

Draft Minutes

Select Board

6/4/18

1. Call Meeting to Order

Present at this meeting were Anne Surman, Kathy Corson, Julie Gilman, Molly Cowan, Don Clement, and Town Manager Russ Dean. The meeting was called to order at 6:30PM by Ms. Gilman. Selectwoman Corson motioned to move into non public session under RSA 91A 3 2a for compensation. Selectwoman Surman seconded. Roll call vote: Surman aye, Gilman aye, Clement aye, Cowan aye. The Board then entered into a non-public session. The Board emerged from non public session.

2. Board Interviews – Zoning Board of Adjustment. Esther Olson was interviewed by the Select Board for a position on the Zoning Board of Adjustment.

The Board then reconvened in the Nowak Room for the remainder of the meeting.

3. Public Comment

Darius Thompson spoke about the materials for the holiday parade, as he is the person responsible for those materials. He wanted to make sure that people knew that the Memorial Day and Holiday parades are two separate events. He is bringing this up because there were some materials used for the Memorial Day parade that were taken from the Holiday parade storage without him being contacted.

Will and Eva, two students from the Student Activists Against Gun Violence, asked about their applications for the use of the town hall. They asked for a fee waiver for the AV and filming charges, and requested access to the upstairs bathroom and live streaming of the event. Ms. Gilman said they would discuss it at permits & approvals, and also would come back to them about the bathroom access.

Megan Eddy asked about the smell coming from the wastewater treatment plant. Mr. Dean said that the smell is coming from the sludge transfer done at the lagoon, and they are trying to aerate and mix the sludge so that the smell is reduced. Mr. Dean said that he would have the health officer check for any health concerns and look into it more. Mr. Clement asked if there is an estimate from the engineers about when it would be completed. Mr. Dean said that there was not as of yet, and that they are still trying to minimize the odor with alternatives.

Mark Damsell thanked the Lions Club and other volunteers for staining the benches in Swasey Parkway over the weekend.

4. Minutes & Proclamations

a. Proclamations/Recognitions

There were no proclamations at this meeting.

5. Approval of Minutes

a. April 23rd, 2018

MOTION: Mr. Clement moved to accept the April 23rd 2018 minutes as submitted. Ms. Corson seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

b. May 21st, 2018

MOTION: Ms. Corson moved to accept the May 21st, 2018 minutes as submitted. Ms. Surman seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

6. Appointments

There were no appointments at this meeting.

7. Discussion/Action Items

a. 12 Front Street Request – Parking Access

John Lyons, the attorney representing the property owner, spoke about this request. Anne Bushnell, the property owner; Cory Belvin, the project engineer; and Betty LaBranche who is Ms. Bushnell's real estate agent. They had approached the ZBA for a density and setback variances, which were both granted. The HDC gave their approval to take down some of the L-shaped land in the back and replace it with another structure. Now, they are coming before the Select Board for the access issue. They will still need to go before the planning board to obtain final approval. The project has not changed since they first presented it to the ZBA.

The new structure will not be visible from the front to maintain the historic feel of the location, while maximizing space. In the back of the property is a gate with a historic access to the back parking lot. With the building, it will not be usable for access. They are asking for side access into the town parking, which would be one-way off of Front Street. Mr. Lyons emphasized that the new development meets all the goals of the master plan and is an in-fill development, adding additional affordable residential units. The location allows walking and biking, and is a good opportunity to increase the ability of people to live downtown.

Mr. Clement asked if there is a binding agreement for the rear-access gate. Mr. Lyons said that there is not, there is no definitive easement. Mr. Belvin passed around an aerial photo of the development and pointed out the back parking lot. They began working on site concepts two years prior, and met with Mr. Sharples and Mr. Eastman to discuss moving the access point to the side. The site was re-planned according to their recommendations. The current plan is for 9 units in the rear, providing a 20-foot wide access for emergency vehicles and having a single-entry point from Front Street. This will reduce the number of vehicles accessing the location from Front Street. This development would help to remove housing barriers for those with lower income. There would be two lost parking stalls located on the side, but there will be 14 additional on-site parking stalls.

