

## Selectboard Minutes

June 6, 2023

Present: Jennifer Jones, chair  
Andy Artimovich, vice-chair  
Jon Morgan  
Russ Kelly  
Paul Kleinman

At 6pm, Jones called the meeting to order.

The Board signed the payroll and accounts payable summary register.

Morgan motioned, seconded by Artimovich, to accept the consent agenda which consisted of recreation manifest, treasurer's report (found at the end of these minutes), and the following building permits:

- George Sanborn & Linda Scarfogliero, 59 Deer Hill Road, Building – New Dwelling
- Christopher Meehan, 19 Sanborn Way, Plumbing
- Gagnon Family Rev Trust, 5 Wilson Way, Electrical
- Gregory & Annette Robie, 452 Middle Road, Electrical
- Batryn Family Rev Trust, 25 Mohawk Lane, Minor Projects
- Harris Family Rev Trust, 36 Brook Crossing, Electrical
- Massimo & Brooke Rosati, 35 Longmeadow Drive, Electrical
- Ronald & Jacquelyn Sullivan, 35 Northrup Drive, Electrical
- Ronald & Maureen Rounds, 5 Route 27, Minor Project – roof
- Timothy & Melody Santos, 7 Ole Gordon Road, Pool

All were in favor.

Jones opened the meeting to public comment at 6:02pm.

Lois DeYoung, Crawley Falls Road, questioned the reason the library is on the agenda. Jones responded the amphitheater vote at town meeting was tabled. Following that, she explained, the board had a discussion about possibly freeing up some ARPA funds for a phased project and the next step would be for the library to provide an update on where they are in the process. Morgan noted the library is currently a safety and liability issue in its current state. DeYoung thanked the board for providing the packet ahead of the meeting.

Liz Faria, South Road, asked if the library proposal is new or different. Jones responded she believes it was an update of the proposal the library had been working on. She explained the update on the next steps would be coming later in the meeting. Faria asked if the money for the library would be ARPA funds. Jones responded the library has not been given any money at this point, as that would require a bid or more firm numbers. Faria stated she believes employees should not be able to have time off if there is a need for overtime and current schedules cannot be filled. Jones responded that earned time is part of the benefit structure that will be discussed.

Jim Hajjar, Mohawk Lane, thanked the board for providing the packet ahead of the meeting. He stated he agrees the library amphitheater is a safety hazard. He stated there was no quote or pricing for fixing the safety hazard. He also noted there were two surveys done. Hajjar explained he could not find the survey results, but remembered cost was one of the concerns from the survey. He expressed concerns about not seeing the pricing listed in the presentation. Jones responded it is a conceptual plan with estimated costs and contractors have not provided staged bids at this point. She encouraged Hajjar to reach out to the library trustees for the results of the surveys.

Selectboard Minutes  
June 6, 2023

Becky Dunham, Block Drive, thanked the board for the packet being provided ahead of the meeting. She asked if the \$415,000 quote includes the elevator costs or if the elevator will be an additional cost. She noted the elevator is part of the Capital Improvement Plan for 2024. Dunham questioned if the \$50,000 goal set by the trustees is in addition to or included in the \$415,000. She believes there needs to be more information and transparency with the project. Dunham suggested having a public forum meeting which would allow input into the project.

Rick Labrecque, Chair of the Energy & Efficiency Committee, was present to provide updates. He explained they have been researching community power as a possible option for the town and monitoring CPCNH. He explained there are currently 32 towns as part of that coalition. Labrecque explained it has launched the first group of towns in the last 1-2 months at the rate of 15.4 cents. On August 1, Eversource will be adjusting their rates he explained.

Labrecque explained the committee also had a presentation from Standard Power, which is another energy service provider currently serving Keene, Swanzey, Jaffrey and most recently Derry. The May Energy and Efficiency Subcommittee meeting was a presentation by Colonial Power group which is affiliated with NH based Freedom Energy according to Labrecque. He explained they serve dozens of towns in Massachusetts and are just entering the NH markets with Hampton as a client and other towns in the works.

