

**TOWN OF BEDFORD  
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES  
February 10, 2021  
Virtual**

**1. ROLL CALL:** A meeting of the Bedford Town Council was held on Wednesday, February 10, 2021, via the Zoom platform. Participating were Dave Gilbert (Chair), Denise Ricciardi (Vice Chair), Councilors Phil Greazzo, Melissa Stevens, Bill Duschatko, Lori Radke, and Bill Carter. Also present was Town Manager Rick Sawyer.

Chairman Gilbert opened the meeting at 7:00 PM and read the following statement:

As Chairman of the Council I find that due to the State of Emergency declared by the Governor as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and in accordance with the Governor's Emergency Order #12 pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04, this public body is authorized to meet electronically. Please note that there is no physical location to observe this meeting, which was authorized pursuant to the Governor's Emergency Order. However, in accordance with the Emergency Order, I am confirming that: We are providing public access to the meeting by telephone, with additional access live on BCTV Comcast Channel 22 or streaming online by going to the Town website and choosing BCTV under "departments" and clicking on Channel 22. We are utilizing an online platform called Zoom for this electronic meeting. All members of the Council have the ability to communicate contemporaneously during this meeting through this platform. The public can call into this meeting via the instructions that are being shown on the BCTV broadcast. If anybody has a problem accessing the meeting via the phone please email us at: [councilors2@bedfordnh.org](mailto:councilors2@bedfordnh.org). In the event the public is unable to access the meeting, the meeting will be adjourned and rescheduled. Please note that all votes that are taken during this meeting shall be done by roll call vote.

Chairman Gilbert did roll call attendance.

**Roll call: Carter-alone, Duschatko-alone, Greazzo-alone, Radke-alone,  
Ricciardi-alone, Stevens-alone, Gilbert-alone.**

## **2. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

William Granfield, 6 Ruth St., was disappointed that they only received one bid for the fire truck. They want to foster competition, because competition is supposed to reduce prices and get the best deal for the taxpayer. When he looked at the RFP, he noticed that the compliance list was quite lengthy and heavily detailed. He had asked Mr. Sawyer if any of the companies that decided not to bid had given a reason and he stated that they didn't. They sent out 10 RFP's and only received one bid. He thought maybe the companies looked at the list and thought it was too much work and they couldn't possibly comply with all of it. He understood it was a huge need for the Town and it's important that they purchase the fire truck, but he wanted the Council to be aware that in future, the way they do their RFP's should be streamlined and a bit more open to fostering competition.

Chairman Gilbert stated that he would take one item out of order as they have a number of employees from the Fire Department joining them for the ladder truck agenda item so they are going to take that up prior to the public hearing.

#### **4. NEW BUSINESS**

##### **a. Award of Bid 25-2020 Custom Aerial Fire Apparatus (Ladder Truck) Bid**

Mr. Sawyer stated that this has been their highest capital priority for the last two years. They determined that the maintenance, down time, and cost for repairs on the current ladder truck were no longer acceptable and they should advance the planned purchase by three years. Over the last two years, they have not funded the engine replacement CIP line, so they could apply all of those funds to this immediate need as it's over a year's lead time for delivery. Only one bid was received after providing materials to 10 companies and three indicating interest. They have confirmed that the price received is consistent with trucks purchased in other communities although each one has different specifications. All of the money to complete this purchase is already available in the Capital Reserve Fund for this purchase and with 2020 year-end savings. The purchase will have no impact on the proposed 2021 budget or tax rate. The recommendation is that the Town Council award the contract to Specialty Vehicles, Inc. of Plainville, MA while taking advantage of the 75% prepayment option provided in the contract as their current return on reserve funds are very limited. They have a very high level of confidence with this company given their long history and proven ability to deliver quality vehicles and have supplied vehicles to Bow and Hooksett in 2020 and have a ladder truck to be delivered to Keene in April. He thanked Deputy Chief Folsom and the entire truck committee for their hard work in putting this very detailed specification bid together.

Councilor Duschatko wanted to know if they had any idea why they didn't get more than one bid. Deputy Chief Folsom stated that they sent it out to 10 manufacturers. Five said they didn't want to bid on it. On the RFP that they sent out, they put in there that there were some exceptions that could be made with some of the items. They had plenty of room to respond to the exceptions. The three manufacturers that he talked to said they were very interested and he was very surprised that he didn't get a bid from them. Councilor Duschatko wanted to know if their contract was with a major manufacturer or with the dealer. Deputy Chief Folsom explained that the contract was with the local dealer. Councilor Duschatko wanted to know who gets the prepayment. Chief Hunter stated that the money goes to Rosenbauer, which is the truck manufacturer, not the dealer.

