

Selectboard Minutes

January 30, 2024

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

At 6pm, Jones called the meeting to order.

Artimovich motioned, seconded by Morgan, to sign the appointment slip for James Russell as a part-time officer of the Brentwood Police Department.

Chief Ventura, police chief, welcomed everyone in attendance. He shared that Lt. James Russell will be retiring from full-time law enforcement after serving North Hampton for 22 years. Ventura explained he has worked with Russell over the last 10 years while Ventura has prosecuted cases for North Hampton. Ventura shared he believes Russell will fit into the department well because he supports the vision of the department.

Daphne Woss, Town Clerk/Tax Collector, swore James Russell in as a part-time police officer of the Brentwood Police Department. Officer Russell's wife, Carrie, was present to pin him.

The Board signed the payroll and accounts payable summary register.

Woss returned to read a prepared letter to thank all who assisted in the recent election. She read, "Before I begin, I was remiss in mentioning Jillian Benedix and Sally Finan for their help with the Rockingham Nursing Home the day that we did absentee ballots. They were tremendously helpful with the residents. I was really happy that they came with myself and Lt. Justin Doty. Thank you!

I am filled with gratitude for the help we had during the Presidential Primary and I would like to thank a few people. We set up the entire election in under 2 hours and everything was packed up and brought back to the town office in less than an hour. Thank you to Mr. Kew and Rusty (facilities manager for SAU16), for providing us all the materials we needed (lights, tables, chairs, Wi-Fi).

Listed are the many Town employees and residents that helped out, not just with set up/breakdown, but during election day, as well: Our highway crew (Wayne, Jeff & Micah), Joyce Keegal, Caleb Smith, Heather Haggett, Sally & Doug Finan, Ernie Woss, Bob Mantegari, Jenn Jones, Letty Bedard, Betsy Ibbitson, Kathy Beggin, part of the Brentwood Police Dept (Lt Justin Doty, Cpl. Chris Spitalere, Ofc. Bob Gagnon, and Ofc. Jared Wright-Ward, Ofc. Kevin Kneeland, and Ofc. Matthew Kelly), and part of the Brentwood Fire Dept (Katarina, Matthew, and Jeremy).

Our ballot clerks, who were absolutely amazing at what they do: Carole Belliveau, Carolyn Cocklin, Katie Coppola, Kathy Beggin, Liz McConnell, Matt Lipinski, Michelle Siudut, Becky Dunham, Sally Finan, Jillian Benedix, and Betsy Ibbitson. And a huge thank you to each Selectboard member! You all stepped into help at any given moment during the election.

Thank you to Lindy's for the amazing food that we had for lunch and dinner. They are always willing to accommodate us. And last, but not least, there are not words to express my thanks to Heather Haggett and Joyce Keegal. Before, during and after the election, they have to put up with my bossiness and organization and they do it kindly towards me and efficiently."

Jones thanked Woss, the Moderator, and Assistant Moderator for all their hard work with the election.

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

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- Jan & Donna Jakubowski, 9 Homestead Lane, Building
- 3 Ponds LLC, 98 Three Ponds Drive, Plumbing
- 3 Ponds LLC, 92 Three Ponds Drive, Plumbing
- M & G Irrevocable Trust, 8 Michael Bennett Road, Electrical

All were in favor.

Jones opened the meeting to public comment at 6:13pm.

Lois DeYoung, Crawley Falls Road, questioned how the board could vote to appoint a candidate who was not recommended by the Conservation Commission. Jones responded that the board has not voted to appoint anyone yet and it was an item that would be discussed tonight. She also asked for specifics on the qualifications the board was looking for in a candidate and questioned if there was a list. Jones suggested DeYoung listen to the previous meeting and the current meeting's discussions for that information.

Liz Faria, South Road, stated she believes Rob Wofchuck "quit" the Conservation Commission in the past. She questioned what will be different if he is chosen to serve on the Conservation Commission again. Faria believes the candidates (Marcoux and Hajjar) were disparaged at the last meeting and felt it was insulting. She stated she believes it is a conflict of interest for Wofchuck to serve on the Conservation Commission because he is also on the board of SELT.