The next meeting of the Energy & Efficiency subcommittee is slated for June 21 according to Labrecque. He stated the committee is expected to sort through what has been learned from the presentations and to bring a recommendation to the board, refining the Energy Plan, and preparing for at least 2 town information meetings as required by statute.

Jones asked if the committee was in favor of putting the plan in front of the voters. Labrecque responded that a majority of the subcommittee supports the idea of bringing the energy plan to the Town Meeting.

Labrecque explained last winter was a volatile time causing people to scramble for better electricity rates. This interest caused growth in community power service options. He expressed reasons community power might be beneficial including mitigating price spikes.

Jones asked if the energy plan would be tied to a specific vendor or if the plan would vary by vendor. Labrecque responded it will be a generic plan adopted and it will fit regardless of the vendor chosen.

Labrecque offered an update on the fire station solar array. He stated the town is coming to the end of year 6 and will be faced with the decision to purchase the array and take ownership or wait for another year. Labrecque stated the system could be purchased resulting in power for zero dollars in exchange for the purchase price and ownership responsibilities. He believes the decision requires an economic analysis including the examination of costs for preventative and corrective maintenance, hiring an O&M provider, research of possible insurance modifications, salvage and disposal obligations, and a cash flow analysis of annual savings.

Jones stated the buyout could occur in August per the Power Purchase Agreement. She asked if Labrecque believed the subcommittee would be willing to delve into those concerns and come to the board with a recommendation. He explained he believed the subcommittee could examine the options and offer a recommendation of whether an August buyout would make sense or if exercising the buyout at the end of year 7 or 8 would be more fiscally responsible.

Kleinman asked if community power would be mandated or if a resident could opt out. He also questioned the factors being used to choose the entity.

Labrecque responded that 30 days prior to the launch, every resident who does not already have a supplier would be sent a letter in the mail. The letter would explain the process of opting out if the resident is not interested in utilizing the community

## Selectboard Minutes

June 6, 2023

power supplier. He explained if the resident does not call to opt out, he/she will automatically be enrolled into the program. If after being opted in, the resident would like to revert to the previous supplier they could call and get out.

Kleinman asked if the factor is solely price based when choosing which entity to utilize. Labrecque explained the committee will determine the entity to recommend based on factors including the price, longevity of the organization, customer service features, local control, among other factors. He stated it will be debated at the subcommittee level before the recommendation to the Selectboard is made.

Kelly stated he believes the town is fortunate to have Labrecque and the entire committee. He shared the committee is impressive and the knowledge level is remarkable. Kelly suggested the board give prioritization to the committee before Labrecque left the table.

Jones responded that the Energy Plan had to go in front of the voters before warrants are due. She asked if the subcommittee would be able to make a recommendation on a solar buyout ahead of August. Labrecque responded he believed they could accomplish it.

Jones asked the timeline of holding information meeting sessions about the community power. Labrecque responded possibly September and explained the plan would be tweaked based on input from the residents at those sessions. Jones added that Swasey has stated Labrecque has been an invaluable resource in the solar array discussions for the school.

Kleinman asked what the buyout amount would be to purchase the fire station solar array. Karen Clement, Town Administrator, replied that it would be \$102,000. She added that the amount has already been raised and appropriated.

At 6:38pm, the public hearing to accept unanticipated revenue in the amount of \$10,337.50 from the NH Highway Safety Grant was opened. There was no public comment. At 6:39, the hearing was closed. Morgan motioned, seconded by Artimovich, to accept the \$10,337.50 highway safety grant. All in favor. The motion passed.

Jeff Hyland, Ironwood Design, was present to update the Selectboard on the amphitheater plan. Liz McConnell, library board of trustee chair and Janice Wiers, library director, were also present to address concerns and answer questions about the project.

McConnell explained the process of getting to the end goal of addressing the amphitheater safety concerns has involved public surveys, meetings, fundraising, and finalizing plans to go out to bid. She added the library trustees did not want the proposed numbers to affect potential bids which is why the actual numbers have not been published.

