

Selectboard Minutes  
December 5, 2023

Present: Jenn Jones, chair  
Andy Artimovich, vice chair  
Jon Morgan  
Paul Kleinman  
Russ Kelly (via zoom)

Jones called the meeting to order at 6pm.

Artimovich motioned, seconded by Morgan, to allow Kelly to attend remotely. All were in favor.

Artimovich motioned, seconded by Morgan, to sign the appointment slip promoting Officer Christopher Spitalere to Corporal. Artimovich – aye; Kelly – aye; Morgan – aye; Kleinman – aye; Jones – aye.

Chief Ventura thanked those in attendance for being there to support. He expressed gratitude to the board for accepting the vision he laid out 18 months prior with a plan to update equipment and address the command structure. Ventura explained he had two candidates eligible for the promotion. He added Spitalere went before the oral board and took a written exam. Ventura explained that Spitalere “came to the top” during the process. He shared that Spitalere has grown in maturity, intellect, and ability over the last year and a half.

Daphne Woss, Town Clerk/Tax Collector, was present to swear in Christopher Spitalere as Corporal of the Brentwood Police Department.

Nikki Bernier, Spitalere’s fiancée, was present to pin him.

Chief Ventura shared information about Officer Matt Kelly, Brentwood’s K9 officer. He explained Kelly approached Ventura about starting a K9 program. Ventura explained he told Kelly he would need to raise the funds for the program. Kelly was able to raise \$20,000 in less than a month. It was Kelly’s responsibility to find and train the dog, according to Ventura.

In May, Kelly and Maggie, K9, graduated from the first half of the training program, according to Ventura. Last week, Kelly and Maggie graduated from the second half of the program. Maggie is now certified for basic tracking. Ventura shared his pride for Kelly and Maggie’s successful certification.

Chief Ventura shared that over a year ago, one of the officers was deployed to serve our country at the southern border in Texas. He welcomed back Officer Kevin Kneeland.

The Board signed the payroll and accounts payable summary register.

Artimovich motioned, seconded by Morgan, to accept the consent agenda which consisted of public minutes from 11/28/23, sealed non-public minutes from 11/28/23, recreation manifest, treasurer’s report (found at the end of these minutes), and the following building permits:

- AnnMarie Stevens, 24 Abbey Road, Electrical
- Shannon M Stevens Rev Trust, 18 Abbey Road, Electrical
- Holly Lemerise, 54 Prescott Road, Plumbing
- Thomas & Patricia Tompkins, 22 Fellows Road, Minor Project – strip/reshingle roof
- Mark & Jean Gagnon, 396 Middle Road, Solar
- Michael Lachance, 51 Haigh Road, Building

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- New Height Properties, 60 Middle Road, Electrical

Artimovich – aye; Kelly – abstain; Morgan – aye; Kleinman – aye; Jones – aye.

Jones opened the meeting to public comment at 6:15pm.

Becky Dunham, Conservation Commission Chairperson, and Eric Turer, NH State Representative, were present to update the board on the recent Exeter River Advisory Committee meeting. Dunham explained there was a quorum at the most recent Exeter River Advisory Committee meeting. She explained they allotted 2 hours for the meeting. Dunham stated they presented the same slides as the previous meeting with an addition of a few slides.

Dunham explained there was no discussion and feels there is no resolution as a result of that meeting. She explained Robert Span was also in attendance. Dunham explained Span has started a Friends of Exeter River group and has a meeting planned for December 14 at 5pm. She encouraged people to check out the website and get involved.

Dunham asked for clarification of the counsel the town received. Karen Clement, Town Administrator, replied the information came from the dam bureau. She explained that Exeter is only required to notify abutters and does not have an obligation to notify the town.

Dunham explained Turer learned from an Exeter Selectboard member that in 2018, the dam status was labeled as high hazard. Dunham plans to review the minutes from Conservation Commission meetings from 2018 and forward to learn what she can about that determination. Clement responded that Brentwood was notified from NH DES. She explained the town was sent the notifications each time there was an inspection.

Dunham also shared there appears to be a study from the dam to Haigh Road. She added that 14 of the 18 houses on Spruce Ridge are powered by geothermal.

