

AMENDED

MINUTES OF THE JULY 19, 2021 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 Select Board member Allison Knab

ALSO PRESENT: Town Administrator David Moore Officer Ken Gauthier, Town Planner Mark Connors, CEO/BI/HO Shanti Wolph and Lamprey Coop Chair Paul Deschaine.

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

Mr. Houghton asked if there were any comments on the draft minutes. Mr. Lovejoy motioned to approve the July 6, 2021 minutes as presented. Mr. Houghton seconded the motion.

Mr. Houghton recognized Officer Ken Gauthier. He then swore him in as a full time police officer. The Board, Officer Gauthier's family, and the various members of the Police Department documented the occasion with pictures.

Mr. Houghton opened the Public Hearing to accept the donation of up to \$35,000 from the Seacoast VeloKids. Mr. Lovejoy seconded the motion. All voted in favor. Mr. Houghton asked for comments from the public. Hearing none, Mr. Houghton closed the Public Hearing. Mr. Lovejoy seconded the motion. All voted in favor. Mr. Lovejoy motioned to accept the donation of up to \$35,000 from Seacoast VeloKids for the purpose of renovating the pump track. Ms. Knab seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Mr. Houghton recognized Town Planner Mark Connors. Mr. Connors reported on the zoning amendments the Planning Board is preparing to be voted on for the next election. Focus is on the Rt 33 heritage district rezoning and changes to the flexible mixed use district (former technical school). The Board had expressed interest in redevelopment of that site. If changes to the rezoning passes, there are incentives that could spur projects there.

Referring to his handout, Mr. Connors reviewed the proposed changes to the zoning amendments. Some of the proposed changes adjust our incentives for the projects we, as a Town, desire; they tighten up some regulations; adjust for minor inconsistencies; update and clarify some of the ordinances.

Next Mr. Connors discussed the NHDOT 10 year plan. Currently, our only project is the Rt 108 / Bunker Hill intersection. Factors have lead Mr. Connors to believe this project's timeline could begin sooner than the 2027 date. Mr. Connors expressed interest in what the townspeople view as transportation priorities. Other possible projects to advocate for would be improvements to the Marin Way intersection and Exit 12 off ramps (technically in Exeter) or the corridor plan for Rt. 33. We could partner with Greenland and possibly Portsmouth. The State tends to support towns working collaboratively.

Ms. Knab asked questions about process of the NHDOT plan and noted that the PCAC has researched roads where bike lanes would be beneficial. Mr. Houghton emphasized creating an online resource where residents could find more information about the current Long Range Transportation Plan and other projects. Mr. Connors will be following up in coordination with Planning Board to further discern priorities, including some community outreach.

Lastly, Mr. Connors advised the Board of a multi-family residential project at the southern end of Portsmouth Ave corridor. The project will be coming to the Planning Board in the fall.

Building Inspector/Code Enforcement Officer/Health Officer Shanti Wolph updated the Board on the status of Covid as it relates to town activities. As Health Officer, he has recently performed inspections on a couple of restaurants and daycares.

As Code Enforcement Officer, he's encountered two different properties with the same issue – a pool and deck on the abutters' property. He has worked with the homeowners on resolutions.

Regarding previous on street parking concerns, he has worked with the business owner and there haven't been any recent complaints.

Mr. Wolph occasionally receives complaints about wetlands disturbances. Most of the time the people are unaware that there are regulations that must be followed regarding wetlands. Once they are made aware, they cease what they are doing.

Mr. Wolph discovered some contractors performing work without a permit. There were a couple of instances where he discovered a plumber and electrician working without a license. That is a misdemeanor; he is following-up in coordination with the relative licensing Boards and law enforcement.

Mr. Wolph has received complaints about unkempt property. He is working with the property owner to clean up. The risk associated with storage of uninspected vehicles which rust and deteriorate, is that fluids can go into ground. It then becomes an environmental issue.

Mr. Wolph continued his report, saying building activity has surpassed last year by 67 projects, however, they are of a smaller scale and the revenues are under last years, but still on track with the budget. He is working with Mr. Connors on zoning interpretations that are informing that list of Planning Board zoning amendments under consideration.

Regarding the PFAS issue, he is working with our contractor to install filtration systems in the affected homes. All but two have received site visits. As soon as next week we hope to move ahead with installations. The Building Dept. will continue to track all aspects of the mitigation in our computer system and in paper files.

The Zoning Board of Adjustment received two applications.

Significant ongoing projects are the Cooperative Middle School, SPCA, and Burger King. Mr. Wolph asked for the Board's support in issuing a temporary occupancy permit for Burger King. They are waiting on materials for the roof, but the roof is watertight. The Board understands the supply chain issues and supports issuing a temporary occupancy permit.