Faria stated she does not agree with wage adjustments. She believes if an employee is getting a COLA/merit increase it should be limited to that amount only – such as 5% for example. Faria stated she has an issue with some of the towns used in the comparison of wages. She believes that since Rye is not part of SAU 16, it should not be used as a comparison. She disagrees Portsmouth should be considered as well, as they are a city. Faria suggested using Fremont or a town "next door" to Brentwood.

Faria stated that at the September 19 Selectboard meeting, propane rates were negotiated at \$1.83/gallon from Suburban. Faria questioned why town employees and Selectboard members can benefit from that pricing. She questioned how it is not a conflict of interest.

Doug Finan, Gove Road, requested the board purchase three laser pointers. He stated he is aware of one pointer being purchased but recommended three. He noted Glenn Greenwood, Town Planner, and the presenter should also have access to a pointer in addition to the chairperson.

Caleb Labbe, Shannon Way, was present to recommend Patrick Marcoux be selected to serve on the Conservation Commission. He supports young leadership being on the commission.

Jones closed public comment at 6:19pm.

Rob Wofchuck, Conservation Commission alternate candidate, was present to speak with the board. He explained he served on the Conservation Commission for 12 years and was chair for 8 years. He added he also served on the Planning Board for 5 years. Wofchuck stated he believes that his historical background, institutional knowledge, and experience he brings will assist with getting through future road blocks the commission may have.

Wofchuck believes he was helpful with the Fuller project. He explained some of the process may have been sidetracked by the interpretation of the language of the master plan and the open space bond. He added he desires to be involved again because of the 3-million-dollar open space bond and there being only 1-2 projects in their early stages, two years into the

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bond. Wofchuck hopes to help maximize the return on that investment. He believes the Conservation Commission was successful in leveraging the last open space bond.

Wofchuck explained he resigned from the SELT board in November 2023. He added he witnessed over 100 conservation easements and assisted with grant funding during his time on the SELT board. He added he believes that knowledge and experience are something that can be used going forward. Wofchuck added he admires Becky Dunham and her effort and organization as the chair of the Conservation Commission over the last few months.

Kleinman asked Wofchuck about the conflict of interest regarding SELT. Wofchuck responded he does not believe there is a conflict of interest, as he has resigned from the board. Kleinman clarified his question to ask how Wofchuck serving on the board of SELT and Conservation Commission would be a conflict of interest. Wofchuck responded that with past projects when SELT received money from the town, he recused himself from the decisions. He explained that while he did not receive money as a board member, he did not want to give the perception – actual or apparent – of a conflict of interest by voting.

Morgan asked Wofchuck to explain his perspective of the function of the Conservation Commission. Wofchuck responded that on a regulatory level, the commission is overseeing wetlands and keeping track of open space in town. He added the commission assists with implementing the Master Plan, which is the resident's vision for the town. Wofchuck added there is an Open Space chapter which the Planning Board does a good job at updating and the Conservation Commission may be able to assist with.

Wofchuck believes the Conservation Commission should be implementing the town's vision based on the warrant article that was voted on at Town Meeting. He stated he shares the vision to keep rural character, protect farms, and protect important trail systems when possible.

Jones asked Wofchuck's thoughts on the public use of conserved properties. Wofchuck responded that in an ideal world all conserved properties would be open to the public. He understands that would not work for everyone and added the access rights should stick with landowners. Wofchuck added that unlimited unfettered access should not be the goal. He added unrestricted access would be deal breakers for the Fuller and Swasey properties.

Jones requested Wofchuck address the public comment regarding him stepping away for a time and whether there would be any issues rejoining the commission and working with its members. Wofchuck responded he would not have an issue working with its members. He added there was some frustration with the Selectboard at the time and the flip flopping of support for a particular property. After serving for 12 years on the commission, he believed it was an appropriate time for a break from the commission. He noted after a break for a few years, he believes it would be a good time to reengage.