Councilor Radke wanted to know what if something happens and they couldn't deliver the truck, would they get the prepayment back. Chief Hunter stated that one consideration that they could have in choosing to do a prepayment is to include a performance bond. That is an option and he has pricing on that. It wasn't a recommendation by them given their knowledge of the company, however, it's at the Council's discretion. They still have 25% of the payment as leverage, which is why it's less concerning to him.

Councilor Duschatko wanted to know if they had any financial statements on Rosenbauer. Chief Hunter stated only what's been provided already as attached in the staff report.

Councilor Stevens wanted to know if the other companies that didn't respond to the bid were well known companies in the area. Deputy Chief Folsom stated that they were all well represented in the area. They have some vehicles from those manufacturers that they sent the specs out to. Councilor Stevens wanted to know if the other companies were given more time, if they would have responded to the RFP. Deputy Chief Folsom stated that they gave 30 days to submit a bid and he didn't know why they didn't respond. Nobody asked for an extension. Councilor Stevens wanted to know how they receive the RFP. Deputy Chief Folsom stated that they advertised on the Town website. There are 10 major ladder truck manufacturers in the country and he emailed all of the dealers, each representative, an RFP, so they were all notified the same day via email.

**MOTION by Chairman Gilbert that the Bedford Town Council award the bid for a 2021 Rosenbauer Aerial Apparatus from Specialty Vehicles, Inc. of Plainville MA in the amount of \$1,312,952 which utilizes the 75% prepayment savings option and authorize the Town Manager to execute the contract. Seconded by Councilor Duschatko.**

**Roll call: Ricciardi-aye, Radke-aye, Greazzo-aye, Stevens-aye, Carter-aye, Duschatko-aye, Gilbert-aye.**

### **3. PUBLIC HEARING**

#### **a. Consideration of a request from Verizon to construct a cell tower on Town owned land off of Chubbuck Road**

Mr. Sawyer stated that on November 14, 2018, the Town Council adopted a policy that said they should only consider proposals for wireless telecommunication facilities on Town owned land following a public hearing where the abutters were notified. On November 2, 2020, a request from Verizon Wireless was received to see if the Town would lease a portion of land off of Chubbuck Road for a 130' monopole tower. The general area being requested has been the subject of proposed towers in 2003, 2015, and 2017. In 2003, the proposal gained all of the necessary approvals, but was never built. The 2015 proposal did not gain all necessary planning and zoning approvals and was ultimately withdrawn. The 2017 proposal was consider by the Council and following a public discussion the Council chose to reject the request and indicated that no proposal for this site would be considered for one year while a committee was formed to look at the issue. In March of 2018, the zoning ordinance was amended by the voters to require a tower setback of 750' from any residentially zoned parcels and to limit the height of towers to 75' in the R&A and GR zoning districts. This site is in the R&A district. The setback requirement has left the Chubbuck Road site as one of three potential residential parcels in Town that can meet the 750' setback requirement. During the 2017 discussion, Chief Bryfonski provided an update on our existing emergency communication system and our needs going forward, which showed our greatest priority being in the southeast

portion of the community with the second priority being in the northwest. The southeast need has been addressed with new equipment on the Station Road and State Police towers. Should this proposal go forward, we would need to evaluate it to see if it would be beneficial to the emergency communications system and what the cost impacts would be. The Council is under no obligation to provide a lease for a tower as this is simply a request to see if the Town as property owner is interested in having this on its land or not. No federal rules or requirements come into play in this decision. Should the Council come to an agreement with Verizon (or any other tower company) it would not relieve the company of needing to proceed through the Zoning and Planning Board aspects of constructing a tower in the community. Telecommunication towers are permitted in all zones by Special Exception which are reviewed by the Zoning Board of Adjustment that would be followed by a required site plan, which is reviewed by the Planning Board. Abutters would be notified of the hearings to be held by both boards. Several price proposals were provided for the Council to consider.

