

MINUTES OF THE JULY 5, 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 was absent

ALSO PRESENT: Town Administrator David Moore; Fire Chief Jeff Denton, Director of Public Works Nate Mears

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

Mr. Anderson motioned to accept the minutes from the June 20 Select Board meeting and the June 22, 2022 employee meeting. Mr. Houghton seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Mr. Houghton recognized Fire Chief Jeff Denton for his report on the Fire Dept. Chief Denton reviewed the trainings, Matt Bartel recently received his Firefighter I certification and Kyle Saltonstall, a former combat medic in the army, just renewed his EMT certification. Recruiting through word of mouth is going well. They have several potential new candidates.

Chief Denton went on to describe various equipment needs. He has an eye towards updating the equipment, improving capability, making it more effective and safer.

They've been working with the Police Dept. and Homeland Security on the active shooter drill being held at the park in the fall. The department will become certified by the State for EMS in a warm zone through that drill. Joint trainings in preparation for the drill are ongoing. He is working on a policy for EMS in a warm zone. The Police and Fire Departments are working on ways to strengthen communication between them during an incident.

Chief Denton felt that the department is doing well covering calls. He explained the possible reasons for the ups and downs of call volume.

Next, Chief Denton spoke about the importance of providing leadership training for the Department's officers. Seacoast Chiefs have leadership training as their goal too. He's had leadership training in the military and understands the importance of empowering officers to lead.

Chief Denton addressed the difficulties of managing and covering inspections. Currently, only he and Deputy Josh Crow can perform them. Funding a part time, dedicated inspector is a priority for the department. The position would require someone with experience, as there is a tremendous amount of code to adhere to. It would be perfect for a retired chief.

Chief Denton continued his report, discussing the future of the department. Currently, the department is covering calls well; only missing 2 – 2.5%. If the missed rate increases significantly, then we would consider a change. We are on par as far as mutual aid is concerned - every community relies on mutual aid. We will continue to monitor and change accordingly.

Mr. Houghton spoke in support of offering leadership training. Mr. Anderson praised him on the work he's done thus far.

Mr. Mears brought up the subject of pre-emption systems at intersections used by emergency responders. A firm was brought in to assess and make repairs to two systems; all are now in working order. His department is putting regular inspections into its schedule. Chief Denton offered any assistance DPW might need.

Mr. Mears suggests maintaining operating funds to make any needed repairs. One card costs between \$3,800 - \$5,000. Any part of the unit might fail, which might require a replacement. They will discuss further during budget preparations. Mr. Mears and Chief Denton will coordinate on monthly inspections.

Mr. Houghton recognized Mr. Mears for his department report. He began by discussing the Solid Waste Ordinance. His report explains the reason for changes to the ordinance. The changes better reflect the processes that have currently taken place such as the land fill being capped and the incorporation of curbside collection. Mr. Mears detailed some of the recurring issues at the Transfer Station and his plan to resolve them. He would like to change the Transfer Station sticker to an annual permit with a calendar year expiration. Mr. Moore explained that to adopt the new policy, first we must finalize it, do a public hearing and publicize it, then adopt it.

Mr. Mears continued his report saying tonnages are starting to fall, likely because people are returning to work. He discussed the ways in which Casella is trying to minimize spillage of the recycling from their pickup trucks. He's seen a drop in value for scrap metal as a commodity. Hopefully, with the repairs to the shredding facility, that will change. Transfer Station revenues are up.

Regarding the parks, to address the concerns of the Conservation Commission, Mr. Mears reached out to NH Fish & Game. He will follow their recommendations for mowing the Barker field at SHP once in early fall. This will allow native wildflowers to produce, to facilitate the pollinators and bird species to utilize the habitat.

Steven's park has become inhabited by Killdeer birds. We are allowing for nesting to take place.

Mr. Mears has been working with the chairs of Summerfest. DPW is making sure the facility is prepared. Dragon Mosquito will spray prior to the event.

Mr. Mears reported that the water system has been meeting standards for sampling and testing through state labs. There was one water main break that DPW repaired.