Ms. Corson asked why the access is in-and-out, as opposed to just out. She also asked about why the emergency access needs to be 20-feet. Mr. Belvin said that it is due to town regulation. Mr. Lyons said that they are looking to get a sense of consideration from the Select Board before they go to the Planning Board. Ms. Corson emphasized that the 20-feet plays a big role because it can make the difference between one or two lost parking spaces. She also brought up that if there is a parking garage ever planned for that location, it would be undesirable. In order to prevent people from using that access point as an entrance, they would need signs. Mr. Lyons said that there would also be a

condominium association for the project which would enforce its rules and regulations. Mr. Clement said that they also should draft an official agreement. Mr. Lyons indicated their willingness to work with the town about any project concerns. Mr. Dean said that the access from the perspective of the flow of cars going onto Front Street is desirable, so that less traffic occurs on Front Street.

Ms. Cowan asked them to explain what infill development was, and also to clarify what affordable housing means to this project. Mr. Belvin said that this affordable housing does not meet the RSA requirements, but they are reasonably priced single-bedroom units. They are not luxury units. Infill development describes the use of empty spaces that already exists as opposed to developing new green space. Mr. Clement also pointed out that the access route would be a private way. Mr. Sharples said that access aisle requirements depend on a lot of variables. He asked the board if they were concerned about the parking spaces or the traffic flow, because he believes that if the access is one-way, they would still lose two spaces.

The board was in favor of the proposal as long as their concerns were addressed to the planning board.

b. Property Use Policy/Special Events Form Discussion

Ms. Gilman said that there were some questions about town liability and an equitable policy for all. The board would like to update these policies because they felt they were outdated. She addressed the current tension between the Exeter Arts Committee and some members of the public. She pointed out that there is no requirement for public comment, and that if there are non-residents wishing to speak they must ask permission. The Right-to-Know law does not require an audio recording, but the town is likely to move forward with that. She said that she felt as though the arts committee deserves respect, and that people should provide constructive criticism.

Mr. Clement agreed with Ms. Gilman that it was perfectly okay to disagree with the arts committee or any other town board, but it needs to be constructive and not personal in nature. He also emphasized the importance of the volunteer boards and committees.

The board then went over the revised property use policy and special events form, which have been added to. Ms. Gilman proposed a checklist for any application coming in, so that nothing is left out and that all permissions can be considered at once. Mr. Dean said that the current policy dated back to 2004. They removed sections in the new draft for loaning town equipment, solicitation, and the signboard. There are multiple permitting bodies in town, and all of these policies are supplementary to the venue the event occurs at.

In section 5, they listed the order of preference for users. The new policy also clearly defines what a "town sponsored function" or "civic event" is. There are also added provisions on accessibility and scheduling. They have also created a broader event application form that all locations are able to use, along with more detailed supplementary information. The event application also lists other documents and forms that must be submitted with it, if applicable.

Ms. Gilman expressed her desire to slim the application down so that it isn't overwhelming, especially for smaller events that only occur at the town hall and don't require any specialized permitting or setup. She also said she would like more discussion about alcohol use in town buildings. The board agreed, and also would like to close any inconsistencies between this policy and any specific

location use policies such as the library trustees or arts committee. Mr. Clement said he would like to schedule a work session to go over the new policy. Ms. Corson said it would be a good idea to include some kind of policy for the upstairs bathroom. Also, there should be a different fee schedule considered for nonprofit organizations not centered in Exeter.

Dan Chartrand said that he believed that there was bias and exclusivity in some of the town boards, like the Swasey Parkway trustees and Exeter Arts Committee, towards TEAM Exeter. He said that they want more access to public spaces. He suggested that the Board of Selectmen start acting as the permitting body for the art gallery. Ms. Gilman said that she fears that having that would make permitting more difficult.

Derek Haddad said that he attended a recent arts committee meeting and did not feel comfortable speaking during their public comment. His concern is that members of the public will not want to attend meetings if they are not comfortable speaking. He hopes that every town meeting will be recorded for viewing. He also asked for clarification about what the selectboard representative's role is at other meetings. Mr. Clement said that selectboard representatives can be voting members of the committee, depending on that committee's charter. Mr. Haddad asked if there could be more information on how meetings function.

Jim Faber said that there was a perception that the arts committee meeting was not responsive to the public. He said that nametags and public recording would have been good.

Scott Ruffner said that he had served on the arts committee for three years before he was not reappointed. He feels as though the people without power are voicing their frustrations and are being stifled. He pointed out the delay in getting applications and permitting through the process. He also said that the selectboard representative's role needs to be clearer and less involved.

