

MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 21, 2023 SELECT BOARD MEETING

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

ALSO PRESENT: Town Administrator David Moore, Finance Administrator Christiane McAllister,

At 7:00 pm Mr. Houghton opened the meeting and requested motions on the minutes. Mr. Anderson motioned to approve the minutes from February 6, 2023 as written. Ms. Knab seconded the motion. All voted in favor. Mr. Houghton called attention to correspondence from Mr. Ream. Mr. Anderson motioned to accept the resignation from Mr. Ream from the Energy Commission and the Energy Aggregation Committee. Ms. Knab seconded the motion. All voted in favor. Referring to Correspondence, Mr. Houghton asked what our responsibility was regarding the Comcast letter. Mr. Moore advised that Comcast has responsibility to communicate with their customers. Mr. Anderson asked about the agreement between Comcast and the Town. Mr. Moore noted the contract was recently renewed. It's not exclusive; we have no role in franchising associated with the internet. Comcast has agreements with companies who have rights to the utility corridors, such as Fairpoint and the electric companies.

Mr. Houghton recognized Town Moderator Dave Emanuel and Town Clerk/Tax Collector Deborah Bakie to discuss Town Meeting preparations. Mr. Moore reviewed the logistics for Election Day, March 14 and the town meeting business session, March 18. Ms. Bakie reviewed the procedure for completing the ballot vote for the transportation fees. Mr. Moore reviewed important dates – School District Meeting 3/6, Voter Information Night 3/7. There will be a change to Voter Information Night this year. Town Planner Mark Connor and Mr. Moore will videotape their presentations on the warrant articles so that people can access it before and after that night. They will also be there in person to highlight certain articles and answer questions. They went through the Town Meeting agenda. An attorney representing the Town will attend the meeting. Articles include the purchase of a fire truck, legislative requirement to re-adopt two veteran's tax credits, additional transportation fee, capital reserve funds, giving the Select Board authority to set fees. They discussed the positioning of the Select Board on the stage vs the floor. They went through the agenda to determine which Select Board member would speak to each of the articles and who would second. They discussed who might read the "In Memoriam" sections.

Mr. Houghton motioned to open the public hearing on the adoption of transportation fees. Mr. Anderson seconded the motion. All voted in favor. Mr. Houghton stated that this hearing is to discuss RSA 261:153 to see if the town will vote to collect an additional motor vehicle registration fee of \$5 per vehicle to support municipal transportation. Mr. Hickey supports the additional fee. Hearing no further comments, or questions, Mr. Houghton motioned to close the public hearing. Mr. Anderson seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Houghton recognized Parks & Recreation Director Seth Hickey to discuss the renewal of the Trail Management Advisory Committee and Jack Rabbit Lane parking. Mr. Hickey advised that

only one member will not be continuing but was confident a replacement could be found. A future project of the committee will be to create a new trail map. He hopes to have more Trail Work Days this year. The committee's charge is only for one year. Mr. Houghton wanted to formalize the ongoing collaboration between the conservation Commission and Park Association through the charge. They amended the charge to include that outreach formally. Ms. Knab motioned to adopt the charge for the Trail Management Advisory Committee for 2023 as amended. Mr. Anderson seconded the motion. All voted in favor. Ms. Knab motioned to re-appointment of the five current members of TMAC: Kate Dardinski, Edie Barker, Greg Blood, Trish Weideman, Bill McCarthy. Mr. Anderson seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Mr. Hickey moved on to the parking ordinance changes at Jack Rabbit Lane. Since October, he has reached out to the Conservation Commission, SHPA and the Recreation Commission to obtain their understanding and support. He recommends moving forward with the change. Mr. Anderson questioned why cash is not accepted. Mr. Moore offered to look into the reasoning and suggested moving forward with scheduling the public hearing. They discussed the amount of the fine as it compares to other communities. Chief King submitted a memo supporting this fine and recommending a re-evaluation of all fines. Mr. Houghton motioned to move ahead with the public hearing but to continue to review the amount of this and other fines. Ms. Knab seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

ADMINISTRATION

Mr. Moore recommended the DPW Director and Mr. Hickey appear together at the March 6 Select Board meeting to present the revised park ranger position. He would also like to have a conversation regarding the upcoming season and capital projects involving the park.

Mr. Moore stated that he has received a letter from Tim Slager of the DPW notifying them of his retirement as of March 31, 2023. Mr. Anderson motioned to accept the retirement of Tim Slager as of March 31, 2023 with regret. Ms. Knab seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Mr. Moore reported out on the first Open Space Steering Committee meeting held in the previous week that Mr. Houghton also attended. Both agreed it was a good start.

As a result of a recent Planning Board meeting regarding solar panels, it was suggested that consideration be given to forming a task force to examine residential solar installations. Mr. Houghton felt requests for solar panels would increase in the future. The purpose of the task force would be to define our regulations. Mr. Moore will follow up and bring the Board something on which to act. They continued to discuss the ongoing case regarding a homeowners association and the installation of solar panels.

Mr. Moore reported working with the Stratham Historical Society regarding their 1772 Grant application. The building's lease term may need to be changed. Mr. Moore will continue to bring the various parties together to meet the requirements.

Mr. Moore met with David Barr our current Emergency Management Director who would like to transition out of that role. He assured Mr. Moore that he will do what is necessary, to help with the transition.

Mr. Moore referred to Ms. McAllister to introduce a new financial reporting product, which is designed to be updated monthly. Ms. McAllister said that her goal was to provide a comprehensive financial summary report. The report includes: 1. Current bank arrangement. 2. Various funds under which separate accounts are organized. 3. References on restrictions, how restricted and who has authority to expend. This report gives a snapshot of what financial resources are available at any one time. Ms. McAllister then went through the organization of the report, pointing out where the information could be found. She discussed the possibility of moving the funds from the NH Public Deposit Investment Pool account to an account which would bear a higher interest rate. This is the Treasurer's decision.

She continued, describing each part of the report. She talked about the impacts to the cash balance in the General Fund and the importance of keeping a healthy fund balance.

Ms. McAllister stated that the Fiduciary Fund is the most complicated because it holds multiple funds and multiple types of accounts. Five minor operating funds are reflected here. She described the process if funds need to be transferred. Continuing her review of the report, Ms. McAllister discussed long term assets, escrow accounts and performance bonds.

The Board commended Ms. McAllister on the report and expressed their appreciation for all the hard work she did. Mr. Moore indicated that the intent is for this summary be provided monthly, similar to the budget reports.

Ms. McAllister explained the Treasurer's reconciliation process and how it will appear on the report. Mr. Moore will continue to research the guidelines and restrictions of the various funds.

Mr. Houghton asked what the status was on the reconciled balances. Ms. McAllister assured them it would be soon. The Treasurer has been devising a new system of reconciling to coincide with the start of the new banking arrangements.

INFORMATIONAL

Mr. Moore called attention to the monthly budget report through January.

Mr. Moore reported receiving a call from Verizon regarding the tower on Portsmouth Ave. but he believes it was in error. The Board was not aware of any agreement the Town has with Verizon at that location.

Mr. Houghton raised the issue of moving the March 20th meeting to Friday, March 24th at 8:00 am. The Board agreed to move the meeting.

Mr. Moore advised he had nothing further.

At 8:35 pm Mr. Houghton motioned to go into a non-public session in accordance with RSA 91-A:3, II (a) and (c). Mr. Anderson seconded the motion. Roll call: Houghton-yes; Knab-yes; Anderson-yes

At 9:44 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. Anderson seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

At 9:45 pm Ms. Knab motioned to adjourn. Mr. Houghton seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Richard
Recording Secretary