amount of \$378.92.
- Municipal Resources Inc for Assessing services in the amount of \$342.00.
- Mitchell Municipal Group, P. A for legal services in the amount of \$59.30.

Correspondence: The following correspondence was reviewed by the Board.

- Correspondence from George Sansoucy PE, LLC regarding the 2016 abatement review for Eversource. After his review, Mr. Sansoucy recommended that there would be no change to the value.
- Correspondence from Granite State Power Link
- Correspondence from Omnivision regarding the estimated cost for software maintenance for the town's appraisal program from July 2017 to July 2018. The estimated cost would be \$5670.00 for two to five users. George Sansoucy pointed out that this company was the best for the town to use. The software is user friendly and the information it provides is user friendly for the taxpayer as well. The property cards are easy to read and understand. He recommended that the town stay with this company and the board agreed.

Summer Schedule: The summer schedule was discussed by the Board and the Town Administrator. There will be no meetings in the month of July and August due to vacations. Town Administrator, Line Comeau, will call the board members if there is any need to sign items and she will post the summer hours for the public.

Schedule Appointment: Pete Kavanaugh from Granite State Power Link (GSPL).

Pete Kavanaugh from Granite State Power Link, GSPL, introduced himself to the assembly.

Mr. Kavanaugh thanked the board for having him here this evening. He stated that he was working out of their office on Airport Road in Concord. He was here to chat about the project and to answer any

questions that anyone had. The presentation would be about 10 to 15 minutes and then open for questions. (See copy of the presentation overview attached.)

Mr. Kavanaugh stated the following: We (GSPL) are not the Northern Pass. We are a separate project. What is The Power Link? The Power link is a proposed transmission line that will go from Quebec to Londonderry, NH, passing through the northern kingdom of Vermont. It will deliver about 1200 megawatts of clean energy that will be a mix primarily of wind power and supplemented by hydro. It is easy to think of this in three links. (1) The AC (alternating current) link, going from wind & hydro source in Quebec to a converter station in Norton, Vermont; (2) the DC (direct current) line going from Norton Vermont, crossing over the river to Littleton to a new switching station / converter station in Monroe; (3) from Monroe, there will be an EC line that will go all the way down to a new switching station in Londonderry.

The key here is that there will be no changes to the corridor whatsoever. GSPL will be using the existing corridor with no new easements, no new widening of the corridor and no clearing. Effectively what we are going to do is leave the DC line which is the large tower (110 ft), as is. That will not be touched. On either side of this tower, there are two 60 ft poles and we would reuse all these poles. We will take those lines down and putting new up. We believe we can re-use eight out of ten of these existing structures. Some of the poles are over 70 years old but the new lines we are going to use are lighter than the ones up there now. So in terms of impact of the 105 plus miles of the AC line, we are basically taking down old lines and putting new lines up. The corridor with the exception of gaining access to do the construction, will not be changed.

Mr. Kavanaugh referred to the project close up in his presentation packet (attached). He pointed out the close up showing the AC line, showing the small yellow line in the Litchfield/Londonderry area where they are going to have to widen the right of way by about 90 to 120 feet, most of it being done on property the company already owns and some owned by others. Any widening of the right of way is totally voluntary.

The close up of Dunbarton was shown. Dunbarton has very few direct abutters on the right of way. GSPL sent out letters last week (see attached) letting people know that they might see people out there checking the lines. Mr. Kavanaugh stated that nothing changes in Dunbarton, no widening to be done as most of this line was widened a year or two ago.

Mr. Kavanaugh pointed out that the corridor is about 350 feet wide, making reference to page 6 of his presentation. This diagram shows the towers. The center tower would be untouched. They will be using the two 60 ft towers on each side and there would be no basic difference from the existing line to the proposed line. George Sansoucy asked about the proposed configuration. Asking if it was correct to say that for 80% of the line, GSPL will be using the existing 60' poles and that they would be under hanging them, having enough span capability to do so and for the special properties, they would overhang that section. He also asked if the company would be using the same size wire. Mr. Kavanaugh stated: Yes, they would be using the same size wires, capable to carry a higher amperage and that the insulators will be a little bit larger.