Sharon Harris said that she has witnessed the bias in the town, and has recently become more involved in town meetings. She is looking to the select board to help take responsibility for this issue, and asked the board members to step in and handle it.

Bruce Jones said that he thought that televising meetings would be advantageous for all involved. He felt that public input was shut down at the previous arts committee meeting. He sent the committee an email about these issues and received a response. He did not feel as though members of the public were bullying or harassing the committee members.

Ms. Cowan emphasized that participation by the public in civic life is important. She believes that any permitting body and any committee with a budget should be televised. Mr. Clement said that the housing authority, the energy committee, and the human services committee are all not televised. Ms. Corson also asked what kind of personnel requirement that would entail.

Paul Royal agreed with Ms. Cowan that the current rhetoric discourages public participation in the town. He said it is important to discuss things in a positive manner. He also suggested that televising meetings would help this, because people would hold themselves to higher standards. Amy McLaughlin said that while televising meetings would help, she wanted the leadership in the town to have higher standards for how town bodies treat members of the public. Chris Soutter said that the board should be careful in creating rules that cover everybody, because it might be more appropriate to be specific.

MOTION: Ms. Corson moved to record the next arts committee meeting in the Nowak Room. Ms. Cowan seconded the motion, and it passed 3-2-0, with Ms. Surman and Mr. Clement voting nay.

The board decided to schedule a work session for 6/25/18 at 5:30PM to further discuss the policy.

c. Human Services Funding Committee

Mr. Clement had asked for an update on the human services funding committee. There is also a new charge for the committee, and a description of how organizations are chosen to be funded. Mr. Clement also mentioned the human services funding policy that he would like to update. Each year the select board votes on what organizations the funding will go to, as proposed by the human services funding committee. Ms. Gilman said it would be good to update the policy regarding the type of organizations funded, and how the procedure is followed.

Amy McLaughlin said that the funding distributed from 2017 is broken up into four quarters. If an agency received \$1,000, for example, they would receive \$250 each quarter. Ms. McLaughlin said that they are hoping to formalize the process to make it more consistent. The application form from 2017 was repurposed and made more consistent for 2018. They also ask organizations for a narrative of their overview and impact. Chris Soutter asked if the board could formalize the human services funding committee from an ad-hoc to a standing committee.

MOTION: Mr. Clement moved to adopt the human services funding committee charge as presented. Ms. Corson seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

d. Swasey Parkway Turnaround Update

The board received an updated drawing showing the traffic pattern, and an explanation of the quoted price from Wright-Pierce. The cost of the turnaround would be less if it was completed as a separate project outside of the current Swasey Parkway updates. Mr. Clement thinks the turnaround is a good idea, but doesn't think that it necessarily needs to be done this year.

Mark Damsell, a current Swasey trustee, said that he shared many of the board's concerns about the potential turnaround. He said that the turnaround would be a good asset for the parking situation in the town. He suggested keeping more green space and lessening the pavement. The turnaround would only be for personal vehicles, as well.

Mr. Sharples explained to the board how they could reduce the size of the turnaround and increase the amount of greenspace. He also said that it was important to make sure that larger vehicles could turnaround, and that the traffic flow makes sense.

MOTION: Mr. Clement moved to complete the turnaround as a separate project, and to try to find ways to retain greenspace and shrink the turnaround. Ms. Cowan seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

8. Regular Business

a. Tax, Water/Sewer Abatements & Exemptions

MOTION: Ms. Cowan moved to deny the veteran credit for map 61, lot 13. Mr. Clement seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

MOTION: Ms. Cowan moved to approve the veteran credit for map 68, lot 6, unit 211 for \$500. Mr. Clement seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

MOTION: Ms. Cowan moved to approve the elderly exemption for \$152,251 for: map 29, lot 8; and map 64, lot 65. Ms. Corson seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

MOTION: Ms. Cowan moved to approve the elderly exemption for \$236,251 for: map 94, lot 21. Corson seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

MOTION: Ms. Cowan moved to approve the disability exemption for \$125,000 for: map 95, lot 64, unit 143. Ms. Corson seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

MOTION: Ms. Cowan moved to approve the abatement for \$127.74 for: map 110, lot 2, unit 80. Ms. Corson seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

MOTION: Ms. Cowan moved to approve the abatement for \$163.30 for: map 110, lot 2, unit 80. Ms. Corson seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

MOTION: Ms. Cowan moved to approve the abatement for \$447.65 for: map 104, lot 1, unit 1. Ms. Corson seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

