

MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 4, 2019 SELECT BOARD MEETING

MEMBER'S PRESENT: Board Members Chair Mike Houghton and Allison Knab were in attendance along with Town Administrator David Moore. Vice Chair Joe Lovejoy was absent.

At 7:00 p.m. Mr. Houghton opened the meeting.

MINUTES

Minutes for the 10/28/19 Select Board meeting were unavailable for review.

TREASURER

Town Treasurer Deb Bronson reported that the General Fund balance is \$3,458,086.63. Tax bills will be going out shortly.

POLICE DEPARTMENT

Police Chief Anthony King updated the Board on his department's activities. Chief King is working with the executives at Lindt to create an active shooter plan. The new cruiser (obtained due to an accident) is due to arrive soon. Chief King is requesting a new radar detector as the one they have is outdated. Ms. Knab made a motion to expend the money out of the traffic control program for the new radar detector. Mr. Houghton seconded the motion which passed unanimously. Chief King continued his report noting evaluations for the officers are nearly complete. Chief King is working with IT consultant Lee Todis on a computer replacement plan for the computers in his department. Mr. Houghton made a motion to approve the purchase of computers as requested. Ms. Knab seconded the motion which passed unanimously. Chief King requested an adjustment be made to the Detail Rate over the next three years in order to remain competitive with surrounding towns. He provided background on how the detail rate was established. There was discussion over how the rate is determined here and in other towns. Details are paid by the requester. Mr. Moore advocated instituting a policy as to whom sets the rates. Mr. Houghton made a motion to approve the requested fee schedules as outlined over the next three years. Ms. Knab seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Prior to the meeting, Chief King distributed the first draft of his staffing allocation report. The Board had no questions at this time.

NEW BUSINESS

Co-chairs Bettina Kersten and Andy Gilman of the Pedestrian & Cyclist Advocacy Committee (PCAC) came forward for their annual presentation to the Board to report their achievements and goals for the future. They provided input to the Master Plan noting residents are supportive of adding pedestrian and bicycle accessibility. They are working with town staff and NHDOT to make improvements. Mr. Houghton thanked the committee for bringing awareness of the issue to the community and for advocating for improvement. Both he and Ms. Knab voiced support for the work the committee has done. They encouraged them to seek volunteers to add to the committee. Ms. Knab made a motion to reappoint the PCAC for another year with the goal as expressed in their materials as well as the general areas of interest being their charge. Mr. Houghton seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

The Chair recognized Town Clerk / Tax Collector Joyce Charbonneau who came before the Board to object to a new request to hold a bake sale during the Primary and the Presidential election. Getting residents through the voting process as efficiently as possible is her priority. Bake sales encourage people to linger, slowing down the process. In addition, given the higher turnout for those elections, she cited difficulty finding parking because people are in the building chatting. Ms. Charbonneau suggested the group hold a bake sale at the smaller town election and at town meeting and the various indoor yard sales and craft fairs. The Board supported Ms. Charbonneau's request to deny bake sales beyond the ones previously held in 2018.

The Chair recognized Finance Administrator Dawna Duhamel who gave an update on the tax rate. She suggested making a Fund Balance policy to help guide how much is used to reduce the tax rate. She explained how the re-val and the school bond effected some homeowners. She is reviewing the draft report on the audit and will present it when it is finalized.

Mr. Houghton made a motion to authorize the Town Administrator to execute the 2019 grant agreements. Ms. Knab seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

The Chair requested an update on the 2020 budget process. Based on the input received at the Select Boards prior meeting, Mr. Moore presented two different scenarios for the budget process. He described timing of presentation of materials to the Budget Advisory Committee. They reviewed the options. There will be changes to the meeting schedule and the presentations to make the process more efficient. Mr. Moore will be meeting with the department heads to craft their budgets. A great deal of discussion was given to the timing of who and when the Budget Advisory Committee should meet. Mr. Moore reviewed some of the major budget adjustments that will be requested, including health insurance costs, compensation adjustments, funding the finance reorganization, stand-by coverage for the Fire Dept., additional officer for the Police Dept., reorganization of Parks & Recreation/Dept. of Public Works, four elections in 2020. Mr. Moore will move forward with organizing the agreed upon meeting schedule.

The Chair asked for an update on the Curbside Collection Advisory Committee. Mr. Moore reported that the committee is reviewing logistics. They are weighing the benefits of the conversion while trying to determine what Stratham residents want. Costs are increasing; we need to decide on a strategy. Mr. Moore will have more information once the committee meets again.

TOWN ADMINISTRATION

- Mr. Moore is working on a draft of the TIF FAQ.
- He reminded employees about vacation carryover.
- He presented an invoice from State of NH for \$1282 cost recovery in association with the PFAS investigation. Mr. Moore would like to revisit this at a later date.
- He's been working with the Frost family regarding resident usage of town owned land near their property
- He has been having discussions with the Heritage Commission on legislation 46A. Mr. Moore reported that they do not plan on pursuing any zoning changes at town meeting.
- He attended the Drinking Water Commission meeting.

- He also attended the GACIT Committee meeting regarding the Bunker Hill Ave. intersection. If the project gets approved, an engineering study will be done to determine the best way to address the issue. In the interim, adding turning lanes might improve the situation.
- In November, Senator Sherman will be spearheading a meeting in conjunction with the Rockingham Planning Commission to study the corridor from Portsmouth to Exeter – Routes 33 and 108. Mr. Moore will attend the meeting.
- Ms. Knab and Mr. Moore are developing a Communications Policy which was drafted by resident Geri Denton. Library Director Lesley Kimball has provided input.
- Mr. Moore is following the Stewart Farm application to the State.

The Chair recognized resident Colin Lavery who inquired as to when the yellow lines on the major connector roads and abutting roads would be striped. He emphasized the importance of the lines to improve visibility especially during winter storms.

The Chair wanted to address the Wiggin Burial lot, which is behind the depot house. The Heritage Commission initiated legislation to allow the Town to gain access to the burial ground and the trail leading to it. The burial ground has become unkempt. Meanwhile, the Wiggin family has formed a non-profit dedicated to forming a trail and maintaining the burial grounds. They oppose the legislation because it would affect family burial grounds across the state. As this is the second time the commission has brought legislation forth, Mr. Houghton questioned their efforts to work collaboratively with the Town. He is concerned that they have lost their focus as an advisory committee to the Select Board. Mr. Moore reviewed the State's laws governing such committees. Discussion about other committees' procedures ensued. They felt it is important for all committees to make the Select Board aware of legislative actions. After Town Meeting, Mr. Houghton would like to meet with each Board and Commission to review their purpose and powers.

Mr. Moore reviewed meetings scheduled for the coming week.

At 9:23 pm Ms. Knab made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Houghton seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Richard
Recording Secretary