Mr. Kavanaugh stated that two out of every ten poles most likely will have to be raised higher, a maximum of 80 feet. We (GSPL) have no use to engineer these any higher that we need to, 80 feet would be the absolute max. Therefore there would be no visual impact. The age and the condition of the poles will dictate which ones needed to be improved to make them last longer. The question was

asked about the use of galvanized steel for the poles. George Sansoucy replied that Galvanized steel is the best was to go, saying they deteriorate only 5% over a period of 100 years. He went on to say that the condition of the steel poles was excellent and they had been re-bolted only 10 years ago.

Mr. Kavanaugh went over the economic benefits of this project (page 9 of the presentation). The project provides jobs while under construction and will provide for permanent jobs in the switch and conversion stations. The project will also provide substantial assistance for energy needs of NH low-income customers through Citizens Energy. He stated that National Grid owns 90% of the project and Citizens Energy owns 10%. The question was asked: What is Citizens Energy? This is a national organization for low income customers where money is put into solar energy, home heating oil assistance, Community Action Program, etc. George Sansoucy stated that GSPL would spend their money far more wisely if it went straight to the town, that is the Board of Selectmen, in these towns because they are the ones who would know where the need is. Give them the money and they will spend it wisely. Mr. Kavanaugh replied "So noted."

Mr. Kavanaugh went on to say that the project will reduce the market for electric prices. Energy market savings in NH will be \$1.4 billion over ten years and provide property tax revenues to host towns. The base line estimate statement shows \$590 million in local taxes over 40 years. These numbers were done by a third party for GSPL, someone out of Vermont. These are base line numbers and they would be happy to put it on paper with signatures. As the engineering project goes on, these numbers would change.

George Sansoucy stated that in NH there has been a problem over the past 20 years with all these projects. He recommended the following: Take this back to your engineering folks and have to start the book keeping on a municipal line basis so you can put the correct capitalized costs. What happens is that as they feed these towns the preliminary, it is an estimate based on the whole line and like you said, some towns are doing this, and some towns are not doing it. Mr. Sansoucy used an example of the natural gas transmission and "rollbacks" in \$3 or \$4 million in one year when the final numbers came in. He went on to say: But the one thing I am not going to tolerate for Dunbarton, is a rollback. I will get on your case about this. Because we had rollbacks in the case mentioned, we already know that the way they are doing Northern Pass, there is going to be a problem with the book keeping. You can solve this problem early by setting up the appropriate NH accounting system for how you account for taxes. There is no mystery to it. This will save you a ton of bad will in the future. I would be happy to talk to your people on how to do that. Mr. Kavanaugh stated he would take Mr. Sansoucy up on that.

Mr. Sansoucy went on to say that this has been a massive problem because the engineers don't know anything about utility accounting. There is a precise method for the Federal Government and a precise method for the towns and cities and they are different. They have to marry these two methods and we will be all set.

Mr. Kavanaugh and Mr. Sansoucy discussed numbers and cost of this project. Mr. Sansoucy wanted to know how the numbers were calculated.

After some discussion, Mr. Kavanaugh stated that his point of emphasis was that their minimum base line numbers will be lock in now. Mr. Sansoucy stated that this comes to a method value. Based on the state values, however the Town of Dunbarton does not use the state's numbers. Mr. Kavanaugh stated that these numbers are locked in, they could go up depending on the method. If it goes up, we (GSPL) pay more. \$28 million over the 4 year period, starts in 2021 or 2011, with an absolute peak of \$836 thousand a year. Mr. Sansoucy asked: Why do you even propose locking in some baseline numbers when the Board of Selectmen cannot under the constitution of this state lock in tomorrow's taxes. Mr.

