

MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 3, 2022 SELECT BOARD MEETING

Meeting held in the Hutton Room at the Stratham Municipal Center

MEMBERS PRESENT: Board Members Chair Mike Houghton, Vice Chair Joe Lovejoy and Allison Knab.

ALSO PRESENT: Town Administrator David Moore, Finance Administrator Christiane McAllister, Police Chief Anthony King

At 7:00 pm Mr. Houghton opened the regular meeting.

Mr. Lovejoy motioned to accept the minutes from the December 20, 2021 Select Board meeting. Ms. Knab seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Mr. Houghton called for comments on the Treasurer's Report. On a related note, Mr. Moore and Ms. McAllister discussed additional report templates in development that will provide additional insight into the status of Town accounts on a monthly basis.

POLICE DEPT.

Mr. Houghton recognized Police Chief Anthony King to give his department report. Chief King summarized his Performance Goals and Objectives from his previously submitted report. He noted that the department received 19,500 calls (up over 1,000 calls for service opposed to last year). Motor vehicle stops were also up at 3,900, which is a little over the 2,400 stops last year. Reportable incidents were at 377, opposed to 344 last year. Although crashes were slightly up (115) this year from 110 last year, previous years were in the 200's. Medicals and assisting the Fire Dept. went up a lot, 515 this year; 385 last year (120). Mutual aid also increased from 140 opposed to 103 last year.

Chief King called attention to the highlights in his report. The dept. achieved the CALEA accreditation which is on a 4 year cycle. They will be seeking an advanced accreditation at that the end of the cycle. The dept. is already meeting a lot of the advanced criteria. New officers Wood and Poole will be sworn in tomorrow. Officer Wood is advancing through the field training. Officer Poole is part-time, therefore his training is going a little slower.

Chief King reported working with Director of Public Works Nate Mears regarding potential future updates to the police building and better security for the station's back parking lot.

Chief King announced that out of over 1,000 police departments, we were awarded the Body Camera Grant. This, plus the donation from the Fire Department, will enable them to proceed with purchasing the equipment and training for its use.

Chief King explained that how the officers respond to mental illness in critical incidents was a training priority this year. Two officers, Bibeau and Holbrook, attended trainings in this area. They then trained the entire department in the classroom portion. This month, the department will be holding simulations and invite surrounding communities to attend.

Officer wellness for the officers and their families was also a top priority. Officer Gauthier was trained to be the department's Peer Support Liaison and will be assigned to the Regional Stress Team. Not only will he help us, but he will help other agencies as well. The PD has partnered with Seacoast Mental Health, who is developing a critical mobile device team. This mobile team will be state and county wide. If there is an incident involving mental health, we can call them to assist and get the person help without having them enter the criminal justice system. Seacoast Mental Health hopes to implement this service in the near future.

Chief King noted the Lights 4 Lives event was successful and expressed appreciation for the great teamwork the Police Department shares with the Fire Department. The Toy Drive coordinated by Lt. Pierce went above and beyond – 3 trailers filled with toys went to families in need. He is working with Parks & Recreation to restart the Coffee with a Cop program for the seniors. This summer he plans to start Citizens Police Academy. Lastly, Chief King created an awards policy and hopes to hold a ceremony in February.

In response to a question from Ms. Knab, Chief King responded that the goal of the Police Academy is help the public get better acquainted on what the PD does on a daily basis.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Moore distributed a preliminary draft of the budget and reviewed important deadline dates. It looks like the year over year increase in the operating budget will be less than 2%; the preliminary budget will be finalized and sent out to the BAC when appointed. He then gave a general overview of the budget presentation. His hope is to improve efficiency with the process. There will be no new programs and no net new positions this year. He received an inquiry from Nate Merrill, Heritage Commission Chair, asking if/when his committee should present. Mr. Moore noted that the commissions haven't presented in the last two years. Consensus from the Board was that there is no requirement to present; only if there is a change in budget request should commissions have that opportunity and they should appear if they feel strongly about doing so. Mr. Moore indicated he would follow-up.

Mr. Moore gave an update on the Town Report. He proposes decreasing the number of books that we have printed based on demand he has observed in three years. We get an electronic version, which is distributed widely and we will still ensure an adequate number of paper copies. Based on topics in the warrant, there are no drivers that would indicate that we need the number of Town Reports at Town Meeting as in the past. Discussion ensued regarding changing the date for Voter Information Night at the Library. CMS is reserved for Town Meeting on March 12. On Jan. 19th our request to use SMS for the local election on March 8th will be on the School Board agenda.

BOARDS & COMMISSIONS

Mr. Moore highlighted the Board and Commission appointments that are expiring at Town Meeting. He acknowledged the lack of consistency with the process for those members who want to renew their terms; he suggests that renewing members use the same application form as newly appointed residents. Mr. Lovejoy questioned the expiration of terms for the Public Works Commission. Mr. Moore will gather information and report back.