Chris Swiniarski introduced Chip Fredette, a real estate consultant for Verizon Wireless. Mr. Swiniarski stated that he is an attorney representing Verizon Wireless. He's also a resident, was a member of the ZBA and on the committee involved in the policy recommendations for telecommunications in Bedford. His client has asked the Town if they were interested in leasing space at the Transfer Station for a communications facility or cell tower. He wasn't there to convince them whether or not they should allow a cell tower at the Transfer Station. It is completely in the Council's prerogative as elected officials. He was there to give them some simple facts to help them make a well-informed decision. They are not voting on whether or not there will be a cell tower in this part of Bedford. You are just voting on whether or not the Town will be the landlord. Wireless carriers are entitled to improve their service as a matter of Federal law, so there is going to be a tower somewhere in this area if it's not at this location. This difference is that the Town has a lot of control if it's the landlord of that tower site. If his client has to put it on private property, the Town has virtually no control, because Federal law preempts a great deal of the Town's zoning ordinance, and they've seen that in recent lawsuits where the Town spends a ton of taxpayer money and ultimately loses in the end. The choice is really a simple one. He doesn't have much of a stake in whether the Town says yes or no. He's just asking if they want his client to do this with the Town or with a private party.

Councilor Duschatko stated that Atty. Swiniarski mentioned the Town having more control at this site if they agreed to lease it to them and wanted to know if it would include setting restrictions that would limit the height of the tower or the placement of the tower. Atty. Swiniarski responded absolutely. Councilor Duschatko wanted to know if they could keep it within the zoning limits. Atty. Swiniarski stated that what they had in their submission packet was a 130' tower. That's what they need to accomplish their objective. To that extent, that's what he needs to do. If the zoning allows 130 feet then the answer is yes; if zoning doesn't allow 130 feet then the answer is no.

Chairman Gilbert opened the public hearing and stated that if you would like to provide comment and are on the phone please dial \*9. If you are attending via Zoom on your computer you can raise your hand by finding the option under your name in participants

list. We will also read any comments that have been received during the meeting that were sent to councilors2@bedfordnh.org. Chairman Gilbert also asked that anyone who comments publically to make sure they state their name and address. He asked that they keep their comments to five minutes or less, because they have a number of people who probably want to talk.

Mr. Sawyer stated that the Council received nine emails over the last week or so, but have not received any additional emails during the meeting. Five members of the public have raised their hand.

Cecelia Doucette mentioned a 10-page document she sent the Council that contained a lot of important references. She wanted to bring to their attention two important documents. One is from the State of NH, which was a legislative commission report that was released on November 1<sup>st</sup> after a bill was passed into law to investigate the health and environmental impacts of wireless technology. She stated that the NH Legislators determined that there was a significant conflict of interest between the wireless industry and the FCC. The report makes 15 recommendations to bring safe, responsible and reliable technology into the community. They are recommending hard wired fiber optics to the premises. She talked about the report and information and research that were in the report. She said that the science was clear and was submitted to the FCC and they chose to disregard it. She talked about how the FCC was being sued by several organizations. She stated that it would not behoove Bedford to install any further wireless infrastructure. She talked about a policy book that was published for municipalities to understand why wireless and cell towers were not a good choice.

Mr. Sawyer stated that Ms. Doucette wasn't a resident and didn't state her address or credentials. Ms. Doucette stated that she was from Ashland, MA. She is a technology safety educator, Director of Education Services for the international non-profit wireless education, Director of Massachusetts for Safety Technology, and a presenter at the EMF (Electro Magnetic Fields) medical conference.

William Neuendorf and his fiancé Alicia Compton, 15 Magazine Street were in the meeting. He thought it was outrageous that they were even entertaining this idea. He echoed everything Ms. Doucette said. They are less than a mile from the Transfer Station. They are dumbfounded that this was even up for debate that they are going to put up a cell tower near anybody. They have quotes and scientific studies backing all of the risks that come with a cell tower. He thought fiber optics was the way to go. He stated that it was a known fact that countless studies have displayed that wireless gives you increased cancer risks, cellular stress, increase in harmful free radicals, genetic damages, structural and functional changes in a reproductive system. He can't believe that he already has to deal with salt piles at the Transfer Station that is a health risk. It angers him that he had to be on a zoom call to tell them that this is insane to him. If this goes through, he would like to know who votes yes, because they would never get a vote from him every again. He would hate to have to move out of his house and go somewhere where he feels safe. Alicia Compton wanted her written email statement read. Chairman Gilbert said that it was on the record, because she sent it to them and it's a public document. Mr. Neuendorf

wanted people to hear the information in it. Mr. Sawyer stated that they can read it into the record, but the Council wouldn't read something that had been submitted prior to the meeting in the record. It's just attached to the minutes. Mr. Neuendorf read the following email that was sent to the Council from Alicia Compton:

*To The Town Council of Bedford:*

*I am writing in reference to the proposal to lease land to Verizon and construct a 130' cell tower off of Chubbuck Rd. The fact that this issue continues to surface at Bedford Town meetings clearly shows that someone (or more than one) on this Council does not fully understand the health ramifications that cell towers present. As author Maya Angelou stated, though, "...when you know better, do better." And with that thought in mind, my hope in writing the following will help you in knowing the plethora of reasons that I vehemently oppose this cell tower, and so should you.*

*We should first all know this truth: the truth that this cell tower has little to do with the claim of helping to facilitate better communications with health & safety professionals, and everything to do with the enticement of money offered to the town of Bedford by Verizon in an effort to further a 5G rollout agenda. The signal coverage surrounding Chubbuck Road is more than adequate, as I have never experienced wireless communication issues while living on Magazine St, a street abutting Chubbuck Rd. In addition, I've personally utilized emergency response via ambulance while living on Magazine St, and had zero issue with wireless communication to initiate such service. Plus, how could health & safety personnel, such as firefighters, advocate for the construction of this cell tower when the International Association of Firefighters passed a formal resolution in 2004 denouncing the placement of wireless infrastructure (cell towers) on or near fire stations due to health risks from wireless radiation? After all, these health & safety personnel are of a profession that's creed states their duty is "to serve their community, and protect their lives and property." So why would they support a cell tower that would NOT serve nor protect the residents of Bedford?*

*How could health & safety personnel support construction of a cell tower that would practically be in some of their own backyards, where their children play? Or, the same cell tower that would be erected near the baseball fields and skate park adjacent to Chubbuck Rd, also where they or their families play? And, the same cell tower that would be placed on land right next to Riddle Brook, the elementary school where their spouses work or their children (& several HUNDRED other Bedford children!) attend? The answer is, I am certain that if presented with real data and facts, these health & safety professionals could and would not, in good conscience, support constructing a cell tower off Chubbuck Rd.*

*If they knew that Harvard University's Ethics Dept. published a paper demonstrating the Federal Communications Commission to be a "captured agency...dominated by the industries it presumably regulates." Human exposure guidelines for RF microwave radiation used by the FCC are 25 years old, & address only thermal, not biological impacts of exposure, which have now been firmly established. This despite being advised to update its guidelines by the US General Accounting Office, the American Academy of Pediatrics, & more than 250 medical/scientific/public health officials from around the world. The guidelines have been the subject of an open FCC docket since 2013 with no resolution, creating an uncertain regulatory environment.*

*If they truly grasped the myriad of health concerns cell towers pose. The Academy of Environmental Medicine reports that studies demonstrate "significant harmful biological effects occur from non-thermal RF exposure", & those effects may include: cancer, genetic & DNA damage, neurological degeneration & nervous system dysfunction, immune system dysfunction(such as frequent infections), cognitive effects(such as headaches & memory loss), sleep disturbances, depression, cardiovascular stress & heart rhythm disturbances, inflammatory*

*conditions, joint & limb pains, increased rates of diabetes, kidney damage, reproductive & fertility issues, birth & developmental defects---all of which have been reported in more than 10,000 peer-reviewed scientific literature. In fact, Swiss RE, the 2nd-largest re-insurance company in the world, called 5G specifically a "high impact" liability risk due to health risks in its 2019 SONAR emerging risks report. According to the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), children absorb up to 10 times more wireless radiation in the bone marrow of the skull compared to adults due to their thinner skulls and higher brain conductivity. In a 2012 study, Yale University researchers found that the offspring of lab animals exposed to wireless radiation had abnormal brain development & exhibited all the symptoms of ADHD, results of grave concern for those teachers & staff at Riddle Brook Elementary that are, or will become, pregnant. Schools around the world have reported adverse health conditions, including cancer, in their staff & students after cell towers were erected on or near school property. Two such cases of this are: the numerous students and professors at San Diego State University that developed brain & breast cancer after being exposed to cell tower radiation on a daily basis near classroom 131 at Nasatir Hall, in addition to the several staff & children that were stricken with brain & kidney cancer after a cell tower was placed near Weston Elementary School in Ripon, California. Multiple studies have linked higher rates of cancer and serious health conditions when living within 5 blocks of a cell tower, & it is imperative to note that many Bedford residents & Riddle Brook Elementary School would fall into such a zone if the proposed cell tower off Chubbuck Rd comes to fruition.*