McConnell stated there has been some money raised by the project. She shared the friends of the library have allocated \$2,500 toward the project, about \$2,000 has been fundraised, go fund me has raised \$4,490 thus far, there may be ARPA funds allocated to the project, possible impact fee usage, donors in the works of providing funds, and more fundraising is planned to include upcoming raffles.

Wiers believes they are close enough to anticipated funds to be able to accomplish the project without doing a temporary fix. She added they have been applying for grants which look promising but have not yet been awarded.

Jones asked about the timeline for getting info on the expected donor funds. Wiers replied it would be as soon as possible. She added the library is not looking into adding the elevator right now. She shared there are grants for accessibility available and is not currently part of the project.

Kleinman stated he thought the direction was to fix the hazard temporarily in interim. Hyland responded that the estimate to stabilize the amphitheater is \$60,000 to demo the walls, replace concrete, catch basin drainage, and stabilizing the slopes.

Selectboard Minutes  
June 6, 2023

Kleinman asked how that amount was determined. Hyland responded that his expertise in the field helped him arrive at the amount. The pricing includes excavation, material disposal and the work needed to stabilize the area. Kleinman requested the line-by-line estimation documentation of the project.

Hyland noted the library will lose ADA accessibility to the basement with the stabilization approach.

Morgan thanked Wiers and the trustees for their hard work.

McConnell added the donors feel the project is something the residents deserve and is an attractive solution.

Hyland offered a presentation on the amphitheater project. He explained the kickoff meeting was in November 2022, followed by an information and input session in December and a public design presentation in January of 2023. Hyland shared slides of the designs from the 2023 presentation and photos of the current state of the amphitheater including the orange fencing used to cordon off the area.

Hyland shared opportunities and constraints were evaluated, pedestrian safety, site lighting, budget, and selection of material were some of the factors considered before the design was conceptualized. He said the first hurdle was design and financing will be the next challenge. Hyland described the next step as keying the project for bidding by incorporating flexibility into the bidding process, stressing the bidding process must be fair and will include add/deduct alternatives. Clement asked if Hyland would be preparing the list of add/deduct alternatives. He responded that he would be.

The timeline proposal offered by Hyland was as follows: refining layout and material selections, advance drainage system and roadway engineering, and finalizing lighting selections in June; working with town staff (planning board, conservation commission, trustees) and completing bid documents and providing them to selected contractors in July; bidding in August; and construction in September – November.

Artimovich asked if the back part of the parking lot would be closed off to traffic during the construction phase. Hyland responded there is some value to shutting the back part of the parking lot off and could potentially lower the project costs by 10%. Wiers added the library would also plan to reduce programming to help decrease the number of visitors. Artimovich reiterated his concern for the safety of patrons and liability to the town. He suggested possibly utilizing 6-foot-high fencing to block the area off.

McConnell asked if the fencing is something the road agent might already have. Artimovich responded it is something that would need to be rented. Hyland estimated the potential additional cost at \$500 per month to rent the fencing.

Jones asked when the fundraising funds would be finalized. Wiers responded there is a \$75,000 grant going out in the mail this week and there is a possible foundation donation that will be available soon. McConnell added there is also a raffle that will be kicking off in June and will be ending the last week of July. Jones stated it appeared there would be a firmer number by the end of the summer.

The board had a short recess to allow Hyland to collect his presentation items.

Chief Bird, fire chief, was present to update the board on a requested earned time accrual change. He explained, currently the full-time fire fighters must use 24 hours of earned time for 1 day off and explained they accrue time at the same rate as employees who work 8 hours shifts. Jones asked for an explanation of the process of getting to the presentation point. Chief Ventura, police chief, responded the exact model was developed by him while he was chief in Wakefield. During that process, many area department models were compared and evaluated, he said.

## Selectboard Minutes

June 6, 2023

Jones stated the basic premise is that 8-hour workdays are different than 24-hour workdays and the amount of time used is very different between the 2 types of hours. Ventura explained that since COVID, departments encourage wellness when an employee is not feeling well. The current culture encourages sick employees to stay home and not affect other employees.

