

## **MINUTES OF THE MAY 16, 2022 SELECT BOARD MEETING**

Meeting held in the Hutton Room at the Stratham Municipal Center

MEMBERS PRESENT: Board Members Chair Mike Houghton, Joe Anderson. Vice Chair Allison Knab arrived at 7:06 pm.

ALSO PRESENT: Town Administrator David Moore, Finance Administrator Christiane McAllister, Parks & Recreation Director Seth Hickey, Town Clerk/Tax Collector Deborah Bakie, Town Assessor Chris Murdough

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

Mr. Anderson motioned to accept the minutes from the May 2, 2022 Select Board meeting. Mr. Houghton seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Mr. Houghton asked if anyone had any questions regarding the Treasurer's report. There were none.

Mr. Hickey distributed his monthly report. He is creating a page on the town website with content about Smyk Park. Committees are reviewing the language for a plaque to be displayed at the park. Other projects he is working on include developing a new policy for Meeting Room A and Summerfest. Youth sports are going well. The food truck festival, held in conjunction with the Exeter Area Chamber of Commerce, was a well-executed, sold out event.

The Trail Management Advisory Committee will be resuming meetings beginning this Wednesday. The Committee will address signage, high level policies and a trail management plan for the year. He noted the Committee cannot make decisions, they can only make recommendations for the Board to adopt. They will consult with other committees for input. A timeline will be determined.

Mr. Hickey reported he is applying for a grant for land water conservation funds for the purposes of protecting privately held parcels within the Park. He is meeting with the administrator for a site walk and will pass along feedback. He will be in Concord on Wednesday for another grant which is focused on signage and trail counters for the park.

Continuing his report, Mr. Hickey said that summer preparations are underway – summer staff is returning, all contracted services are wrapped up; running races on Thursday nights are going well; 80 kids participated in Take a Kid Mountain Biking Day; a June 9<sup>th</sup> senior trip is planned. Discussion ensued as to how to get the word out about these fantastic programs.

Mr. Houghton motioned to open the public hearing for the naming of facilities for Room A and the barns at SHP. Mr. Anderson seconded the motion. All voted in favor. Mr. Moore reviewed the procedure in accordance with the Board's adopted policy of Naming Town of Stratham Facilities and Areas in Town. A request came in from Nate Merrill in April to name Room A at the municipal center the "Joan Sewall Room" and the livestock barns at Stratham Hill Park after James and Lorraine Stuart. Mr. Houghton asked for comments from the public. Residents

Michelle Kardash and Laura Cleminson asked for an explanation of the policy to submit names. Resident Lucy Cushman recalled fond memories of Joan Sewall and the delicious food she cooked and thought this would be a fitting tribute. She also spoke in support of naming the 4-H barns after the Stuarts'. Mr. Merrill spoke about his reasons for recommending Room A to be named after Joan Sewall and the 4-H Barns be named after Jim and Lorraine Stuart. In accordance with the policy, he reached out to Ms. Sewall. He said she was surprised, deeply appreciative and humbled by the honor. Mr. Merrill continued, explaining that Jim and Lorraine Stuart, his grandparents, were deeply committed to Stratham and involved in community activities. His grandfather was in the Stratham volunteer fire dept. They both volunteered at the fair for almost 30 years. They were lifelong dairy farmers and associated with 4-H.

Mr. Moore read the comments that were previously sent in from the Conservation Commission (in favor of both naming proposals) and Cantreice Forest (stating concern about potential changes to the structures in the Park). Two comments from the public were also submitted with the application to the Board; those were from Bruce Scamman and Florence Wiggin, both in favor of the proposals.

Mr. Houghton closed the public hearing and thanked those in attendance for their participation at 7:33 pm. Mr. Anderson seconded the motion. All voted in favor. Next, it will be brought under consideration by the Board and voted on at the next meeting.

At 7:34 pm. Mr. Houghton motioned to open the public hearing to discuss discretionary preservation easements. Ms. Knab seconded the motion. All voted in favor. Mr. Moore explained that the Assessor and Assessing Assistant prepared three barn easements for consideration this evening. This public hearing is required under RSA 79-D. He recognized and thanked Nate Merrill who, in his role as Chair of the Heritage Commission, initiates and supports the applicants in the process. Mr. Moore explained that an easement is placed on properties to provide financial incentive to maintain them in their historic status. Mr. Merrill said that he was proud of the landowners that have stepped up and were taking part in this process. There are approximately two dozen barns in town that are enrolled in the program. Laura Cleminson, Frying Pan Lane, owner of one of the barns, thanked Mr. Merrill for his outreach and education on the subject. She very much supports keeping the town's heritage. Mr. Moore explained that, from a procedural perspective, we have 60 days to complete the process.

