

MINUTES OF THE JUNE 1, 2026 SELECT BOARD MEETING

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

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

At 7:00pm Ms. Knab opened the meeting and called for a motion on the minutes. Mr. Anderson motioned to approve the minutes of May 18, 2026 with the amendments. Mr. Tramaloni seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Ms. Knab recognized Mr. Butzel for his department report. He provided an update on the library's strategic planning process, noting that two focus groups have been completed and the community survey is nearly ready for distribution both online and in print. Survey results, combined with focus group input, will inform a fall community forum and a two-year strategic plan. The survey link will be shared through multiple town and library communication channels. In response to a question from Mr. Anderson, Mr. Butzel explained that the focus groups served as an initial step, with the survey expanding outreach to a broader audience.

He reported on new services in development, including improved wireless and remote printing via an online portal. In response to a question regarding copyrights from Mr. Tramaloni, he noted that the library does not typically review content but may consider adding policy language similar to standard terms of service used elsewhere.

He also announced that the library will soon offer online access to the New York Times, similar to the existing Wall Street Journal service, with 24-hour access codes available to cardholders. NYT Cooking and Games will not be included.

Mr. Butzel provided updates on space-use improvements, including reorganizing the adult non-fiction wing to create more seating and meeting space. He thanked Public Works staff, particularly Mr. St. Onge and Mr. Pond, for assistance with shelving changes and installation of a new digital sign. Six new chairs have been ordered, with existing chairs to be relocated to expand seating options.

He confirmed that the consortium project with Hampton and Greenland libraries remains on schedule for a July 8 launch, with outreach planned to explain the transition and its benefits. He highlighted upcoming summer reading programs beginning June 26 and noted the library's participation in the NHSPCA Paws Walk and Stratham SummerFest.

He concluded by thanking Mr. Batchelder and Public Works staff for recent support with outdoor maintenance. He noted ongoing drainage issues in the parking lot, which may need further review with the Town Administrator.

Chief King requested approval for two funding-related items. He explained that the department remains one cruiser short this year and proposed reallocating Lieutenant Pierce's current

administrative cruiser, which has approximately 40,000 miles, into patrol service. In exchange, a high-mileage cruiser with roughly 135,000 miles would be moved into the detail fleet. The necessary equipment transfer into the administrative vehicle is estimated at \$4,500–\$5,000. This approach would allow the department to request only one new cruiser in next year's CIP instead of two. Chief King asked that the cost be funded from the detail account and suggested authorizing up to \$5,000, with any amount above that to be coordinated with the Town. Mr. Anderson motioned to authorize the Police Chief to use up to \$5,000 from the detail fund for the equipment conversion. Mr. Tramaloni seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Chief King presented a second funding request, noting that he has followed this practice for several years. He requested authorization to use \$1,500 from the golf fund account to purchase small giveaway items for community engagement, including items distributed through patrol vehicles, at Family Fun Day, and to walk-ins at the Police Department. He stated that \$1,500 should be sufficient to cover needs through next year. Mr. Tramaloni motioned to approve the transfer of funds from the golf account in the amount of up to \$1,500 to purchase giveaways for police-sponsored community events. Mr. Anderson seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Chief King noted that he had a non-public matter for the Board. Ms. Knab stated that non-public items would be addressed at the end of the meeting and indicated he did not need to remain, as she was aware of the topic and had no concerns.

Ms. Knab invited members of the Stratham Hill Park Association to discuss their committee status. Gregory Blood (President), Dan Crow (Vice President), and Mel McGrail (Secretary) introduced themselves. Mr. Blood provided a brief history, noting that the Association was formed in 1906, re-recorded in 1957, and had bylaw revisions in 1993 and 2010. He asked for clarification on whether the Association is formally recognized as a Town committee, noting that such recognition would ensure liability coverage.

Ms. Knab confirmed that the Town considers them a committee but wished to consult Town Counsel to determine whether any formal distinctions or additional steps are required. Mr. Roache asked about their finances, and Mr. Crow explained that their funds are held by the Trustees of the Trust Funds, consistent with their bylaws, and that they are not a 501(c)(3). The Association requests funds as needed for projects such as SummerFest tents, a blower for the park, and the ice-skating rink.

Members suggested the issue may be clerical in nature. Ms. Knab said she would also confirm with Primex how a committee is defined. The Board expressed no concerns with their status, noting that they already have staff and a Select Board representative assigned. Mr. Roache will research the Association's formation history and report back.

Ms. Knab opened discussion on the draft ordinance language regarding commercial dog walking at Stratham Hill Park. She noted that draft language addressing individuals walking multiple dogs had been prepared but not yet reviewed by legal counsel. Mr. Roache confirmed he is awaiting feedback from the Town attorney.

Board members offered comments. Mr. Tramaloni asked whether language was needed to address dog walking on private property within the trail system, noting ongoing concerns. Mr. Roache did not believe the Town could regulate activity on private property. Ms. Knab asked whether the reference to “commercial” dog walkers was appropriate. Mr. Anderson preferred framing the restriction as “walking more than two dogs,” and Mr. Roache noted that commercial activity is already prohibited in the park. The Board agreed to remove the word “commercial” from the draft. A public hearing on the ordinance language is scheduled for June 15.

Kyle Hollasch presented a proposal to pursue a PREP (Piscataqua Region Estuaries Partnership) grant to support an assessment and planning study for the Town Landing at the end of River Road. He described the site’s historical, ecological, and recreational significance, noting that it is the Town’s only unencumbered riverfront access but is currently unmanaged and showing signs of degradation. The PREP grant offers up to \$25,000 with no Town match required; funds would be used for an inventory of existing conditions, evaluation of shoreline damage, assessment of recreational and access needs, and development of a stewardship and management plan. The grant cannot fund construction but may support public-outreach components such as a plaque.

Mr. Hollasch explained that the study would be completed by a qualified consultant, with 20% of the grant dedicated to public outreach. He and Ms. Price confirmed that the consultant does not need to be selected prior to applying. He noted that the project could inform future grant applications or capital planning, even if no further action is taken. Mr. Cote of the Conservation Commission stated that the Commission had already expressed support and did not require an additional vote.

Board members asked clarifying questions regarding deliverables, reimbursement procedures, and project coordination. Ms. Knab emphasized that Ms. Price must serve as the official project lead for purposes of managing Town funds, with Mr. Hollasch assisting as a volunteer coordinator. Mr. Roache explained that grant reimbursements would be treated as unanticipated revenue and managed outside the operating budget.

Following discussion, Mr. Tramaloni motioned to authorize Ms. Price to assist Mr. Hollasch in submitting a PREP grant application for an environmental planning and assessment study of the Town Landing site. Mr. Anderson seconded the motion. All voted in favor. Mr. Hollasch will return on June 15 with updates. They thanked him for his work on this project.

Ms. Knab opened the floor to public comments. David Wardrop of 69 Winnicutt Road expressed concerns regarding the proposed subdivision at 80 and 80R Winnicutt Road. He raised questions about the aquifer protection district 20% impervious surface cap, noting that the plans appear to use an adjusted effective lot area calculation rather than the per-lot method described in the zoning ordinance. He questioned whether an independent review of the calculations, aquifer impacts, wetlands, and soil-based lot sizing had been conducted, particularly given a previously granted waiver for soil-based lot size determination. He also expressed concerns about potential impacts on wildlife, wells, septic system setbacks, and the accuracy of lot size representations on the plans. He stated he would submit a detailed written document outlining his concerns to the Town Planner and DES.

Ms. Knab encouraged him to send his comments to the Planner for distribution to the Conservation Commission and, where appropriate, the Planning Board. She noted that DES has issued a dredge and fill permit and that the Conservation Commission will discuss the matter at its next meeting. Mr. Roache added that a preservation easement related to the historic house on the property still needs to be finalized. Ms. Knab reiterated that many of the issues raised fall under the Planning Board's jurisdiction and thanked Mr. Wardrop for his comments.

Myra Citron, an abutter to the proposed development, expressed concern that the project is not in the best interest of the Town and is inconsistent with Stratham's mission to remain a pastoral community. She urged the Select Board, Planning Board, Conservation Commission, Heritage Commission, and other relevant bodies to submit comments on the project, not just the Conservation Commission. She stated that her goal is not to stop the development but to ensure it is scaled and designed responsibly to protect wetlands and community character. She referenced concerns about the driveway serving two large homes, the granting of two bonus lots despite a 2018 Town vote limiting such bonuses, and other issues she believes should be re-examined. She asked the Board to review the project with a critical eye and consider past oversights. The Board thanked her for her comments.

ADMINISTRATION

Mr. Roache reported that there have been no applicants for the Building Inspector position. He will reach out to neighboring towns to explore potential collaboration. The Town's temporary part-time contractor is working well in the interim.

He noted that the Stratham Hill Park working group met on May 15. A public outreach and visioning session for Stratham Hill Park will be held on June 11 in the Sewall Room, facilitated by the Rockingham Planning Commission. Mr. Hickey and Ms. Price are leading the overall effort.

The Town Clerk reported that 120 dogs remain unregistered and that tax bills have been issued. The Police Department is conducting a stuffed-animal drive and requested permission to place a donation box in the Municipal Center lobby; the Board supported the request.