MOTION: Ms. Cowan moved to approve the abatement for \$412.63 for: map 104, lot 1, unit 1. Ms. Corson seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

MOTION: Ms. Cowan moved to approve the abatement for \$266.15 for: map 104, lot 1, unit 1. Ms. Corson seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

MOTION: Ms. Cowan moved to approve the abatement for \$279.06 for: map 104, lot 1, unit 1. Ms. Corson seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

MOTION: Ms. Cowan moved to approve the abatement for \$219.52 for: map 104, lot 1, unit 1. Ms. Corson seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

MOTION: Ms. Cowan moved to approve the jeopardy tax for \$337.30 for: map 87, lot 14, unit 14B. Mr. / Clement seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

MOTION: Ms. Cowan moved to approve the jeopardy tax for \$251.64 for: map 87, lot 14, unit 2A. Ms. Corson seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

MOTION: Ms. Cowan moved to approve the jeopardy tax for \$224.87 for: map 87, lot 14, unit 3B. Ms. Corson seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

MOTION: Ms. Cowan moved to approve the jeopardy tax for \$159.28 for: map 87, lot 8, unit C21. Ms. Corson seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

MOTION: Ms. Cowan moved to approve the yield tax for \$198.94 for: map 47, lot 8. Ms. Corson seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

MOTION: Ms. Cowan moved to approve the land use change tax for \$15,000 for: map 113, lot 5. Ms. Corson seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

MOTION: Ms. Cowan moved to approve the abatement for \$667.23 for: map 13, lot 6. Ms. Corson seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

MOTION: Ms. Cowan moved to approve the jeopardy warrant for \$165.97 for: map 87, lot 14, unit 11A. Ms. Corson seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

b. Permits & Approvals

MOTION: Ms. Corson moved to approve the use of the town hall by James Duprie of the Pine Street Players for their youth theater production from 4/28/19-5/13/19. Ms. Cowan seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

MOTION: Ms. Corson moved to approve the use of the town hall and bandstand by Scott Ruffner of TEAM Exeter for the Exeter Arts and Music Festival from 5/16/19-5/19/19. Ms. Cowan seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

MOTION: Ms. Cowan moved to approve the use of the town hall by Enna Grazier of Exeter Rises for a public forum on 6/22/18 from 5:00-9:00PM Ms. Corson seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

MOTION: Ms. Corson moved to approve the use of the town hall by Enna Grazier of Exeter Rises for a public forum on 7/20/18 from 6:00-8:00PM Ms. Cowan seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

MOTION: Ms. Corson moved to approve the use of the town hall by Enna Grazier of Exeter Rises for a public forum on 8/17/18 from 6:00-8:00PM Ms. Cowan seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

MOTION: Mr. Clement moved to approve a fee waiver for Exeter Rises for their public forums on 6/22/18, 7/20/18, and 8/17/18. Ms. Corson seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

The board discussed the use of the public bathroom upstairs during any town hall events. Ms. Cowan suggested having a monitor from the group holding the event to watch the second floor. The board pointed out that the lights and cleanliness of the bathroom are important.

MOTION: Ms. Surman moved to allow access to the bathrooms in the town hall under the condition that there is a monitor to keep conditions, and to turn off the lights before leaving. Ms. Corson seconded the motion, and it passed 4-1-0 with Mr. Clement voting nay.

MOTION: Ms. Corson moved to table a request from the YMCA for a blue sign at the intersection of Front St and Linden St. Mr. Clement seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

MOTION: Ms. Corson moved to waive the charged interest for \$404.26 to the Town of Hampton. Ms. Cowan seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

c. Town Manager's Report

Mr. Dean reported that the Court Street Bridge Project had been completed. There is a Cooper hawk in a tree at the Winter Street Cemetery, so they need to wait until the fall to complete that project. He also expressed his condolences for the passing of Cleo Castonguay.

d. Select Board Committee Reports

Mr. Clement said that he attended the Lincoln Street project meeting, and said that some individuals on Tremont Street were concerned about drainage. He asked Mr. Dean to follow up on that issue.

e. Correspondence

There are multiple letters concerning the Exeter arts committee making recommendations and offering support as well. There was also a flyer for some other arts committee events, including a magic act and a 70's disco night. The Municipal Bond Bank also sent the board details about bonding.

9. Adjournment

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:30PM. Ms. Surman seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by recording secretary Samantha Cave.