

## **MINUTES OF THE MAY 4, 2026 SELECT BOARD MEETING**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Board Members Chair Allison Knab, Vice Chair Joe Anderson, Tedd Tramaloni

**ALSO PRESENT:** Town Administrator Tim Roache, Police Chief Anthony King, Wiggin Memorial Library Director Steve Butzel

At 7:01pm Ms. Knab opened the meeting and called for a motion on the minutes. Mr. Anderson motioned to approve the minutes of April 20, 2026. Mr. Tramaloni seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Ms. Knab swore in officer Jonathan Ballard. They congratulated him.

Ms. Knab asked for comments or questions on the on the Stratham Industrial Park Easement Deed. Mr. Anderson motioned to approve the Easement Deed for the Stratham Industrial Park dated May 4, 2026. Mr. Tramaloni seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Ms. Knab recognized Steve Butzel for the library report. Mr. Butzel announced that Wiggin Memorial Library will be joining a new consortium with the Hampton and Greenland libraries, effective July 8. The group will be known as the Consortium of Rockingham Area Libraries (CORAL). Once active, Stratham cardholders will be able to borrow materials from all three libraries and browse a shared online catalog containing the combined collections. Items placed on hold will be transported to Wiggin Memorial Library for pickup.

He outlined the benefits of the partnership, noting that while there is a small, shared start-up cost, the consortium is expected to generate savings within two to three years. The program will be reviewed periodically to ensure it continues to meet community needs. Mr. Anderson commended the library for its innovative practices.

Chief King reported that CSO Dave Hersey began work today and will focus on patrols at Stratham Hill Park, educating visitors on park rules and issuing ordinance violations when necessary. Mr. Anderson expressed concern about whether CSO Hersey would have sufficient availability. Chief King noted that because he is retired and also serves with the Fire Department, his hours are limited, but the plan is for him to devote most of his time to the park during the warmer months and shift to Fire Department support during the rest of the year.

Chief King also noted that one officer has recently returned from deployment and another is scheduled to deploy in October.

Chief King praised the new Facilities Manager for the improvements made at the police station. He reported that the new camera server has been ordered and the department is still awaiting three computer stations. The Board confirmed they are moving forward with the replacements and are awaiting clarification regarding the computer list and CIP funding.

He provided an update on the new cruiser, noting that the former 2014 vehicle is now at DPW awaiting auction. Officer Pierce is developing a long-term succession plan for the department's fleet.

Chief King stated that the department's one-year accreditation review is approaching and no issues are anticipated. Wellness visits continue to go well and will be reassessed at year's end.

The State recently completed an audit of several department grants, which Chief King handled with the Finance Administrator. The audit was completed with no issues.

Finally, he noted that the Board previously approved a radio-related grant request submitted through Senator Pappas for \$120,000. The department is earmarked to receive the funding in 2027.

Chief King reported that officers have been highly active in community outreach efforts. The department recently received a Community Outreach and Betterment (COB) grant to support traffic-law enforcement and held a well-attended presentation with 30–40 participants, led by Sergeant Doucet and Officer Holbrook. Additional outreach included a program on Internet Crimes Against Children, the reinstatement of Coffee with a Cop, participation in Timberland's Touch-a-Truck event, and the National DEA Drug Take-Back Day. Two officers also joined NH and MA State Police in escorting a local Make-A-Wish child to Boston Logan Airport. The department will participate in the upcoming SMS career fair. Chief King emphasized the importance of community engagement as a core part of their mission.

Chief King also revisited prior discussions about establishing a second-in-command position. He plans to present a proposal to the Board in the near future outlining options—such as a deputy chief or captain role—to support succession planning. He noted he will provide a full presentation including pros, cons, and his recommended path forward.

Chief King provided the Board with an informational handout on an issue that has become a growing topic of discussion in New Hampshire. He noted that he is not requesting action at this time but wants the Board, Town Administrator, and staff to be aware of it, as questions are beginning to surface in the community, including on local forums. He explained that the material outlines a task-force model used by certain New Hampshire law-enforcement agencies to coordinate with federal authorities on specific immigration-related matters. He shared a list of agencies currently participating and noted that there are both advantages and disadvantages for a community to consider, including financial and political implications.

Chief King emphasized that under current rules, local police may notify federal authorities when encountering an individual with a warrant or detainer but cannot hold or transport that person unless federal officers respond. The task-force model would grant limited authority to detain or transport individuals to a federal facility, functioning as an additional tool for coordination with federal law enforcement.

He stated that he has spoken with other area chiefs, including one from a participating agency, and believes the Town should begin discussing the topic in the future so officials are prepared to respond to public inquiries.

Chief King reported that he convened a working group, which included Ms. Knab, to evaluate the department's current SIG sidearms in light of nationwide reports of accidental discharges and related litigation. The issue has been raised by several New Hampshire agencies, prompting a review of available information, including potential advantages and disadvantages of alternative equipment.