*If the well-being and lives of innocent children aren't enough to convince you to vote NO, then how about this fact: cell towers emit high-frequency radio waves, or microwaves, that can travel as far as 45 miles, which would include every last mile of Bedford, and would affect every last resident in Bedford. If I haven't yet, now do I have your attention? It is in the best health interest of every last resident in this town, including yourselves (and your families & friends), to vote no to constructing yet another dangerous cell tower in this town. And if you do vote in favor of erecting this cell tower, then rest assured that the residents of Bedford will rally together & vote in favor of replacing you in the upcoming election; replacing you with a representative that will have our best interests at heart. I implore you to make the right decision. Our health and lives are counting on you.*

Chairman Gilbert stated that if everyone was going to keep saying the exact same thing over and over, he didn't think they needed that. They understand everyone's desire to not want the cell tower, but please be brief if you are going to comment.

Kathleen Bemiss, 37 Magazine Street, stated that they have been fighting this battle for many years. She had read through the cell tower's application and she was offended by the language in it, because it was very threatening, if you don't do this, we will do that. In terms of control, whether it's on Town land or in her back yard, nobody has control over it except the cell tower owner. If they build in that area, it would only serve the dump that has no cell towers. The open space at Spring Hill, most of the area that it would cover is not populated. They would have to cut down trees in order to make it fit within the zoning ordinance. She stated that the amount for the land lease in the application was \$25k - \$30k per year. She didn't think it was enough for the Town to take this on because of how much staff time it has taken the Town to deal with this in previous years. One way or another there will also be lawsuits. She said that the cell tower company coming tonight wasn't necessarily looking to them to lease the land. They are checking a box, because on their application they have to say that they tried someplace else so they can say they've tried there and they wouldn't let them. The zoning ordinance is very specific in

terms of height, location, and that the Town people did not want it in a residential area. She thought the more important issue was the conservation of it. She has done considerable amount of work in terms of trying to put this into a Town forest or into conservation. This is valuable land for the Town that they should protect. There are multiple species out there. It is untouched land and should remain as such. She didn't think they should be doing this at this time. Chris Wells, Piscataquog Land Conservancy had highly encouraged the as a Town to decide what they want to do with the property as a cohesive plan. Let's come up with plan to use this land appropriately.

Chairman Gilbert told speakers to stay on topic. This was about cell towers. Ms. Bemiss stated that it wasn't about the cell tower, it's about the lease of the land.

Peter Sullivan, 41 Magazine Street, asked that the Town Council vote to not enter into negotiations with Verizon Wireless for a cell tower lease on the Chubbuck Road property. He also asked the Town Council to establish a working group to assess the wildlife impact of future development at the Chubbuck Road property and formulate a master plan for future development or conservation of the property. That is the underlining reason and rationale for him asking the Council not to enter into lease negotiations. It isn't health reasons. The broader topic is at the Chubbuck Rd. property, which has been approached by numerous proposals over the last several years. He thought it was property that they need to come up with a coherent plan for how they manage it as a town on whether they are going to develop or conserve that property. It is such an important part of the habitat. There are over 80 species of mammals, birds, fish, reptiles, and amphibians that live in this area, specifically the Blandings turtle that is on the State endangered species list. He talked about the Blandings turtle and various sightings. He thought they needed to do their due diligence and see what the wildlife impact would be of any sort of development on the Chubbuck Road land whether its cell towers, solar panels or Transfer Station expansion. He's not opposed to development, but he was opposed to development without understanding what the impact was going to be. He thought the important action for the Town to take would be to say they don't have enough information to even think about entering a lease negotiation. They need to get more information and they need to see what a wildlife impact would be. They need to come up with a plan for how the Chubbuck Road property should be utilized and then once they have that, if the plan includes a cell tower, that's the time to enter into a lease negotiations agreement. They need to look at the big picture, because there are a lot more implications for conservation. They have an awesome opportunity here and thought they had the responsibility to really look at the information and realize what they don't know and to act accordingly.