Kavanaugh stated that they would be giving this guarantee as part of the project. Mr. Sansouch stated that the guarantee comes with no strength so if they want to value for more they can and they will. If there is a string attached to it, it is against the constitution. Mr. Kavanaugh stated that what he was saying now is, this is what we are offering as a baseline and that is all he can say. Mr. Sansoucy wanted to know why he felt compelled to do so. Mr. Kavanaugh stated because other towns have asked them to do that. That is because other companies have come back and lowered their baseline and given less. Mr. Sansoucy stated that Dunbarton would be happy to take the baseline. He also said that it has always been the policy of the Board of Selectmen and my history with them, to always to comply with state law.

Mr. Kavanaugh discussed need and timing: 2022 in service date. This has been in the planning for one year, primarily the response to the RFP from Massachusetts for the clean energy legislature mandates put in place by the year 2022. The distributions companies in Massachusetts are distributing from certain segments of energy, off shore wind, hydro, etc. Once that happened this project became viable. Granite State Power Link's RFP will be going into Massachusetts five weeks from now and The Clean Energy Center will decide the winner of that RFP by next January. The two most prominent projects are GSPL and Northern Pass. The winner of this RFP will go forward.

Mr. Kavanaugh stated that the company is in the process of meeting with all boards (towns) involved. They would like to have open community meetings in each town, late July into August. They will set these meetings up. GSPL will bring in all the subject matter experts and basically give everyone the opportunity to talk with each expert, one on one. They will come back to the towns and see which time would be good for the town. They will move forward with the outreach through January of 2018.

A member of the Board of Selectmen discussed timing. They have not been awarded the RFP yet therefore wouldn't they be jumping the gun. Mr. Kavanaugh said that they want to be proactive and don't feel it is a waste of time.

Permitting process: GSPL has to apply to the state of Vermont and NH which would be the SCC process. This is being done now and should be completed soon. They will also be starting the process to apply for the Presidential permit which takes two to three years. They are starting now because it takes longer. He noted that this was needed because they are using the existing right of way. Going through the federal presidential process is always the longest but they feel pretty confident it won't take that long. They feel they can meet that obligation and get started in order to meet their deadline of 2022.

A member of the Board of Selectmen stated that the Governor of NH has been supporting Northern Pass. He asked if GSPL had asked the Governor for his support. Mr. Kavanaugh stated that they have presented their proposal to the Governor. He stated that the bottom line is that the regulators in Massachusetts will make this decision. Mr. Sansoucy stated that the Governor makes the SCC decision, not Massachusetts. Mr. Kavanaugh stated that they felt very good about the SCC process.

Mr. Sansoucy asked about their recent dealings with the town of Monroe and asked about a report requested by Brian Fogg. Had they supplied a report to the town of Monroe? Mr. Kavanaugh said they had. Mr. Sansoucy said he had not received a report from Monroe and would check into that. He also stated that this town had not received a report in eight (8) years. He asked: "If we specify reporting requirements, will you sign on and comply to it?" Mr. Kavanaugh stated that he could not

guarantee that. He said he would bring it back to the company but he could not guarantee it. Mr. Sansoucy stated that this was a serious problem and might result in opposition at the SCC until we get reports back. Mr. Kavanaugh said he would relay that back to the company.

Mr. Sansoucy said he would call Monroe tomorrow to see what they have provided. "There is no reason why you can't properly manage an account for this line." He went on to ask who was in charge of this. Mr. Kavanaugh answered that there were a number of people but gave one person's name, Joe Rossignoli. Mr. Sansoucy stated that this needs to be resolved. Monroe will be the pivot point of this project and GSPL should be working on fixing the problems there. He went on to say: "Other than that, I think it would be fair to say that you've got a fabulous proposal. There will be some pretty clear sailing if you can overcome the concerns of good reporting. I hear a lot of positive things..... We are getting a lot of positive feedback."

There being no further discussion, Mary LaValley made the motion to adjourn. Jacques Belanger seconded the motion, all were in favor.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:20 pm

Mary LaValley, Chairman

Bryan Clark

Jacques Belanger
Dunbarton Board of Assessors

Transcribed by: Janice VandeBogart, Secretary

Attachments:

