MINUTES OF THE JULY 6, 2026 SELECT BOARD MEETING

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

ALSO PRESENT: Town Administrator Tim Roache, Fire Chief Jeff Denton

At 7:00pm Ms. Knab opened the meeting and noted that it was being video recorded as a test. She then called for a motion on the minutes. With the addition of the non-public and adjournment times to the June 15 minutes, Mr. Anderson motioned to approve the minutes of June 15, 2026. Mr. Tramaloni seconded the motion. All voted in favor. Mr. Tramaloni motioned to approve the minutes of the special Select Board meeting of June 23, 2026. Mr. Anderson seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Ms. Knab requested comments on the financial reports. Mr. Anderson noted the year is at the halfway point and, although some categories appeared over budget, overall spending was at 49%, indicating the budget was on track.

Mr. Anderson asked for clarification on how the Lane property is affecting expense and revenue projections. Mr. Roache will follow up with Ms. Ruest, noting that adding this context will make the financial report more complete.

Ms. Knab recognized Fire Chief Denton for his department report. Chief Denton stated the department is operating well and remains very busy, nearing 500 calls at mid-year.

The ISO rating review is ongoing; the town's lack of pressurized water hydrants lowered the score but the department is working towards remediation. Improvements in training and quarterly reporting will increase the score as well. He continued to explain the reason for the rating and the steps they're taking to improve. Adding cisterns in new developments will also support future rating increases.

He reported that the tanker has been repaired and should return tomorrow. Engine 3 is out of service and will be sent out for a turbo-charger replacement. Both repairs are costly, but no further issues are anticipated.

Chief Denton reviewed building maintenance needs. Bay lights require replacement, which will involve renting a lift for $525 plus the cost of new fixtures. An emergency $8,000 repair was needed for the fire pump control panel, and a radiant heat circulator pump was replaced earlier for approximately $5,000, along with other rooftop unit maintenance. As a result, the building maintenance budget is nearly depleted, though the overall department budget remains on track. No fire gear has been purchased this year.

Chief Denton provided an update on the Plaistow ALS Intercept program. He explained that the program has been fully donor-funded until now, but this is no longer sustainable, and participating towns are being asked to contribute. Meetings over the next two weeks will clarify funding details. He also noted a new federal EMS grant program requiring a five-year commitment; costs would begin around $15,000 next year and increase annually to approximately $94,000 by year five. A warrant article would be required for the town to participate.

He emphasized the importance of continuing with the program, as ALS intercept services provide essential backup when local paramedics are unavailable. The working group is exploring additional funding sources—including donations, state support, and possibly county assistance—to reduce overall costs. Towns that do not participate may face higher fees for one-time use.

Cost-sharing discussions are ongoing. Readiness costs would be spread evenly across the 19 participating towns, while additional contributions may be based on population or usage. More information is expected following upcoming meetings. Chief Denton noted that changes will affect the 2027 budget and highlighted added program benefits such as blood delivery and portable ultrasound capabilities, which would enhance regional EMS services.

Chief Denton reported that station coverage is going well.

Mr. Anderson noted that this year marks the 25th anniversary of the 9/11 attacks and suggested the town consider a more significant observance than usual. The Board discussed the memorial located at the fire station and agreed more residents should be made aware of it.

Ms. Knab moved the public hearing on the proposed update to the Stratham Hill Park regulations regarding e-bikes. Mr. Roache explained that the amendment is intended to clarify existing rules prohibiting motorized vehicles by explicitly including e-bikes. He noted that the Board is aware of the three classes of e-bikes and noted that many devices seen in the park—such as e-motos without operable pedals—are not classified as e-bikes and would not be allowed. He also explained that the ordinance language was updated to reference "adjacent town-owned properties," since not all land accessed through the park is part of the park itself. This clarification is needed because some riders use the park to reach nearby private land, which has been affected by motorized bike use. The purpose of the amendment is to ensure consistent understanding and enforcement of the regulations.

Ms. Knab motioned to open the Public Hearing on Chapter 4-01-01 with regard to e-bikes. Mr. Anderson seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Several residents spoke during the public hearing on the proposed e-bike ordinance update. Pete Lewis, a resident since 2018 and experienced mountain bike user, opposed banning Class 1 e-bikes, noting other parks allow them and stating he is unaware of evidence showing they cause more trail damage than traditional mountain bikes. He also raised potential ADA concerns. Ken Wadlin, a Stratham Green resident, said he relies on an e-bike to ride at the park and supports allowing Class 1 e-bikes but opposes other electric-powered bikes. Jeff Hyland, a resident of 26 years and avid cyclist, supported previous speakers and encouraged broader enjoyment of the park; he also commended the Board for initiating meeting video recordings. Rob Adams, a resident for 27 years, said an e-bike enables him to continue using the park following knee surgery and felt the amendment was excessive.

Greg Blood, Stratham native and member of TMAC and SHPA, spoke in favor of maintaining the current prohibition on motorized vehicles. He noted enforcement challenges in distinguishing e-bike classes and referenced the U.S. Forest Service's policy prohibiting motorized bikes on its trail system. Keith Baker, a Greenland resident and member of the New England Mountain Bike Association, stated the organization supports Class 1 e-bikes and compared Stratham Hill Park to Mount Agamenticus.

Mr. Lewis responded that Class 1 e-bikes are easy to identify because they require pedaling and asked what prompted the proposed change, questioning whether incidents have increased. Another speaker suggested identifying specific concerns from abutters and addressing those directly. A question was raised about weight differences between e-bikes and mountain bikes, generally about 15 pounds. Another commenter noted that e-bikes and dogs relate to broader park-planning discussions.

Hearing no further comments from the public, Ms. Knab motioned to close the public hearing. Mr. Tramaloni seconded the motion. All voted in favor. Mr. Tramaloni commented that whatever they decide, it must be enforceable.

Ms. Knab noted this was the second public hearing on the proposed Stratham Hill Park ordinance update regarding e-bikes. She stated that the Board has received input from the Trail Management Advisory Committee, the Conservation Commission, and the Stratham Hill Park Association. The Conservation Commission, which oversees the Town Forest portion of the park, is strongly opposed to allowing any e-bikes. She also noted that several abutting parcels under conservation easements have trails whose owners do not want e-bikes on their property, which would create a patchwork of allowed and prohibited areas and make enforcement more difficult. Ms. Knab added that Stratham Hill Park is smaller than other regional parks and lacks paved or wide trails that can more easily accommodate multiple user groups. She thanked speakers for their comments and said the Board will continue to consider the issue.

Ms. Knab moved to the public hearing on proposed updates to the Ordinance Chapters 1-12-03 and 1-12-04, Animal Control at Stratham Hill Park, which would limit the number of dogs a person may walk at one time. Mr. Roache explained that the change is aimed at commercial dog walking, noting reports of individuals walking as many as nine off-leash dogs, sometimes on private land. This proposal does not change existing leash requirements. It maintains the current park rules, which require dogs to be leashed in the fields and allows up to two dogs off-leash on some of the trails. The intent is simply to reinforce that structure—if you have more than two dogs, the additional dog should remain at home. Ms. Knab noted that broader issues related to dogs in the park still need to be addressed, and this ordinance is a first step.

Ms. Knab motioned to open the public hearing on proposed updates to Town Ordinance Chapter 1-12-03 and 1-12-04, Animal Control at Stratham Hill Park. Mr. Tramaloni seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Mr. Blood asked whether the wording addressed commercial dog walking. Ms. Knab clarified that commercial activity is already prohibited at the park, but the ordinance does not specifically reference dog walking. The Board chose not to use the term "commercial," noting that even five personal dogs would be difficult to control and manage.

Mr. Blood supported the proposed ordinance and urged the Board to adopt the town-wide leash law for the park and surrounding town properties, citing issues with off-leash dogs and trail closures. Alice Gregg, a Stratham Green resident, said she no longer walks at the park due to off-leash dogs and supports requiring leashes.

With no further comments, Ms. Knab moved to close the public hearing; Mr. Tramaloni seconded, and all voted in favor. Mr. Tramaloni stated that the proposal is a reasonable first step in addressing dog-related concerns at the park.