Regarding residential projects, the Rollins Farm development, which has been going on for over 3 years, is almost complete. Treat Farm, a 14 home subdivision, has only two more homes to be built before it is completed.

Second Quarter Statistics
(April, May, June)

	2021	2020
New Projects	231	164
Permits	360	298
Inspections	451	397
Permit Fees	\$58,218	\$91,579
Fees to date (Jan. till now)	\$118,745	\$155,467
Budget Spending	36.67%	43.47%

He listed the classes he's recently completed to maintain his certifications.

Mr. Wolph obtained estimates for renovating the assessor space in order to provide easier access for the public to the town planner, achieve space efficiencies and improve office space for Recreation Department

Mr. Wolph wanted to make the Board aware that with no one at the Assessing desk and when Building Coordinator Denise Lemire was on vacation, it was extremely difficult to not have someone be able to fill in that position. Service to the public was significantly compromised. He is recommending, if it is in the budget, that a part-time Land Use Assistant be hired once again. Filling in, not only for vacation, but for breaks and lunch would be very helpful.

Mr. Wolph talked briefly about the need to put in place annual inspections for commercial properties in coordination with the Fire Dept.

Next, he discussed the need for new building permitting software. There is some money in the CIP for it, but not enough. Some communities have used the ARPA funds for new software. He demonstrated one of the software programs and detailed the many ways it would streamline the department's duties. There was discussion about the transference of records and lack of assessing capabilities. Mr. Wolph discussed the limitations of Avitar, which they currently use. Avitar is not compatible with other programs. Mr. Wolph will continue to research other options. After obtaining pricing estimates, he will come back to the board.

Mr. Moore wanted to acknowledge the good work Mr. Wolph has done to advance PFAS remediation.

Mr. Houghton recognized Paul Deschaine, who is the Town's representative to the Lamprey Regional Cooperative and current Chair of the Board of Directors. Mr. Deschaine gave a brief history of the Cooperative. In the 1970's when the EPA began closing down openly burning dumps, the Town needed to find an alternative. In 1978, 13 communities around the Seacoast area banded together to develop a plan in cooperation with UNH to build an incinerator on the UNH campus next to their heating plant. The idea was to send our garbage there where it would be incinerated, create steam, be sent to the heating plant and then be used to heat the university at no cost. That worked well for many years. When you burn something you create ash. What to do with it? With DES's initial blessing, the agreement was that if you took a truck of garbage to the incinerator, you took a truck of ash back to your own town's landfill. This was a common practice. Eventually, it was determined that that was not an appropriate way to dispose of the ash. Simultaneously, the City of Somersworth had a sewage treatment plant which was generating sludge, causing a disposal issue for the City. Sludge is watery, and ash can act as a stabilizer. A cooperative agreement with Somersworth (also a member of the Cooperative) and the Cooperative was created and a monofill was created behind the sewage treatment plant. This arrangement worked well for a long time. In 1995, UNH didn't renew the Cooperative's lease; they had to dismantle the incinerator. In 1996, we closed the landfill completely. Mr. Deschaine explained the mechanics of the closed landfill and leachate collection system. Its permitted capacity was much greater than was necessary (because it was sized to operate longer than was ultimately needed due to the termination of the UNH lease).

Once the landfill was closed, responsibilities remained. Mr. Deschaine detailed many items that required ongoing maintenance, such as groundwater testing, site monitoring, permit compliance, etc. Stantec was hired to handle the groundwater monitoring, and CMA Engineering to create a management plan for the landfill, both on a continual basis. In December, CMA submitted a report noting there were issues that needed immediate attention and the Coop through its Chair and Executive Committee are following-up on those issues. In June, the management company hired by the Cooperative to handle its administrative tasks gave notice that they would no longer be able to service the Cooperative. The Coop Board is looking for a company to take over the accounting and organizational aspects.

It's been at least 20 years since the creation of the lease agreement between the Cooperative and the City of Somersworth. The Executive Committee has drafted a renewal of the ground lease agreement. It is now with the City of Somersworth. The management of the landfill will be a perpetual responsibility of the Cooperative members.

Mr. Houghton thanked Mr. Deschaine.

Mr. Moore asked about the next step to resolve the technical issues. Mr. Deschaine replied that CMA Engineering is under contract to do this.