Jones stated that Jim Hajjar pulled his application at a prior Selectboard meeting. She added that she believes there are two candidates – Patrick Marcoux and Rob Wofchuck – for two alternate openings. Jones asked Karen Clement, Town Administrator, what the length of the term would be. Clement responded one year.

Kelly stated there was an issue of alternates of the Conservation Commission not showing up in the past. He feels it is important to get the appointments right. He believes that just because there are 2 applicants and 2 positions, both do not have to be filled tonight. Kelly stated he 100% supports Wofchuck's candidacy. He stated he supports posting the alternate position again and encouraging other qualified people to apply. Kelly stated there was a great deal of drama with the discussion of the previous candidates and he would not like to see that repeated.

Kelly, addressing an earlier public comment, noted that it was the character and integrity of the Selectboard that was attacked and questioned. He supports filling the alternate position with a qualified candidate.

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Morgan stated he shared Kelly's sentiments. He added that the Conservation Commission is appointed by the Selectboard and is advisory in nature. He believes the commission members should implement the vision of the town. Morgan supports the Selectboard choosing someone with enthusiasm and passion for conservation.

Artimovich stated he does not think Marcoux should be disregarded. He pointed out Marcoux is part of a younger generation, and it would be a lot of pressure for him to succeed. Artimovich suggested Marcoux would pave the way for the younger generation to serve on the commission. Artimovich supports giving Marcoux an opportunity to serve on the Conservation Commission. He added he believes Marcoux has had educated questions at Town Meeting. Morgan disagreed and suggested Marcoux's comments were bombastic. Artimovich responded that Town Meeting is an opportunity to become informed.

Kleinman suggested that serving as an alternate is a perfect opportunity for someone who is interested in conservation to become involved. He added Marcoux would bring youth to the commission. Morgan argued that once an alternate is appointed, they could become a full member at any meeting.

Artimovich motioned, seconded by Morgan, to appoint Rob Wofchuck to a one-year term as alternate to the Conservation Commission. All were in favor.

Artimovich motioned, seconded by Kleinman, to appoint Patrick Marcoux to a one-year term as alternate to the Conservation Commission. In favor – 3; Opposed – 1 (Kelly), Abstained – 1 (Morgan). Motion passed.

At 6:40pm, Jones opened the public hearing pursuant to RSA 31:95-b to accept unanticipated funds. Clement explained the funds were as follows: \$25,560.91 from House Bill 2 (HB2) for maintenance, construction, or reconstruction of town owned bridges into a non-lapsing fund which would be restricted funds in the general fund; \$28,045 from the NH Department of Safety for the full match amount for the MDT grant the board previously signed for; and \$12,750 from FEMA for the July storm with damage to Pickpocket Road and Peabody Drive. Jones opened the floor to questions.

Morgan asked how much is in the account for bridges. Clement responded there is about \$20,000 in the Capital Reserve Fund (CRF) and about \$25,000 on the 2024 town warrant to be added to the fund. She added the \$25,560.91 could not be added to the CRF, it would have to remain in the general fund as restricted funds.

Morgan asked if the FEMA money would cover the full cost of the project. Clement responded it is 75% of the full amount and that the town encumbered funds to cover the repairs from highway's 2023 budget.

Liz Faria, South Road, asked for clarification on each grant. Clement explained the MDT grant was a 75/25 grant. MDT stands for Mobile Data Terminals, according to Clement. She added it is for the police laptops in the cruisers and confirmed it was for 6 units. The FEMA grant was also a 75/25 grant.

Morgan motioned, seconded by Kleinman, to accept \$66,355.91 in unanticipated funds. All were in favor.

At 6:45pm, Jones closed the public hearing.

Faria asked if there was specific length of time the hearing had to remain open. Jones responded there is not a requirement for a public hearing for unanticipated funds.