Mr. Moore reviewed the attendance records for the Boards and Commissions in accordance with the policy.

Next, Mr. Moore called attention to the request by Town Planner Mark Connors regarding Lindt. Mr. Houghton motioned to release \$810,000 for the performance bond for the project at Lindt. Mr. Lovejoy seconded the motion. Mr. Houghton called for discussion. Hearing none, all voted in favor.

Mr. Moore noted that the Assessing Assistant Jim Joseph noticed an assessing credit was inadvertently overlooked. The Board signed the paperwork to issue \$600 to the resident.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

Ms. McAllister send a communication to staff about payroll for 2022 explaining processing for cut off for accrued time is for 2022.

Mr. Moore said that he and Mr. Connors plan to attend the Regional Housing discussion sponsored by Rockingham Planning Commission.

The Board discussed the increase in Meals & Rooms Revenue the Town received in 2021 following the adjustment of the formula by the legislature in favor of the Towns.

RESERVATIONS

Mr. Moore read a request from Annie's Angels to use Room A on the first Thursday of every month and to have the fee be waived. Ms. Knab motioned to approve the request. Mr. Lovejoy seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Mr. Moore read a request from the Greenland Vets to use the 4-H Pavilion for their annual cookout and request to have the fee waived. Ms. Knab motioned to approve the request. Mr. Lovejoy seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

BOARDS/COMMISSIONS

Mr. Moore presented the flyer Mr. Connors designed for the Route 33 Heritage District open houses. The Planning Board's zoning work is the target of this effort. The open houses are to bring people here to talk about the revised regulations and potential that provides residents to develop their property.

Mr. Moore heard back from our attorney regarding barn easements. He will forward the response to Mr. Merrill.

Mr. Connors sent an email to the Pedestrian Cyclist Advocacy Committee members notifying them of a change from being a separate committee to becoming a Planning Board subcommittee. This shift will allow them to refocus on Master Plan priorities.

Mr. Moore will meet with Parks & Recreation Director Seth Hickey to discuss the work of the Trail Management Advisory Committee. Their second public forum was held on the 15th. Attendance was light, but conversation was robust. They will continue to meet and have draft

recommendations to the Board by mid-March. They plan to do more community outreach. Mr. Houghton requested they submit their recommendations earlier if possible and Mr. Moore said he would follow-up.

Mr. Moore directed attention to the mask wearing policy currently in place in the Town offices. He suggested updating our policy to reflect the CDC guidelines to “strongly urge” everyone to wear a mask regardless of vaccination status. After discussion, the Board decided to adopt this recommendation.

Mr. Houghton asked Mr. Moore for the status on the organizational goals and objectives. Mr. Moore noted drinking water quality continues to gain attention. Our Water Source Protection Plan will be a resource for us to prioritize actions. Our focus should be on improving zoning related regulations to improve water source protection and long term planning to monitor PFAS contamination in Town Center.

Also on the list was to continue the discussions about the Fire Department. This year the Board and the Fire Chief identified the metrics that pointed to the structure working for the Town and that the Board expressed an interest in planning for long terms sustainability.

Another goal is to pursue Master Plan implementation by working with the Conservation Commission and Heritage Commission on projects derived from the Plan. If the Rt. 33 Legacy Highway Heritage District passes at Town Meeting, we will need a system in place to move forward. Funding is in the CIP.

Following up on the Trail Management Advisory Committee’s recommendations for Stratham Hill Park is another goal. We are pursuing an RFP for consulting services to bring clarity to our open space plan. Stratham Hill Park is intertwined in that RFP.

Mr. Moore also included the goal to increase efficiency and modernize our business practices. Particular attention will be paid to planning for financial oversight. First, he will identify changes to be made, then train staff.

Mr. Moore stated that we are ready to move forward with implementation of the new permit software. It will consume a significant amount of time for the Town Planner and Building Coordinator.

Continuing with his goals report, Mr. Moore will focus on assessing our IT contract with LS Solutions. We are in our third year of the contract.

Mr. Moore reported that a list issues have been identified to address to update the Employee Manual. He’ll continue to work on it with Ms. McAllister and perhaps involve staff. It should be completed by mid-2022.

At 8:45 pm Mr. Houghton motioned to go into a non-public session in accordance with RSA 91-A:3, II(c) to discuss a matter that may affect the reputation of another. Mr. Lovejoy seconded the motion. Houghton – yes; Lovejoy – yes; Knab - yes

9:00 pm Mr. Houghton motioned to come out of the non-public session and seal the minutes noting failure to do so may render a proposed action ineffective. Mr. Lovejoy seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Mr. Houghton asked if there was any other business to discuss. Ms. McAllister discussed changing our short and long term disability insurance provider from Unum to HealthTrust to maintain continuity and potentially provide an added benefit to the employees.

At 9:05 p.m. Mr. Houghton motioned to adjourn. Mr. Lovejoy seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Richard
Recording Secretary