Turer explained that at the previous meeting of the Exeter River Advisory Committee they extracted points of concern from the Town of Brentwood. He added that people were invited to add items of concern/discussion. Turer expected there would be discussion after the presentation of findings. He stated that due to time constraints there was no discussion.

Jones asked Conservation Commission to keep the board informed. Dunham asked if it would be possible to have an “official” representative on behalf of the town. Kleinman added he felt it was a difficult meeting. He is unsure if/when there would be an opportunity for the town to object. Kleinman suggested the town consider retaining a consultant with expertise of potential dam issues if it is removed.

Jones asked what the timeframe is for VHB completing their study. Turer responded he believes it is expected to be completed by January 2024. He added the grant cycle is July 2024. Dunham stated she heard the report would be ready in April but has not been provided with a definitive date.

Artimovich voiced his concern involving the town. He is hesitant to invest money in something the town does not have a standing in. He added the board has a fiduciary responsibility to the town. He admitted that while some residents could be affected, a potential lawsuit because Exeter’s plan falls through would affect the entire town. Kleinman stated he does not agree with Artimovich that the town does not have a stake. He believes research should be done to see if Brentwood does have a legal standing.

Dunham stated Conservation Commission is not taking an official stance. She said they are using the opportunity to keep interested parties informed. Jones added that the town has no legal stake. She is not sure the board would use legal funds. Morgan asked Kleinman his initial thoughts on how to proceed. Kleinman responded maybe from the nuisance onto land of

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Brentwood residents potentially causing an impact. He believes it could give Brentwood a legal standing.

Morgan asked Kleinman if there was something specific, he was recommending or looking to do. Kleinman responded no, he was just planting the seed. Turer stated he was not sure if there was going to be a hearing to accept the grant money. Jones responded she believes Exeter would need to have a hearing to accept unanticipated funds.

Jones closed public comment at 6:33pm.

Chief Ventura and Lieutenant Doty presented the Police Department budget.

### Police Budget

- Salary lines reclassified
  - Doty removed from the 110 line
  - Doty added to 120 line
    - Wage adjustment for lieutenant salary
    - COLA/merit increase of 5%
- Salary line increases
  - Include COLA/merit
  - Retention increases approved last year
    - Three \$1 retention increases
    - One \$2 retention increase
    - Hourly increases for education
- Overtime line (140)
  - Decreased by 6.79%
  - 100 hours cut from OT line
- Firearms qualifying line (244)
  - Decreased by \$3,000
  - Reduction of 37.5%
- Mileage line (280)
  - Decreased by \$200
  - Reduction of 33.33%
- Prosecutor line (320)
  - Increasing by 31.48%
    - Increase due to higher amount of arrests
    - Increase due to change in court structuring where felonies are being tried in district court first
  - Increasing by \$5,267
- Level-funded lines
  - Training
  - Court fees
  - Radio repairs
  - Dues/subscriptions

Kleinman asked how many officers are in the 110 line. Ventura responded 8 full-time officers and the part-time patrol officers. Morgan asked if all officers got a 5% increase. Ventura responded no. Kleinman stated he supports the education incentive. Jones asked about Doty's wage adjustment. Ventura responded Kingston is paying their lieutenant \$90,000 - \$92,500. Artimovich supports lieutenant's wage adjustment amount.

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Ventura explained they are looking to add another Corporal. He explained there are 4 eligible officers to fulfill that position. When budgeting, Ventura factored in the lowest salary of those 4 eligible officers to be sure there are adequate funds in that line.

Artimovich questioned the training line (242) remaining level funded. His concern is based on every officer needing 4 additional hours of training. Ventura responded that he believes the training line will be okay. Morgan questioned the equipment line having 81% of the line remaining. Ventura explained he has some funds earmarked for equipment. He added he tries to keep some money until closer to the end of the year in the event of an unexpected repair like a blown engine.

Morgan questioned the Prosecutor line (320) increasing. Ventura explained the Prosecutor is underpaid for the workload. Heather Iworsky, Town Prosecutor, has requested an increase over the course of 5 years to get her to the market value of other prosecutors serving town's similar to Brentwood, according to Ventura. He explained Brentwood crested 200 arrests this year. He explained it is in part to more officers, but this increases the number of cases for the prosecutor.

