

## **MINUTES OF THE JULY 18, 2022 SELECT BOARD MEETING**

Meeting held in the Hutton Room at the Stratham Municipal Center

MEMBERS PRESENT: Board Members Chair Mike Houghton, Vice Chair Allison Knab, Joe Anderson

ALSO PRESENT: Town Administrator David Moore; Town Planner Mark Connors

At 6:00 pm Mr. Houghton motioned to go into a non-public session in accordance with RSA 91-A:3, II (a) Personnel. Seconded by Mr. Anderson. Roll Call: Houghton – Yes, Anderson – Yes, Knab -Yes

At 7:05 Mr. Houghton motioned to exit the non-public session and seal the minutes noting that failure to do so may adversely affect the reputation of another or render the proposed action ineffective. Mr. Anderson seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

At 7:06 pm Mr. Houghton opened the public session of the Select Board. Mr. Anderson seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Mr. Houghton directed attention to the Treasurer's Report, asking for questions or comments. None were noted.

Mr. Houghton recognized Town Planner Mark Connors who began by reporting on the Open Space Plan meeting. He's been incorporating suggestions from boards and commission chairs into the RFP. Desires around open space planning have changed over the years. In the past, the focus was on environmental and wildlife protection. Nowadays, there is a push for connecting parcels and more intensive recreational uses. Mr. Connors would like to see better outreach surrounding our assets and its uses.

Mr. Connors reported on the DOT project of installing a center aisle from Sandy Point to Greenland. Because they will be making the road shoulder narrower, our concern is for pedestrian/cyclist safety. There is a possibility they may install a side path. The project engineer will be at the next Select Board meeting. Mr. Moore advocated the Town stay involved in the design process.

Mr. Connors said that although improvements on Marin Way were budgeted for this year, DOT is seeking additional information about our project and we are following-up. DPW Director Nate Mears has been having ongoing discussions with them to address the issue in coordination with Mr. Connors.

Mr. Connors reported that the PCAC will be reformed as a subcommittee of the Planning Board with tasks delegated by them. Their primary focus will be on Master Plan goals, like the complete streets policy. They will be identifying corridors and proposing improvements for pedestrian and bicyclists. Mr. Moore feels that with guidance from the Planning Board, their projects will be more manageable and feasible.

Mr. Connors feels the departments in the office are running smoothly. MRI has been helping with inspections. He is thrilled to have Susan Connors, the new planning project assistant,

onboard. She has a strong background in environmental issues which is extremely helpful on the storm water and water quality projects.

Next, Mr. Connors reported that the new construction next to Market Basket has run into PFAS and chloride groundwater contamination issues, likely due to an antique business that was on the property decades ago. They must install a monitoring well and construct a vapor barrier around the foundation.

Rt. 33 Heritage Legacy District met and the Planning Board approved interim fees. Everything is in place for property owners to submit applications for new zoning. A letter will be going out to the owners within the corridor soon.

Mr. Connors reported on the possible donation of a portion of 18 Jana Lane to the Town. The Planning Board recommends the Select Board accept the donation. Its valuation is low; low taxes. It abuts one of the few large conservation areas and has good connectivity to publicly owned lands. The Conservation Commission expressed interest in a site walk. This will likely be set up prior to their meeting on the 27<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Connors reported having preliminary conversations regarding digital mapping tools. It is a recommendation for heritage, historic and conservation land. Mr. Moore suggested making it an implementation task in the open space plan.

Mr. Connors is working on zoning amendments for the Planning Board to consider. Some items include a sign ordinance update and housing recommendations.

Mr. Anderson motioned to approve the minutes from July 5<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Houghton seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Ms. Knab wanted to give a giant thank you to Mr. Mears for contacting Fish and Game about mowing the park.

Next, Mr. Houghton moved to the electricity aggregation project. The Energy Commission has been staying up to date with our aggregation with Rockingham Planning Commission. The Committee recommends continuing the MOU. Our contract expires in October. RPC is organizing this group. This aggregation helps us secure better pricing than if we were on our own. Mr. Anderson motioned to allow the Town Administrator to enter into a MOU with Constellation Energy. Ms. Knab seconded the motion. All voted in favor. Mr. Moore will provide an update on August 1<sup>st</sup>.

#### INFORMATIONAL

Mr. Moore reported that the CMS auditorium is not available on the Saturday after Town Election, which is when Town Meeting is typically held. Mr. Anderson advocated holding the meeting on March 25<sup>th</sup> at CMS. Mr. Houghton favored keeping with the tradition of holding Town Meeting on the Saturday after the election and finding a different venue, perhaps SMS. Mr. Moore said he would explore options and report back.

Mr. Moore called attention to a training the Select Board could attend, the Academy of Good Governance.

Mr. Moore reported that New Hampshire Retirement System has had a reduction of rates for the next biennium.

DES has declared a moderate drought. It is unclear if the declaration was a formal announcement of a drought, which would allow municipalities without water systems to implement restrictions. In the past, we had been prepared with the required three day notice once a drought is officially declared. Mr. Houghton requested a reminder of the stages of I, II and III. Right now, voluntary restrictions are being urged. Mr. Moore will confer with Police Chief King and DPW Director Mears. HOAs have more flexibility in imposing restrictions.

#### RESERVATIONS

Mr. Moore said that the Guerette's are requesting use of a fire pit during their rental of the pavilion. The Board was not in favor of this request indicating the site was not designed to accommodate this use and the presence of simultaneous non-party members using the site could pose safety concern.

#### ADMINISTRATION

Mr. Moore referred to his goals document and the June 30<sup>th</sup> budget report in the packet. Mr. Moore reported that Finance Administrator Christiane McAllister has made positive changes regarding accounting improvements and will explain more at her next board appearance.

Ms. Knab expressed concern about the permitting software rollout and wants to proceed cautiously. Mr. Moore is working on finalizing the contract. The rollout will include testing and training.

Mr. Houghton was pleased that at halfway through the year, we are halfway through the budget. He asked if there were any concerns they needed to be aware of. Other than being overextended on energy line items, Mr. Moore has no concerns.

Mr. Houghton directed attention to the Employee Meeting follow up. At 8:55 pm Mr. Houghton motioned to go into a non-public session in accordance with RSA 91-A:3, II(c) to discuss a matter which might adversely affect the reputation of another. Ms. Knab seconded the motion. Roll call: Houghton – yes; Knab – yes; Anderson – yes.

At 9:55 pm Mr. Houghton motioned to come out of the non-public session and seal the minutes noting that failure to do so may render a proposed action invalid. Mr. Anderson seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

At 9:55 pm Mr. Houghton motioned to adjourn. Mr. Anderson seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Richard  
Recording Secretary