William Granfield, 6 Ruth Street, wanted to know if Councilor Ricciardi was going to recuse herself as an abutter to this project. Councilor Ricciardi stated that didn't have to do that and she wasn't going to recuse herself. Mr. Granfield asked Councilor Ricciardi if she didn't think she had a conflict of interest as a direct abutter to this project personal or otherwise. Councilor Ricciardi stated that it wouldn't matter if she lived there or not; she would still feel the same way and she wasn't going to recuse herself. Mr. Granfield stated that the fact was she does live across the street and it does create a personal and financial

conflict of interest for her, so he believed it was appropriate for her to recuse herself in the vote. Councilor Ricciardi stated that she disagreed and she wasn't going to.

Mr. Granfield stated that he had been a ham radio operator and amateur radio operator for over 20 years and has a pretty good understanding of how radio waves work. He wanted to know from Mr. Swiniarski of this was on LTE band 71 in the 700 megahertz range where this tower was going to be. Mr. Swiniarski stated that they will have transmitters in the 700 megahertz range wherever they put a tower. They also have licenses on several different bands. He didn't exactly which bands they will be on, but 700 for sure; that's their primary band, but there will be others as well. Mr. Granfield stated that the 700 megahertz range is right around the TV broadcast range. These radio waves have been energized around all around us before we were born and before our grandparents were born. This is a heavily used piece of spectrum that has been around for an extremely long time. He wanted to know how many of them have Wi-Fi in their house, how many carry a cell phone in their pocket every day. They have smart devices that are all over them all the time and they all use wireless communications. He found it ironic that those on Magazine Street were worried about environmental consequences when they moved next to a capped off dump. He didn't understand how they could argue that. They live next to a dump. He thought it was a beautiful neighborhood and they all have beautiful homes, but he found it ironic. He thought the stuff that was being presented was pseudoscience. It's up there with the anti-vaxxers. It's not real. There is no evidence behind it. This stuff has been around for a very long time. The anti-5G stuff has been associated with the QAnon conspiracy theory folks. Those are the people that stormed the Capital on January 6<sup>th</sup>. This is not good stuff. They do not need their leaders thinking about this stuff. Mr. Neuendorf interrupted saying that Mr. Granfield shouldn't be bringing politics into this. Chairman Gilbert stated that this was one person's comment and no one else needs to comment. Mr. Granfield thought there was a need for cell service in this area. If they ever want to get out from under the thumb of a single service internet provider then they need to understand that 5G is the future of that situation. He thought it was ridiculous. Radio waves were around everywhere. It's the future of internet things. 4G brought them amazing things like Uber. They couldn't have Uber without 4G technology. Imagine what 5G is going to bring them.

Mr. Granfield stated again that he thought Ms. Ricciardi should recuse herself with a conflict of interest. Councilor Ricciardi stated that she appreciated his opinion and she disagreed and stated that it's Senator Ricciardi. Mr. Granfield stated that she wasn't appearing tonight as a senator.

Will Bemiss, 37 Magazine Street, lives next to the dump. He's 24 years old. His mother, Kathleen, had been a participant in these dialogs in the past. Mrs. Ricciardi is a close neighbor and friend and is proud of her continued involvement on behalf of her constituents. He agreed with the points stated earlier by Mr. Sullivan. He's studied environmental science extensively and he wrote his senior thesis at Villanova on the subject. He thought preservation of their natural spaces was important. Respecting and conserving their finite natural resources was beneficial to the health of the whole community. He thought actively behaving as a steward regarding the local environment