Mr. Mears has contacted three vendors regarding their paving schedule. RFPs are due by the end of July. Marin Way continues to be a topic of discussion between the Town and DOT. We are prepared to make betterments to that road this year. The scheduled repairs are a replacement of the existing betterments at the Marin Way intersection; we are working with DOT. Storm water improvements and maintenance has been ongoing. Benjamin Rd resident's concern has been addressed. Drainage at the cemeteries has been corrected.

Mr. Mears said that he would work with Town Planner Mark Connors regarding the street signs at the Rollins Hill development. Their street signage doesn't conform to our standards. It can pose a problem for first responders and delivery people.

Mr. Mears was happy to report that his staff is working well as a team. Compensation issues are being discussed. Mr. Mears expressed appreciation for his team.

Mr. Moore thanked Mr. Mears for chairing the Joint Loss Management Committee.

CORRESPONDENCE

A resident wrote a letter complimenting the DPW department for its help in the cemetery and with a burial. Mr. Mears recalled working with Mrs. Afannato.

Mr. Moore explained that a resident is offering to sell a parcel of their land to the Town. Initial review of the parcel is favorable – it is accessible to the public which fits into the concepts being explored as part of open space planning discussions. The parcel is not buildable. There is no history of issues associated with the property. Mr. Houghton motioned to refer 18 Jana Drive to the Town Planner and Conservation Commission for review and recommendations. Mr. Anderson seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Mr. Moore recalled that Seacoast Velo Kids and the town had entered into a contract to raise funds with a goal of \$30,000 to improve the pump track at SHP. They've raised \$14,000 and don't believe they'll be able to raise the remaining funds. They are offering to give the amount raised to the Town. If we accept the grant, improvements on the pump track would be a Town project. There would have to be a public hearing to accept the funds.

Mr. Moore called attention to the certificate and award from the New England Chiefs of Police to our Police Department. Mr. Anderson recognized that to be second in all of New England is quite an achievement.

RESERVATIONS

Mr. Anderson motioned to allow the Institute on Disability, UNH, to use the Front Pavilion on August 10th and to waive the fee. Mr. Houghton seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Mr. Moore said there was a Summerfest Raffle permit request, but it did not list what was being raffled. Mr. Anderson motioned to approve the Summerfest Raffle Permit request provided the prizes will be added. Mr. Houghton seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Mr. Moore stated there was a fireworks permit application from Mr. Garrity, Blueridge Circle, to have a fireworks display on 7/19. Mr. Houghton motioned to approve. Mr. Anderson seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

ADMINISTRATION

Mr. Moore stated that the Jack Rabbit Lane parking pilot is off to a good start in terms of communicating the change. There's been good coordination between TMAC, Parks & Recreation and DPW.

The Library Trustees have asked Mr. Moore to serve on the selection committee for the new director. As long as the Board has no concerns, he will do so. No concerns were noted. The Trustees are holding a good-bye event on Friday.

Mr. Moore has a workshop regarding PFAS on Wednesday. He projected the need for the Board to work further on the issue in upcoming meetings.

Mr. Moore presented the agreement with Piper's Landing for the Board's signature.

Mr. Moore said he hasn't responded to Nate Merrill's request for naming the facilities and an event for naming the barns. The Board discussed timing of such an event and were open to ideas.

Mr. Houghton directed attention to the recently held all employee meeting, saying he felt it was a great event with good engagement, constructive comments and was generally positive. Focus is now on developing responses to the issues that were raised. Mr. Anderson agreed that it was a good discussion and nicely moderated. He felt it important that the employees not expect changes immediately. Mr. Moore feels an interim message would be a good idea. He got great feedback from staff about the meeting.

At 9:01 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; Anderson-Yes

At 9:58 pm Mr. Houghton motioned to come out of the non-public session and seal the minutes noting that failure to do so may render a proposed action invalid. Mr. Anderson seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

At 9:59 pm Mr. Houghton motioned to adjourn. Mr. Anderson seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Richard
Recording Secretary