Artimovich believes the benefits should be equal for all employees whether town, fire, or police. Morgan asked if it was possible for the hours and requested changes be put into a spreadsheet.

Jones asked if Chief Bird's proposal solves the issue. Artimovich argued 128 hours is low. Jones desires the changes to be equitable to all departments. It was decided the proposal would be tabled until a spreadsheet can be presented outlining the proposed changes and the percentage of the change for each of the shift categories (8, 10, 24-hour shifts).

Chief Bird offered an update on the radios. He explained the portables and radios have both arrived. The department is waiting for installation at this point. The portables will be dispersed soon. He added the ambulance delivery date has been pushed out to July. Bird expressed his hope of it being in service by August. He thanked the voters for their support of the radio purchase.

Jones shared a resignation with the board. Artimovich motioned, seconded by Morgan, to accept the resignation of full-time firefighter Jack Bryan on good terms. All were in favor.

Jones read a resignation letter from part-time police officer Jeremy Worcester. Artimovich motioned, seconded by Morgan, to accept the resignation of Jeremy Worcester. All were in favor.

Jones shared the school recently had an unexpected safety issue which needed to be corrected. They originally requested impact fees from fire/police to help off-set the cost of this unexpected project. Jones suggested possibly tabling the release of \$10,000 of police/fire impact fees being released to the school until the end of the school budget closes. Morgan supports following through with the earlier discussion of releasing the funds to the school. Kelly asked what would happen to the money if it is not needed by the school. Clement answered if it is not transferred to the school it would remain in the impact account for police.

Morgan stated there is no planned meeting of the Selectboard between the next meeting and the end of the school year. Jones asked if the transfer of these funds would deplete the impact account. Clement responded it would leave a minimal amount in the police impact fee account.

Letty Bedard, school board member, offered clarification that the school is not expected to be insolvent. She added the school income cannot be used to offset appropriations because spending is capped by the voters. Clement asked where expenses sit in comparison to appropriations. Morgan asked if the \$10,000 funds are needed. Bedard responded that as the budget sits now, no.

Morgan motioned to expend up to \$10,000 of police/fire impact fee funds to keep the school budget solvent, if needed. The funds will remain in the impact fee account otherwise. Kelly seconded the motion. All in favor.

Artimovich had no committee updates.

Morgan had no committee updates.

Kelly shared there is no communications subcommittee meeting on Thursday as originally scheduled.

Kleinman updated the board on the regional impact meeting he attended at the Rockingham County Planning Board. He explained that due to the aquifer zone on the site, a hydrogeological study has been recommended. Additionally, he added

## Selectboard Minutes

June 6, 2023

that Exeter has been put on notice due to watershed concerns. Kleinman believes the project is contingent upon upgrades to the intersection of Route 125 and 107. Jones asked for clarification on the project moving forward only with a light. Kleinman responded it was non-advisory recommendation and would be ultimately up to Kingston.

Kleinman offered a Planning Board update about a potential bakery moving into the old animal hospital location on South Road and Route 125.

Jones offered a school board update from last night's meeting. She explained that Daphne Woss, Town Clerk/Tax Collector and the Town Moderator, Dick Chamberlain addressed the school board requesting they reconsider their decision about the town using the school for elections. Jones shared the request was to add three days off over the next four school years. She sensed the general flexibility is there and explained the issue seems to be that the February 2024 primary date has not yet been set by the state. The school board agreed to table the request and readdress the request in the fall.

Kleinman shared that during his recent visit to Vermont, he learned the town had a Citizen of the Year. He expressed the idea of doing something similar in Brentwood to possibly bridge the divide felt in town. Artimovich suggested the person could be Town Citizen of the Year/Grand Marshal of the 4<sup>th</sup> of July parade.

At 8:23pm, Artimovich motioned, seconded by Morgan, to enter into non-public for hiring, legal, and reputation. All were in favor.

At 9:01pm, Morgan motioned, seconded by Kelly to seal the minutes and go into public session. All were in favor.

At 9:01pm, Morgan motioned, seconded by Kelly to adjourn. All were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Tamera Peek