should be one of the primary responsibilities of the Town Council. He's lived there his whole life and is a close abutter. He grew up playing in those woods and wrote his college essay about how important that was to him. During quarantine the only thing that kept him sane was running on the cross country trails back there. The ongoing construction at the Transfer Station and the expansion has been a disturbance and has stressed him pretty greatly. There were a lot of trees taken down, the bright lights shine through his bedroom, the trucks are going down the road, and interrupt what was a pretty serene forest. Those woods are filled with wildlife, wetlands and a whole ecosystem that they should value, understand and treasure. The land that they are specifically discussing is the Spring Hill open area, the Chubbuck forest surrounding the Transfer Station, the Powder Hill open space, and the Legacy Field and cross country abutting that. This process of cell companies trying to build a tower back there is ongoing, it's dangerous to their environment and by extension the health of the community. Today it could be a cell tower, tomorrow it could be field complex, strip mall or some other monstrosity and he thought Bedford was better than that. His mother has joined in the fight against environmental degradation as has State Senator Denise Ricciardi as have many of their friends and neighbors. This is not just about a cell tower. These requests from Verizon lawyers and others will continue to come before the Council and if those interests had their way every square foot of land back there would be used up. They shouldn't have had to present a case to convince the Council that tearing down their natural environment was a bad idea. It shouldn't have to be a consideration of dollar signs, because you can't put a price on these things. Conservation for conservations sake is not too high of a bar to ask and they ought to honor that. He's asking them to do their job. Don't just deny the cell tower, put that Town-owned land into conservation, tie the hands of the Town, and no new construction back there. Their duty as election representatives is to represent them and they have made it abundantly clear that nobody wants a cell tower, a strip mall or anything other than nature in their natural spaces. If they don't preserve the land that they live on then they've failed them completely. He hoped what he said to heart and consider he's not alone in his position. The hundreds of young voters in Bedford would stand behind him on this.

Chairman Gilbert closed the public hearing.

Joleen Worden apologized, but she didn't know how to raise her hand using this platform. She didn't know if they had to be abutters, but it should have been abutters. She thought the first woman who spoke for about a half hour had no business speaking. She mentioned the property at 35 Magazine Street. Her concern was how many people carry a cell phone. She mentioned that at 35 Magazine Street you can't get decent cell reception at all if you need to use your cell phone. She wanted to know how many people carry a cell phone, because this is called 'not in my backyard'. Everyone there objecting to this should get rid of their cell phones, otherwise don't preach to anybody about anything. She spent 10 years living in Manchester next to the high tension power lines and they heard all the same things there. Every bit of it was the same. It was, 'your kids are going to die. Your kids are going to be unhealthy, blah, blah, blah.' They spent 20 years living there and she has had three of the healthiest kids on earth and they still are. She was very concerned about the things that were said. Her real objection is that she

knows that at 35 Magazine Street they cannot get cell reception. If people really want to get rid of all this stuff they've got to throw away their cell phones. Don't try and play both sides of the fence. She stated that the address she's speaking for was 35 Magazine Street, but she also owns a property at 7 Birchwood Circle.

Chairman Gilbert stated that they were now out of public hearing.

**MOTION by Councilor Ricciardi that the Bedford Town Council not enter lease negotiations with Verizon Wireless for a cell tower lease on Chubbuck and recommend that the Town Council form a subcommittee as suggested by resident Dr. Sullivan to study the appropriate use for the land and possible appropriate conservation strategies. Seconded by Councilor Carter.**

Chairman Gilbert stated that he wanted to deal with the Verizon lease only; whatever else has come up in discussion they can deal with later. That's a separate subject. He thought they should only stick to the Verizon lease right now. They should not be combined. Councilor Duschatko agreed with Chairman Gilbert that this was not a 2-part issue. Their discussion tonight was regarding a proposal to lease a piece of land to Verizon. He thought the discussion should be limited to that particular factor.

Councilor Ricciardi restated her motion:

**MOTION by Councilor Ricciardi that the Bedford Town Council not enter lease negotiations with Verizon Wireless for a cell tower lease on Chubbuck. Seconded by Councilor Carter.**

**Greazzo-aye, Stevens-aye, Ricciardi-aye, Radke-aye, Carter-aye, Duschatko-aye, Gilbert-aye.**

**a. Other New Business – None.**

**5. OLD BUSINESS – None.**

**6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**a. Public Session – January 27, 2021**

**MOTION by Councilor Duschatko that the Bedford Town Council approve the minutes of the January 27, 2021 Public Session. Seconded by Councilor Carter.**

