

MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 18, 2019 SELECT BOARD MEETING

MEMBER'S PRESENT: Board Members Chair Mike Houghton, Vice Chair Joe Lovejoy were in attendance along with Town Administrator David Moore. Board Member Allison Knab was absent.

At 7:00 p.m. Mr. Houghton opened the meeting.

MINUTES

Mr. Lovejoy made a motion to approve the minutes of 10/28/19 as amended. Mr. Houghton seconded the motion, which passed. Mr. Houghton deferred approval of the 11/4/19 minutes until Ms. Knab could be in attendance.

TREASURER

Town Treasurer Deb Bronson indicated the General Fund balance was \$4,251,218.77. As a result of tax bills going out, revenue has been coming in.

NEW BUSINESS

Curbside Collection Advisory Committee member Sophie Robinson presented an interim report and summarized the Committee's work thus far. The Committee made several findings as a result of its deliberations over its five meetings. Specifically, the Committee found that our culture as a whole is becoming more aware of the effects of human impacts on the environment including relying on landfills and consumer habits that generate the need for disposal and related costs. As a result, the Committee is encouraging a broader conversation about how we manage and think of what we dispose of prior to committing to any particular mode of collection (automation, the existing program, or some other approach).

The Committee also proposed some specific next steps including: Hit "pause" on preparations for the proposed Automation Program; Perform additional outreach to the Community to learn more about preferences and attitudes about preferences for curbside collection of trash and recycling in general; Assess the community's feedback from the survey and interest in other models and - using that information - define the level of service desired by the Committee for the purposes of soliciting new competitive bids for the model and types of services desired; and move forward with a new contract for the desired level of service defined through the process.

The Board expressed appreciation for the Committee's work and is in agreement with the interim recommendations. Meanwhile, there will be no interruption in current curbside collection services and the Committee will be moving forward with a survey product to learn more about the Community's desires with regard to curbside collection in general. More updates will follow as the Committee continues its work.

PARKS & RECREATION

Parks & Recreation Director Seth Hickey presented his department report. Baseball field at SHP is completed. They will install a scoreboard in springtime.

Mr. Hickey continued his report by informing the Board of his collaboration with Public Works Director Nate Mears on the transition of maintenance related items for Stratham Hill Park, Stevens Park, and town owned facilities to the DPW.

Mr. Hickey has been gathering input from the seniors on programming. They've implemented some activities, which have been tremendously successful. He has identified the need to add some coordination capacity on staff for senior program offerings that will focus solely on senior programming, which would have a budget impact. They discussed whether or not to charge for the programs. The senior community has shown appreciation for the recognition and support the Town has been offering.

Mr. Hickey reviewed the work his Department has done as part of the Master Plan and to determine focus areas and mission from the department going forward. He pointed to the survey completed over the summer and the recent senior brainstorming meeting. He indicated his budget request will reflect the reorganization planned for the buildings and grounds maintenance as well as the focus on the underserved populations as a result of the outreach.

Mr. Hickey reported the Planning Board found the Skate Park Committee's plans for a skate park met with the Town's site review regulations for municipal facilities on November 4th. The proposed facility was cited on the Municipal Center property adjacent to the current softball field. Notice was sent to area residents and outreach will continue. On Oct. 26th a successful fundraiser was held generating over \$6,000.

As a result of the Town's acceptance of the Barker Easement, a process was put into place that requires Select Board and Ms. Barker's approval for any races or events going through or using the property. Races and events not using the Barker easement will need to go through the same process. This standardization will allow for better planning. Mr. Hickey has been working with groups that have used the trails in the past. Mr. Houghton made a motion to approve the 19 non-profit organizations identified on the list of trail usage for 2020 and have the Parks & Recreation Department continue to work with Town staff and attorneys to perfect the documents. Mr. Lovejoy seconded the motion which passed. Mr. Hickey noted that his department will be taking over facility rentals. He is also working on accepting online payments for the rentals. He will review financial control procedures with Finance Administrator Dawna Duhamel.