Ms. Knab moved to new business and introduced the Smyk tree removal item. Mr. Roache reported that a high tree limb broke during a recent storm and is now lodged in another tree at Smyk. Mr. Batchelder is requesting funding from the Smyk Trust to address the hazard. An estimate is not yet available, but the expected cost is between $2,000 and $3,000. Mr. Anderson motioned to authorize the DPW Director to contract with Royal Green Tree Service to remove the suspended tree sections at Smyk Park funded from the Mary and Walter Smyk Park Trust at a cost not to exceed $4,000. Mr. Tramaloni seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Ms. Knab moved to the Union Road sinkhole item. Mr. Roache reported that Mr. Batchelder is awaiting an estimate from the culvert-lining contractor and intends to address the repair within the existing pavement budget. Mr. Anderson motioned to authorize the DPW Director to proceed with the repair of the culvert on Union Road, as outlined in his June 24 memo to the Select Board, at a cost not to exceed $30,000 using the contingency amount that was reserved within the 2026 pavement program for unforeseen roadway infrastructure needs. Mr. Tramaloni seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Ms. Knab moved to old business and introduced the Highway Safety Grant. Mr. Roache reported that the Police Department applies for and receives this grant annually, and this year the department was awarded $15,800. The grant requires a $3,900 match, which will be funded through the Golf Fund. Mr. Tramaloni motioned that the Select Board, in a majority vote, accepted the terms of the New Hampshire Highway Safety Grant, as presented in the amount of $15,800.00 and the Select Board authorizes the Town Administrator, Tim Roache, or Finance Director, Lori Ruest, to sign all documents related to the grant on behalf of the Select Board. He further moved that the Select Board authorizes a grant matching amount of $3,950 to be paid from the Police Golf Fund. Mr. Anderson seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Ms. Knab moved to the Community Garden sign. Mr. Roache will inform the committee that the Board approved the sign as revised.

ADMINISTRATION

Mr. Roache reported ongoing work to update town policies and procedures. Interviews are underway for both the CEO/Building Inspector position and the Office Coordinator position. He noted that a resident requested the Town consider additional ways to notify the public about current water restrictions. He also reported that the Town Clerk has prepared the annual dog warrant, which is ready for signature, with approximately 30 dogs currently unlicensed.

Mr. Anderson reported on current drought conditions. Mr. Anderson motioned to authorize the Town Administrator to move the town of Stratham back to a level one if on this Thursday we continue to be in a D1 moderate drought as defined by the US Drought monitor. Mr. Tramaloni seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Mr. Anderson asked for an update on the Emergency Management Director position. Mr. Roache reported that he has received a couple of applications. The Board discussed whether certification is required for the role and noted that Homeland Security may be able to provide guidance. They expressed a desire to have someone appointed before the graded exercise scheduled for September 23. Mr. Roache will look into the position's requirements.

RESERVATIONS
Ms. Knab motioned support for the Exeter Area Rotary Club to use the Scamman Pavilion on July 29 and waive the fee if they are a non-profit. Mr. Anderson seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Ms. Knab moved to the permit for the New England Run for the Fallen. Mr. Roache noted that Chief King has no concerns. Mr. Anderson motioned to approve the New England Run for the Fallen event on August 16 and to authorize Allison Knab to sign the authorization on behalf of the town. Mr. Tramaloni seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Referring to a memo from Chief King, Mr. Anderson requested that at his next quarterly report, Sgt. Doucet lead the gun presentation, and the cruiser presentation could be done separately.

Mr. Tramaloni requested that at a future meeting, the Board, in conjunction with the Stratham Police Department, make a formal statement regarding the 287G program.

At 8:09pm Ms. Knab motioned to enter into a non-public session in accordance with RSA 91-A:3, II(a), (b) and (c) the dismissal, promotion or compensation of a public employee; the hiring of a public employee; a matter that may adversely affect the reputation of another. Mr. Anderson seconded the motion. Roll call: Knab-yes;Anderson-yes; Tramaloni-yes

At 8:41pm Ms. Knab motioned to come out of the non-public session and seal the minutes in accordance with RSA 91-A:3, III, noting failure to do so may adversely affect the reputation of another. Mr. Anderson seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

At 8:42 Mr. Tramaloni motioned to adjourn. Mr. Anderson seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Richard
Recording Secretary