**Roll call: Stevens-aye, Greazzo-aye, Radke-aye, Ricciardi-aye, Carter-aye, Duschatko-aye, Gilbert-aye.**

**7. TOWN MANAGER REPORT**

- 1) March 9th – Local Election Day, 7:00 AM – 7:00 PM, Bedford High School.  
March 10th – Budgetary Town Meeting, 7:00 PM, Bedford High School.
- 2) Absentee ballots can be requested by filling out the application on the Town Clerk website. As soon as they have a ballot, a sample ballot will be placed on the website.
- 3) The last day to register to vote or to make name and address changes prior to the March 9th Election is Saturday, February 27, 2021, 11:30 AM – Noon at the Town Office Building for the purpose of voter registration and changes only. Residents may also register to vote at the polls on Election Day.
- 4) No political signs are permitted on Town property or traffic island.
- 5) The Bedford Men’s Club will hold a forum for the Town Council race on February 11, 2021 and the School Board race on February 18, 2021 both at 7 PM. The forums will be held virtually and broadcast live.
- 6) COVID-19 Pandemic – Bedford thankfully has seen a drop in our number of cases with 46 current COVID-19 positive patients. I strongly encourage all residents to follow the CDC and State of NH recommendations for protecting yourself including wearing a face covering and washing hands as often as possible. The Bedford Walgreens will be part of the vaccine distribution, but you have to make an appointment.
- 7) Drought – Bedford and a much of southeastern NH remains in the condition defined as “Abnormally Dry”. Unfortunately northwestern NH has fallen back to abnormally dry to moderate drought conditions after having been cleared from the drought.
- 8) February 15th – The Town Office Building, Library, and Transfer Station will be closed for Presidents Day.
- 9) Miriam Johnson has been named the new head librarian with Mary Ann retiring. The Library Trustees have announced Miriam to be the new Library Director. She has been the Assistant Library Director for a long time and she’ll do a great job.

## **8. COUNCILOR COMMENTS AND COMMITTEE UPDATES**

Councilor Carter stated that the Conservation Commission met last night in a workshop to update everyone on what’s going on. They have a relatively new Commission. It was talking and understanding some accomplishments and things they would like to see. They will continue to work on that as the Commission meets over the next year. He talked about the Cub Road Club and the clean up on the road event on April 17<sup>th</sup>, 9:00am to 3:00pm. They have the Rotary, High School, schools, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, Men’s’ Club, and Women’s Club are all involved. He wished everyone a happy Valentine’s Day.

Councilor Duschatko stated that on Monday was a Planning Board meeting. One of the items was the approval of a home business of dog breeding (Labradoodles) on Perry Road, which was approved. There was also a site plan approval for Wirebelt Company of America. It received unanimous approval by the Planning Board. Unfortunately, they received notice this morning that Wirebelt was considering another opportunity next to or in close proximity to their current facility in Londonderry. They hope the Londonderry possibility falls through, because they would really like to see them locate to Bedford.

Councilor Radke congratulated Miriam Johnson. She thanked the DPW on the fantastic job during the snowstorm. They always step up and do the best job possible. She thanked

all of the people that took the time to submit testimony tonight for the public hearing. She was glad to see that their democratic process works. They do listen and they do read all of your letters.

Councilor Ricciardi thanked the residents for contributing and making their voices heard. She gave a big shout out to all of the Bedford Cares volunteers. They've had a surge in grocery shopping needs and they have really stepped up and are doing a fantastic job. She gave a special shout out to Lauren Welk, because she is doing lots of shops multiple times a week for families. She mentioned the staff and how much they've been working during this difficult time and all of the Department Heads. She talked about her Senate bill 99 and that if it should pass, it should give property tax relief to everyone in NH.

Councilor Stevens mentioned that there would be a ZBA meeting on Tuesday to discuss an application that was a continuation of an application that they discussed a month ago. She hoped everyone has a great Friday as grades K-8<sup>th</sup> will all be in school for the first time together since February of last year. Kudos to DPW for being out there and always doing a good job and also the Fire Department and the Police Department for working through these difficult times with the weather and COVID; they really appreciate it.

Chairman Gilbert thought they could start meeting again in person starting with their next meeting. No one from the Council objected, so the Town Council would be meeting at BCTV in two weeks.

#### **4. NON-PUBLIC – RSA 91-A:3 II (b) & (d)**

**MOTION by Councilor Radke that the Bedford Town Council go into non-public session per RSA 91-A:3 II (b) the hiring of any person as a public employee.**

**AND**

**RSA 91-A:3 II (d) the consideration of the acquisition, sale or lease of any real or personal property which, if discussed in public, would likely benefit a party or parties whose interest are adverse to those of the general community.**

**Seconded by Councilor Duschatko.**

**Roll Call Vote: Carter-aye, Ricciardi-aye, Greazzo-aye, Stevens-aye, Radke-aye, Duschatko-aye, Gilbert-aye.**

The public meeting ended at 8:21 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Dawn Boufford