7:39 pm Mr. Houghton motioned to close the public hearing. Mr. Anderson seconded the motion. All voted in favor. Ms. Knab thanked Mr. Merrill for his hard work. Ms. Knab motioned to approve the discretionary preservation easements of the three barns as recommended by the Assessor. Mr. Anderson seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

#### NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Houghton directed attention to the Energy Commission acting Chair Matt O'Keefe and Energy Commission member Joe Van Gombos. They outlined a proposal in which the Town of Stratham would join other municipalities in participating in a Hydro Group Net Metering project. This project would allocate some of our energy usage to hydroelectric generation facilities, a renewable power source. NH Energy Laws were recently updated to allow municipalities to earn revenue by joining the program. The Town would sign a 5-year contract with an 'out clause'

that provides no penalty for early exit with 90 days-notice of exit. The Energy Commission recommends entering into the agreement. Discussion ensued regarding rates and allocation of kilowatts. This project supports clean energy and generates a small amount of revenue. The Board was in favor of entering into an agreement as recommended. Mr. Anderson motioned to authorize the TA to execute the agreement following review by legal counsel and which is in substantial conformance with the proposed agreement before the Board. Ms. Knab seconded the motion. All voted in favor. The Board thanked Mr. O'Keefe and Mr. Van Gombos for their work.

Mr. Houghton called upon Town Assessor Chris Murdough who brought forward two land use change taxes which were a result of a subdivision of land. Mr. Moore said that no vote was needed; only signatures.

Mr. Houghton recognized Town Clerk Tax Collector Deborah Bakie to discuss deed waivers. Mr. Moore noted the need to address other items in non-public in accordance with RSA 91A. At 7:57 pm Mr. Houghton motioned to enter into a non-public session in accordance with RSA 91-A:3, II(a)(b)(c) and (d). Ms. Knab seconded the motion. Roll call: Houghton-Yes; Knab-Yes; Anderson-Yes

At 10:20 pm Mr. Houghton motioned to come out of the non-public session and seal the minutes noting that failure to do so would affect adversely the reputation of another. Ms. Knab seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Mr. Moore received a request from Police Chief Anthony King to withdraw CIP funds to replace two desk top computers. Ms. Knab motioned to approve up to \$1800 from the CIP for the replacements. Mr. Anderson seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Mr. Moore reported that the police department has received a donation from Pipers Landing for \$1,000 to pay for the Police Department Awards Dinner on May 20, 2022. They have submitted the paperwork and, in accordance with our policy, the Police Department is recommending it be brought forward. Mr. Anderson motioned to accept the donation. Ms. Knab seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Mr. Moore gave an update on PFAS long term planning study and grant opportunities. He has reviewed the draft Underwood report and obtained staff comments. The report explores various alternatives for meeting the safe drinking water needs for Town Center. These include maintaining the existing point of entry filtration systems and ongoing engineering and reporting and testing associated therewith; creation of a new public water system in Town Center to supply affected properties; or connection to regional water systems to provide water. Mr. Moore said the study is positioning the Town to submit a pre-application for the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund that would enable the Town to acquire grant and other funding to meet the long term needs associated with water contamination in Town Center. He explained that this pre-application is in no way a commitment to move forward with a project or even a formal application at a later date. Mr. Moore wants to keep the residents' informed about the various approaches to water quality as the potential for the Town's obligations associated with PFAS has the potential to grow and become more costly over time.. Mr. Moore described Public Works

Chair John Boisvert's comments regarding Underwood's report. Mr. Houghton summarized that while the name of the fund is a loan fund, there is substantial potential for loan forgiveness. Mr. Moore confirmed and referred to the number of federal grant sources coming to the state for infrastructure related projects. Mr. Houghton motioned to authorize Mr. Moore to submit a pre-application to the 2022 Drinking Water State Revolving Fund pre-application form. Mr. Anderson seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Mr. Houghton motioned to appoint John Kunowski as an alternate to the Planning Board for a term ending in 2024. Ms. Knab seconded the motion. All voted in favor. Mr. Houghton motioned to appoint Alex Dardinski the Heritage District Advisory Committee for a three year term ending in 2025. Mr. Anderson seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Mr. Moore requested guidance on the logistics of the Naming Facilities request. Mr. Moore clarified that even though the structures are named, there is no promise of their permanence.

Mr. Moore noted that Tara Madden has been doing a fantastic job as Wellness Coordinator for the employees.

Mr. Moore brought forth reservation requests: Mr. Houghton motioned to approve Josh Crow's use of the Scamman Pavilion on 6/19 and Tara Madden's use of the Scamman Pavilion on 5/17 and 5/24 for the home school group and to waive the fees (both staff members). Ms. Knab seconded the motion. All voted in favor. Ms. Knab motioned approval for Girls on the Run to use Room A on 8/21 and to waive the fee. Mr. Anderson seconded the motion. All voted in favor. Ms. Knab motioned to approve Transportation Assistance of Seacoast Citizen's use of the Front Pavilion on 6/7 and to waive the fee. Mr. Anderson seconded the motion. All voted in favor. Mr. Houghton motioned to approve the Exeter Area Garden Club's use of the Morgera Room at the Fire Station (because Room A is not available) for their monthly meetings From September 2022 to May 2023. Ms. Knab seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Mr. Anderson motioned to adjourn. Ms. Knab seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Respectfully submitted,



Karen Richard  
Recording Secretary