He noted that the working group is gathering findings, and he will present a full report to the Board in the future. Depending on the outcome and whether a transition to a different model is recommended, the cost could be covered largely or entirely through existing donation accounts, including the golf fund. Chief King emphasized that he wanted to keep the Board informed as part of maintaining transparency.

Mr. Tramaloni asked whether Chief King had received information about Axon's AI-assisted reporting tools. Chief King said the topic is emerging statewide and noted that, as a member of the NH Law Enforcement Accreditation Commission, he has already drafted an AI policy focused on reporting requirements. He explained that while such tools could be activated through existing systems, he does not support using AI to generate officers' reports, as sworn documents must reflect an officer's direct observations. He added that no national guidance recommends replacing officer narratives with AI.

Chief King noted that AI may have limited administrative uses—such as assisting with training materials, policy development, or grant writing—but not for official reports. He raised the issue at a recent Rockingham County chiefs meeting; the Attorney General's Office is involved. At this time, there is no formal statewide guidance, though he expects rules and recommendations to be developed in the future.

At 7:35pm Ms. Knab motioned to go into a non-public session in accordance with RSA 91-A:3, II(b) and (c) to discuss hiring and a matter that may adversely affect the reputation of another. Mr. Tramaloni seconded the motion. Roll call: Knab-yes; Anderson-yes; Tramaloni-yes.

At 7:53pm Ms. Knab motioned to come out of the non-public session and seal the minutes determining divulgence of this information likely would affect adversely the reputation of any person other than a member of this board. Mr. Tramaloni seconded the motion. Roll call: Knab-yes; Anderson-yes; Tramaloni-yes.

Mr. Merrill presented the Stratham Hill Park Preservation proposal, explaining that the goal is to hire a preservation consultant to conduct a full inventory of the park, document its history, and identify historically significant built features. The resulting report would be submitted to the State to determine whether the park is eligible for the State Register, and potentially the National Register in a later, separate phase. He noted that pursuing this designation does not restrict the Town's ability to manage the park; rather, it helps clarify what features are historically important and supports long-term goals such as creating an interpretive panel for public education. Ms. Knab added that the Stratham Hill Park Association supports the effort.

Mr. Merrill stated that the consultant's fee is approximately \$6,000. They discussed funding sources. It was agreed that the Heritage Commission Capital Reserve Fund (CRF) would be the appropriate funding source. Ms. Knab asked that he confirm support from the full Commission. She also requested that the contract include language requiring the consultant to seek approval before undertaking any work that would significantly increase the cost. Mr. Roache noted that he is working toward standardizing contracts and will ensure this requirement is addressed.

Ms. Knab motioned to authorize the Town Administrator to move forward with drawing up a contract with the preservation company to do an evaluation or report on Stratham Hill Park. Mr. Tramaloni seconded the motion. All voted in favor. They will follow up later regarding the funding.

#### ADMINISTRATION

The Board revisited its prior authorization for Hall & Parlor LLC to begin work on the Lane property porches. The original motion was based on a mid-range estimate of \$54,500; however, when Mr. Roache spoke with Mr. Bedard, he clarified that his proposal included a low-to-high range, and he is more comfortable with a not-to-exceed amount of \$67,500. The Board noted

that some preliminary work has already begun, primarily porch and shed removal coordinated with DPW, but the substantive repair work has not yet started.

Board members expressed concern about increasing the cap before understanding the full scope and cost of other needed building repairs, including heating and water systems. They also discussed the risk of authorizing too low a cap and having work pause mid-project. Ms. Knab noted that if all tasks trend toward the high end of estimates, total costs could exceed \$100,000, and the current contingency would not cover that.

The Board agreed that setting a higher cap without full cost information would be premature. Mr. Roache expects to have updated estimates for the remaining building needs after meeting with the DPW Director and Facilities Manager. The Board decided to hold off on adjusting the contract amount and will revisit the issue in two weeks when they have a clearer picture of total project costs.

Mr. Roache reported that he met with the temporary Building Inspector consultant, who recommended advertising the Building Inspector position as a full-time role. The ideal candidate should have zoning code enforcement experience and be able to serve as Health Officer. The position will be posted this week with a salary range of \$70,000–\$85,000. Mr. Anderson noted that NHMA currently lists only two similar openings, neither in towns comparable to Stratham.

Mr. Roache also continues work on the Employee Manual. Mr. Anderson suggested focusing on the five or six items that have been recurring issues. The Board agreed to review the manual at the next Select Board meeting in a non-public session.

Mr. Roache reported that the RFP for Stevens Park is ready for release and will cover the pavilion (including septic), parking lot, and grading work. He noted that the Fire Tower RFP will be presented at the next meeting; additional language was added to ensure the contractor coordinates with Rockingham County State Police to avoid disrupting existing communications equipment.

He also identified the Town's solid waste contract as a high-priority DPW item, with an RFP to be issued soon.

Regarding the Stratham Hill Park Visioning process, Mr. Roache is coordinating with stakeholders and plans to schedule an organizational meeting for mid-June, facilitated by the Rockingham Planning Commission.