Mr. Roache said he continues work on the employee manual and recommended involving a labor attorney to assist with finalization. He noted that the Exeter Area Chamber of Commerce sent a thank-you letter regarding the Great Bay Food Truck Festival. He will address the Lane Property later in the meeting.

Mr. Anderson asked about the status of the DPW Detail policy. Mr. Roache said Mr. Batchelder will attend the next Select Board meeting to discuss it.

Mr. Anderson reported that he will provide a full update on the Communications and Community Engagement Committee at the next meeting. He noted that the committee has completed an audit of communication practices in neighboring towns and plans to meet with small groups of residents of varying ages to identify communication gaps.

Ms. Knab opened discussion on the Lane Property. Mr. Roache reported that the final outstanding assessment concerned the septic system. Greg Blood inspected the system and found the tanks deteriorated and unsafe, with cracked structures, root-filled distribution boxes, and a compromised leach field. He recommended replacing the tanks, distribution boxes, and leach field, and provided a concept design for a shared leach field with three tanks. The estimated cost is approximately \$64,000.

Mr. Anderson asked whether a second estimate should be obtained; Mr. Roache agreed that would be good practice but noted that timing is also a factor, as the Town hopes to rent one of the properties soon to generate revenue. He suggested exploring whether septic work could be phased. He added that the cost implications will require revisiting how remaining Lane gift funds are allocated and recommended holding a strategic session to determine next steps.

Ms. Knab asked for an update on Mr. Bedard's work; Mr. Roache said he is proceeding within his approved budget. Mr. Anderson asked about projected rental revenue for the year; Mr. Roache said Finance would need to confirm, but the inability to rent the Tannery Building likely puts revenues below expectations. The Board agreed to schedule a strategic session to plan the path forward.

Ms. Knab opened discussion on road naming for the Copley Properties subdivision. Mr. Anderson asked whether the Board had previously agreed on "Gallant Road." Ms. Knab invited Mr. Goddard of Copley Properties to respond. He provided draft Heritage Commission minutes indicating support for the name "Gallant" in recognition of the Gallant family. He also noted that a second road, which will not contain structures, could be named "Wildflower Circle," and that he selected several wildflower-themed names from the Heritage Commission's list to keep the naming scheme cohesive. Ms. Knab noted that all proposed names must be reviewed by E911.

Mr. Goddard then addressed comments made earlier by abutters. He stated that although the Select Board is not the approving authority at this stage, he respects residents' desire to voice concerns. He emphasized that the project underwent more than a year and a half of review by the Planning Board, Conservation Commission, Heritage Commission, Parks and Recreation, and Town staff, and that both the developer's and the Town's third-party engineers thoroughly reviewed the plans. He noted that the project complies with zoning and that the density could have been significantly higher under the ordinance. He encouraged residents to participate earlier in the process and to engage in future zoning updates if they wish to influence development standards.

Mr. Anderson asked what approvals remain outstanding. Ms. Knab stated that the only remaining item is the DES dredge and fill permit, on which the Conservation Commission intends to submit comments.

Ms. Knab opened the Reservations agenda item and recognized Chris Heal of 11 Bunker Hill Avenue. Mr. Heal, representing the Cub Scouts, requested permission to use the top of Stratham Hill Park on October 9 for a Cub Scout campout. He explained that the location works well for younger scouts because parents can easily pick up children if needed. If allowed, they would

apply separately to the Fire Department for a fire permit. No portable toilets would be placed at the top of the hill; participants would use the restrooms at the base. Ms. Knab moved to approve the Scouts' use of the top of the hill on October 9 for their sleepover. Mr. Tramaloni seconded the motion. All voted in favor. Mr. Heal said he would also notify the Police Department.

Ms. Knab next introduced the Crestview block party request for a partial road closure. After brief discussion, Mr. Tramaloni motioned approval of the request for a partial closure of Crestview Terrace between numbers 42 and 44 Crestview from the hours of 1pm to 7pm on Saturday, June 13, conditioned on the Police Department's approval. Mr. Anderson seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Ms. Knab asked for any other comments. Upon hearing none, at 8:11pm, Ms. Knab motioned to enter a non-public session in accordance with RSA 91-A:3 II (b), (c), (d). Mr. Tramaloni seconded the motion. Roll call: Knab-yes; Anderson-yes; Tramaloni-yes

At 9:11pm Ms. Knab motioned to come out of the non-public session and seal the minutes noting failure to do so may render the proposed action invalid. Mr. Tramaloni seconded the motion. Roll call: Knab-yes; Anderson-yes; Tramaloni-yes

Ms. Knab asked if there was any further business. Mr. Roache said there were documents to be signed. At 9:12pm Mr. Tramaloni motioned to adjourn. Mr. Anderson seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Richard
Recording Secretary