Ventura explained in 2019, the law changed where felonies would not be prosecuted in district court. Starting in 2024, felonies will be prosecuted in district court first. Morgan asked if Ventura could expect the same statistics for future years. Ventura responded that about 75% of the arrests are from proactive patrolling and motor vehicle violations. The remaining arrests are domestic related. Ventura added more officers allows for higher visibility, protection, and coverage. He added double coverage helps with officer safety, but also provides better service for requests like VIN verifications.

Morgan motioned, seconded by Artimovich, to approve the police department budget in the amount of \$1,248,804. Artimovich – aye; Kelly – aye; Morgan – aye; Kleinman – aye; Jones – aye.

Ventura and Doty presented the Animal Control Officer budget.

### **Animal Control Officer Budget**

- Level-funded
- \$9

Artimovich motioned, seconded by Morgan, to approve the Animal Control Officer budget in the amount of \$9. Artimovich – aye; Kelly – aye; Morgan – aye; Kleinman – aye; Jones – aye.

Karen Clement presented the Government Buildings and Street Lighting budgets.

### **Government Buildings Budget**

- Most lines level-funded
- Increase rec from \$2,450 to \$5,000
- Increase highway from \$1,000 to \$5,000

Artimovich motioned, seconded by Morgan, to approve the Government Buildings budget in the amount of \$91,410. Artimovich – aye; Kelly – aye; Morgan – aye; Kleinman – aye; Jones – aye.

### **Street Lighting Budget**

- Level-funded
- \$1 budget

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Artimovich motioned, seconded by Morgan, to approve the Street Lighting budget in the amount of \$1. Artimovich – aye; Kelly – aye; Morgan – aye; Kleinman – aye; Jones – aye.

Clement asked if the board would like to meet on December 26 or come in to sign the manifest. Morgan motioned, seconded by Artimovich, to sign the manifest on December 26 and not have a meeting that day. Artimovich – aye; Kelly – aye; Morgan – aye; Kleinman – aye; Jones – aye.

Clement shared that Kip Kaiser, Building Inspector, has safety concerns with the library decking and stairs. Clement explained Kaiser reached out to four vendors, but only heard back from Blue Collar. Kaiser believes the repairs are an immediate safety concern. Jones asked if these repairs are separate from the amphitheater project. Clement confirmed they were. Jones asked how much is in the Capital Reserves. Clement answered there is about \$100,000 in that fund.

Morgan motioned, seconded by Artimovich, to accept the Blue Collar bid for \$7,773 and expend funds from the Capital Reserve Fund for Building Maintenance. Artimovich – aye; Kelly – aye; Morgan – aye; Kleinman – aye; Jones – aye.

Artimovich had no board updates. Conservation Commission meets Wednesday.

Kelly had no updates.

Morgan stated Economic Development is working to schedule a meeting.

Kleinman shared there is a housing presentation by the Planning Board on Thursday at 7pm.

Jones stated the School Board voted unanimously to hold the January 23 primary elections at Swasey. She stated Woss will post it on the town Facebook page and the town website. Artimovich suggested the school also post it on their marquis.

Jones reminded everyone that taxes are due by December 15.

Jones also shared the school board has finalized its budget and will be going to the budget committee.

At 7:04pm, Morgan motioned, seconded by Artimovich, to adjourn the meeting. Artimovich – aye; Kelly – aye; Morgan – aye; Kleinman – aye; Jones – aye.

Respectfully submitted,

Tamera Peek

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WEEKLY TREASURER'S REPORT				
<b>DATE:</b>			<b>12/5/2023</b>	
<b>General Fund:</b>		<b>TD BANK</b>		
Previous Balance:		3,844,692.15		
Deposits:		4,668,623.71		
Payroll:		33,980.16	DDP: \$33,980.16	
			CHK: \$	
FICA:		7480.81		
A/P:		1,010,155.35	Reg A/P Cks \$66,460.35	NHRS \$
			Swasey \$241,000.00	CO-OP: \$702,695.00
Transfer to REC CC				
Voided Check				
Transfer to Impact Fees				
Account Balance:		7,461,699.54		
Interest Earned YTD:		112,622.45		
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Joyce A. Gallant, Treasurer				