Mr. Hickey reported that he is working with Public Works Director Nate Mears and with the Police department on PCAC projects. He's also working to ensure the Exeter Regional Cooperative School District is aware of the proposed Safe Route To School improvements on the School property for their consideration in project planning for the school renovation.

Mr. Hickey concluded his report by giving the status of Rec Revolving account.

RESERVATIONS

Mr. Moore presented a request from the Greenland Veterans to use the 4-H pavilion on September 13, 2020 and to waive the fee. Mr. Lovejoy made a motion to approve the use and waive the fee. Mr. Houghton seconded the motion.

ADMINISTRATION

Mr. Moore and Finance Administrator Dawna Duhamel presented a draft budget summary calling attention to budget drivers and trends impacting the budget. Mr. Moore pointed to organizational goals he has identified in draft form, which will help guide budgetary priorities and decision making if adopted by the Board. Ms. Duhamel reported on the General Fund appropriations. She noted that the Operating budget will have an increase of just under \$400,000 and noted there are some moving parts that remain. She suggested moving debt service payments to the Operating budget as opposed to having it in the CIP. Contributing factors to the increase is a rise in health insurance and waste disposal costs. They discussed reasons for the increase in workers compensation claims. Other drivers include the new compensation model for the Fire Department, the reorganization of the Finance department, upcoming elections and salary adjustments. Mr. Moore further detailed the compensation adjustments, the additional police officer, Park & Rec request for part-time staff hours and additional programs. Ms. Duhamel reviewed the top revenue sources and discussed reasons for fluctuations over the years. Ms. Duhamel gave an explanation on revenue estimates and how it effects setting the tax rate. Ms. Duhamel plans to better identify the chart of accounts in order to increase organization. She continued her report, reviewing the fund balance, explaining that the Town continues to be in a good financial position. They continued to discuss what they'd like to see on the budget reports and the rollout with the Budget Advisory Committee. Mr. Moore will be prepared to discuss evaluations on Dec. 2. They discussed the structure of the Budget Advisory Committee meetings.

Mr. Moore presented elements of a draft Select Board schedule.

Mr. Lovejoy raised the issue of the authority of committees to take legislative action. Mr. Moore organizational goal of ensuring each committee knows what its charges are, where their authority comes from and what they are asked to do. They all felt it was important that there be good communication and consistent focus on mission and duties and powers across the various Boards & Commissions.

At 8:40 pm Mr. Houghton made a motion to go into a non-public session to discuss contract terms. Mr. Lovejoy seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

At 9:05 p.m. Mr. Lovejoy made a motion to come out of the non-public session; the motion was seconded by Mr. Houghton and passed unanimously. Mr. Lovejoy moved to seal the minutes finding that failure to do so would render the discussion ineffective. Mr. Houghton seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Mr. Lovejoy made a motion to extend the Casella contract for trash and recyclable collection for the calendar year in its existing form. Mr. Houghton seconded the motion which passed.

Town Administrator items: Two bond reductions were presented. Mr. Lovejoy made a motion to reduce the bond requirement for Betty's Way and Barbara's Way projects to the amounts stated by Town Planner Tavis Austin and validated by the Public Works Director Nate Mears in memorandums submitted. Mr. Houghton seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

At the request of Mr. Moore, Mr. Lovejoy motioned to go into a non-public session at 9:09 pm to discuss a tax abatement matter. Mr. Houghton seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

At 9:17 p.m. Mr. Lovejoy made a motion to come out of the non-public session; the motion was seconded by Mr. Houghton and passed unanimously. Mr. Lovejoy moved to seal the minutes finding that failure to do so would render the discussion ineffective. Mr. Houghton seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

The previous Planning Board and Master Plan meetings were reviewed. Mr. Moore reported that the Energy Commission is researching the use of electric vehicles in town, the Heritage Commission is seeking ways to protect historic structures with regards to the Master Plan.

RAFFLE PERMITS

The Stratham Town Democratic Committee is requesting to hold a raffle in December. Mr. Lovejoy made a motion to approve the request. Mr. Houghton seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Mr. Houghton inquired about the status of the PFAS issue. Mr. Moore responded that we are expected to have a report by the end of the month.

Mr. Lovejoy made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Houghton seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Richard
Recording Secretary