Ms. Knab and Mr. Anderson plan to attend upcoming Library meetings and will coordinate to avoid attending the same session.

Mr. Tramaloni requested that the Town determine which laptop will be used before ordering the necessary cable for Select Board meeting streaming. He recommended conducting a test run and placing a launch plan on a future agenda. He noted that a test he ran with Mr. Hickey worked smoothly. The Board also discussed ensuring presentation slides are visible to viewers and preventing accidental recording of non-public sessions.

Ms. Knab raised the Teen Coordinator position, noting her only concern was whether the individual would be permitted to drive the Town van. Mr. Roache will contact Primex to confirm if there is an age restriction under the Town's insurance. Mr. Anderson pointed out that the wage listed in the job posting differs from the previously approved range. The recommended wage is \$21–\$23.50. As the position had already been approved, no further motion was required.

The Board reviewed the proposed DPW cost recovery policy. Ms. Knab suggested adjusting the DPW schedules so that someone is regularly working on Saturdays during the busy summer season; she agreed this idea should be vetted with DPW. Mr. Anderson felt the approach was workable.

The Board discussed how to define which events would trigger DPW cost recovery, emphasizing that the intent is to apply the policy only to large-scale events—such as PAWS Walk—not small family gatherings. They noted that very few events at the park reach that scale. Ms. Knab expressed concern about clarity and avoiding “surprise billing,” wanting organizers to know in advance if fees will apply.

Members discussed possible criteria, such as attendance, duration, and scope of use (e.g., multiple pavilions or fields). They also considered whether event organizers should appear before the Select Board or whether the existing online approval process could be modified to say the Select Board will take the event request into consideration and include notice about potential fees. Mr. Anderson suggested adding language requiring organizers to coordinate with DPW at least a week before the event, with DPW providing a cost estimate at least 48 hours in advance.

The Board also discussed staffing challenges, noting that unlike police details, DPW cannot outsource coverage if staff are unavailable. Ms. Knab asked that Mr. Hickey review the proposed policy and work with the DPW Director to define when it should apply. She also encouraged DPW to consider having weekend coverage during peak season. Mr. Roache will discuss this with the DPW Director, and Mr. Anderson noted that upcoming seasonal hires may help.

Regarding pricing, Mr. Anderson said DPW time would be billed at time-and-a-half plus a small administrative fee.

#### APPOINTMENTS

Mr. Tramaloni noted that Mr. Hanson is up for appointment but was unable to attend a recent Energy Commission meeting. Ms. Knab read an email indicating that the Commission Chair supports his appointment. Board members expressed concern about appointing individuals who then do not attend meetings, as this has been an issue on other committees. Mr. Anderson motioned to appoint Luke Hanson to an Alternate position on the Energy Commission for a three-year term to expire at Town Meeting in March 2029. Mr. Tramaloni seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Ms. Knab asked Mr. Hickey to prepare a memo summarizing the status of e-bike use at Stratham Hill Park, noting that the Conservation Commission, abutters, and the Stratham Hill Park Association are all opposed to allowing e-bikes. Mr. Anderson stated that the current ordinance, adopted in 1974, references “motorized and like vehicles,” and should be updated to explicitly include e-bikes. Ms. Knab questioned whether the proposed ordinance should be reviewed by Town Counsel. Mr. Tramaloni asked whether the existing language already covers e-bikes. Ms. Knab said clarity is needed, as e-bikes are becoming a problem at the park. Mr. Roache noted that pedal-assist e-bikes complicate interpretation. The proposed ordinance would prohibit all types of e-bikes. He will schedule a Public Hearing for June 1.

The Board discussed commercial dog walking at Stratham Hill Park. Ms. Knab noted that commercial activity is already prohibited under the existing ordinance. Mr. Anderson suggested setting a limit on the number of dogs one person may walk, and the Board agreed that no more

than two dogs per person should be allowed due to control and waste-management concerns. They discussed enforcement, potential ordinance language, and whether Town Counsel should review the changes.

Ms. Knab recommended bringing the issue to TMAC and the Conservation Commission for input. Mr. Roache asked whether this would be an amendment to the existing ordinance; Mr. Anderson said it would fall under the Animal Control section as a new paragraph. The Board agreed the ordinance should explicitly state that walking three or more dogs is prohibited. Ms. Knab said the proposal should also be reviewed with Mr. Hickey.

At 8:58pm Ms. Knab motioned to go into a non-public session in accordance with RSA 91-A:II(b) and II(c). Mr. Anderson seconded the motion. Roll call: Knab-yes; Anderson-yes; Tramaloni-yes.

At 9:32pm Ms. Knab motioned to come out of the non-public session and seal the minutes noting divulgence of the information likely would affect adversely the reputation any person other than a member of this board. Mr. Tramaloni seconded the motion. Roll call: Knab-yes; Anderson-yes; Tramaloni-yes.

At 9:33pm Ms. Knab motioned to adjourn. Mr. Anderson seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Richard  
Recording Secretary