Clement explained the board previously voted to encumber funds from the Police Department budget. She added they would like to encumber \$106,640 to cover the salary and benefits for the 10th officer for the 2024 budget. Jones confirmed this was something that was already discussed at the board level. Clement added there will be \$9,000 returning to the taxpayers from the police budget.

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Artimovich motioned, seconded by Morgan, to encumber \$106,640 from the police budget. All were in favor.

Jones noted there would be no direct tax impact as far as increasing the tax revenue.

Clement presented the board with two beaver trapping permits. She explained there is a beaver dam in the fire pond at the corner of Bartlett and 111A. Fish & Game would like to relocate the beavers, according to Clement. She added the work was recommended by Wayne Robinson, road agent. Jones asked why there were 2 permits. Clement responded it was for 2 different trappers. Jones stated it was for David O'Hearn and Tom Coleman.

Artimovich motioned, seconded by Morgan, to sign the beaver trapping permits. All were in favor.

Artimovich had no committee updates.

Morgan stated there will be an Economic Development meeting on February 15 at 6pm. They will be preparing for the upcoming quarterly business breakfast.

Morgan shared the quarterly business breakfast will be on February 21 at 7:30am. It will be held at the Brentwood Recreation Center. It will be a business round table. Economic Development will be looking for insight, comments, feedback, thoughts, and requests regarding doing business in Brentwood.

Kelly asked when the website would launch. Clement responded it would be launching tomorrow at 10am. She added the communication committee has split up their members to be available to the various departments.

Kelly asked about the use of funds for the access road that was addressed at a previous meeting. He stated he believed it was to be added to a future agenda and asked for the status of that plan. Clement replied that there were enough funds in the highway budget to encumber to not need to split it up between various lines as previously discussed. Jones suggested it be put on a future agenda.

Morgan motioned, seconded by Kelly, to appoint Artimovich as an alternate to the budget committee meeting on February 5th. All were in favor.

Kleinman shared the Planning Board has a major project that is being presented to them. He explained the location of the Castles has plans to become a manufacturing business which is being relocated from Exeter. A conditional use permit was approved at the last Planning Board meeting, according to Kleinman.

Kleinman explained there is a site plan review application for Lambert & Sons to construct an 8,000 SF contractor building and a 12,000 SF Brentwood Surplus building. He explained they had been approved for a wetlands conditional use permit at the last meeting.

Jones asked about the status of the cease and desist that was served. Clement responded they were given thirty days. She added the landowner plans to meet with Glenn Greenwood tomorrow.

Jones shared the School Board meets next week. She thanked the school for the use of their facilities for the elections. She noted how smoothly it went with the added space.

At 6:57pm, Artimovich motioned, seconded by Morgan, to enter non-public for real estate. Artimovich – aye; Morgan – aye; Kelly – aye; Kleinman – aye; Jones – aye.

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At 7:10pm, Morgan motioned, seconded by Artimovich to enter public session. Artimovich – aye; Morgan – aye; Kelly – aye; Kleinman – aye; Jones – aye.

Morgan motioned, seconded by Artimovich, to seal the non-public minutes. Artimovich – aye; Morgan – aye; Kelly – aye; Kleinman – aye; Jones – aye.

At 7:10pm, Morgan motioned, seconded by Artimovich, to adjourn the meeting. All were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Tamera Peek

WEEKLY TREASURER'S REPORT				
DATE:			1/30/2024	
General Fund:		TD BANK		
Previous Balance:		8,208,686.38		
Deposits:		69,849.28		
Payroll:		36,748.50	DDP: \$35,158.50	
			CHK: \$1,590.00	
FICA:		8180.40		
A/P:		21,790.32	Reg A/P Cks \$21,790.32	NHRS \$
			Swasey \$	CO-OP: \$
Transfer to REC CC				
Returned Check				
Bond Payment				
Transfer to Conservation Acct				
Account Balance:		8,211,816.44		
Interest Earned YTD:		18,592.93		
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Joyce A. Gallant, Treasurer				