Mr. Houghton turned attention to the Public Service Agency Grants. Mr. Moore explained that occasionally we receive a question from a non-profit as to how they may obtain town funding. He is suggesting adopting a policy to formalize the steps for running the program as well as documenting the past practice with regard to adding agencies (via a vote by the Town meeting

following a petition). Mr. Houghton made a motion to adopt the policy on public service agencies annual appropriations as documented in the memo from the Town Administrator dated July 7, 2021. Ms. Knab seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Next, Mr. Houghton addressed the Stratham Welfare Guidelines. Mr. Moore said that Welfare Administrator Karen Richard recommends adopting the updated document. Mr. Moore recognized Ms. Richard for her efforts to track developments in the Welfare field as well as maintain her knowledge of the network of agencies that assist residents in need. This work to stay abreast of developments in the field ensures we effectively serve residents facing hardship, but also reserves our welfare budget for services and that can otherwise be provided. Ms. Knab motioned to adopt the 2021 Welfare Guidelines as written by the NH Municipal Association. Mr. Lovejoy seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Mr. Moore reported on the municipal center roof repair project. A request for proposals was issued; three companies responded. Funds in Grounds Maintenance Trust are sufficient to cover the work. Mr. Houghton motioned to release the funds for the municipal center roof repairs and authorize the Town Administrator to execute an agreement with Brad Jones Roofing. Mr. Lovejoy seconded the motion. Ms. Knab noticed structural engineering was included in one proposal, but not the other. There was discussion about the chimney, which has been capped. Mr. Moore indicated he would revisit this scope item with Mr. Mears. All voted in favor.

TOWN ADMINISTRATION

Mr. Moore reported that he had received an inquiry regarding the renaming of Room A after a resident. He received positive preliminary feedback from the Board and said he would urge inquirer to move forward with the formal application process outlined in the Select Board's policy manual.

Mr. Moore said that the Hebert's attorney is requesting a meeting with the Select Board in order to gain the Board's cooperation in obtaining an alternative access to the property they have under agreement. The property has a right of way, but it is unbuildable. The Board reviewed its discussion at the meeting at which it met with the couple and felt there was no need to revisit the issue based on the request.

On Wednesday evening, the Planning Board will consider the nomination of Joe Johnson to the Rockingham Planning Commission. That nomination comes back to the Select Board for a vote.

Mr. Moore indicated that he had received a letter with visuals from the Tom and Heidi Shealy's, 34 Stratham Heights Rd, who are concerned about drainage coming off of the road to their property. They have not had resolved their issue after meeting with Mr. Mears and asked for additional attention to the issue. Mr. Moore indicated that he is working with Mr. Mears and requested the involvement of a Board member. Mr. Lovejoy indicated he is willing to assist. The Energy Commission met last week. Mr. Mears attended. Mr. Moore stated that they had good collaboration as they discussed town projects in the CIP. Another initiative being undertaken is collecting information from utilities, inputting it into an energy software. Finance Administrator Dawna Duhamel and Energy Commission member Matt O'Keefe are working on it. In addition, the committee is engaged with JB Branahan who worked on the LED street light

conversion in town. Committee is also re-engaging on financial performance of the solar array, which appears to be very good.

Mr. Moore moved to the donation form from the Police Department, which is submitted to the Board's approval under the donation policy. The donation of \$3,500 is from Lee Paladino and Mark Stevens Business / George Conway for National Night Out. Mr. Houghton motioned to accept the donation from Lee Paladino and Mark Stevens Business / George Conway. Mr. Lovejoy seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Mr. Moore said the cable franchise agreement is moving forward, with a Public Hearing scheduled for August 2nd. The Town's attorney will be present.

RESERVATIONS/PERMITS

Resident is requesting a fireworks permit. Mr. Moore obtained conditional approval from the Fire and Police Chiefs provided that the display only be held during blue or green fire danger days. Ms. Knab requested we include a reminder about the noise ordinance. Ms. Knab motioned to approve the fireworks permit request. Mr. Lovejoy seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Richie McFarland Children's Center, a non-profit service provider, requested to use Room A for a meeting and to have the fee waived. Mr. Lovejoy motioned to approve the request. Ms. Knab seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

There was a request to waive the alcohol prohibition for a previously approved Room A reservation request. Ms. Knab motioned to approve. Mr. Houghton seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Mr. Moore stated that the Town Assessor recommended approval of the following two Veteran's Credits: John Money, Map 3 Lot 50 and Christy Money, Map 3 Lot 50. Mr. Houghton motioned to approve the veteran's credits. Ms. Knab seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

At 9:26 pm Mr. Houghton made a motion to go into a non-public session per RSA 91-A:3, II(a) Personnel. Seconded by Mr. Lovejoy. Roll call: Houghton – yes, Lovejoy – yes, Knab – yes.

At 10:16 p.m. the Board resumed its public session and Mr. Houghton moved to seal the minutes noting that failure to do so would render a proposed action ineffective.

Vice Chair Lovejoy moved to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Knab seconded the motion; all voted in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Richard
Recording Secretary