

Select Board Meeting  
Monday February 25th, 2019  
Town Offices, Nowak Room  
Draft Minutes

1. Call Meeting to Order

Members present: Anne Surman, Kathy Corson, Julie Gilman, Molly Cowan, Don Clement, and Russ Dean were present at this meeting. The meeting was called to order by Ms. Gilman at 7 PM.

2. Board Interviews

a. There were no board interviews at this meeting.

3. Bid Opening: Wastewater Treatment Facility Force Mains (Contract #2)

a. J.A. Polito & Sons Inc., Shrewsbury MA: \$3,031,250

b. Albanese D&S Inc., Dracut MA: \$4,345,520

c. N. Grantees and Sons Inc., Salem MA: \$3,846,990

d. Jamco Excavators: \$2,359,340

e. DeFelice Corporation, Dracut MA: \$3,336,378

**MOTION:** Ms. Surman moved to turn the bids over to the Public Works Department. Ms. Corson seconded. All were in favor.

4. Water/Sewer Abatement Requests: Motion to Rescind, 2 Grandview Terrace WS Abatement

Peter Helfer was present but did not speak regarding his abatement request.

**MOTION:** Ms. Corson moved to rescind the motion of December 18<sup>th</sup>, 2018 to deny the abatement for 2 Grandview Terrace. Ms. Cowan seconded. Ms. Corson and Ms. Cowan voted yea, and Ms. Surman, Mr. Clement, and Ms. Gilman voted nay. The motion to rescind failed 2-3-0.

Ms. Helfer asked to be notified if there are future issues with the water usage. Mr. Dean said that in this case, there was a door knocker left at the end of May last year. Water/Sewer doesn't have everyone's contact info, so when they see an issue like that, a notice on the door is the most effective way to communicate. They have no obligation to notify, it's just a courtesy. The town is looking into a program called WaterSense, but this will be subject to budget approval and Select Board approval.

5. Public Comment

a. There was no public comment at this meeting.

6. Proclamations/Recognitions

a. There were no Proclamations/Recognitions at this meeting.

7. Approval of Minutes

a. Regular Meeting: February 11th, 2019

Ms. Surman asked that on page 6, where it mentions that she talked to Attorney Margaret Burns, to clarify that "her" refers to Margaret Burns and "they" to the Select Board.

**MOTION:** Ms. Surman moved to accept the minutes of February 11th 2019 as amended. Ms. Cowan seconded. All were in favor.

8. Appointments - Water/Sewer Advisory Committee, Rockingham Planning Commission  
Alternate, Trustees of Robinson Fund

**MOTION:** Ms. Corson moved to appoint Carl Wikstrom to the Water/Sewer Advisory Committee for a term ending 4/30/2019. Ms. Surman seconded. All were in favor.

**MOTION:** Ms. Corson moved to appoint Pete Cameron for RPC Rep from the Planning Board, alternate member. Mr. Clement seconded. All were in favor.

**MOTION:** Ms. Corson moved to appoint Jane McCafery to the Trustees of Robinson Fund, term to expire in 2022. Mr. Clement seconded. All were in favor.

**MOTION:** Ms. Corson moved to appoint Gwen English to the Trustees of Robinson Fund, term to expire in 2020. Ms. Surman seconded. All were in favor.

9. Discussion/Action Items

- a. E-911 Street Naming Recommendations Continued Public Hearing (note: this hearing will be opened, and continued to 3/4/19).

**MOTION:** Ms. Corson moved to continue the public hearing for E911 until Monday, March 4th. Ms. Cowan seconded. All were in favor.

- b. Water Sewer Abatement Policy

The Board reviewed a draft of the new Water Sewer Abatement policy. Ms. Cowan said she likes that the proposed policy acknowledges that sometimes stuff happens, and allows them to avoid playing detective, but that may not be the consensus of the board.

Ms. Cowan asked if the ratepayer should go before the Water and Sewer Advisory Committee to start the abatement process, saying that the Committee needs to meet more regularly, and dealing with abatements would give them something to do at their meetings. The Water and Sewer Advisory Committee could approve or deny the abatement and then the ratepayer could appeal to the Select Board. Mr. Dean said that the Water and Sewer Advisory committee would review the case and then make a recommendation to the Select Board to approve or deny the abatement.

Ms. Cowan wanted to add a provision that if an abatement is in process, the ratepayer won't be charged interest on their Water and Sewer bill, even if the abatement is ultimately denied; the interest should start accruing only after the final action of the Select Board. She doesn't want to penalize people for going through the abatement process. Mr. Clement said that an abatement is defined as a refund of monies already paid; it used to be that the ratepayer would pay the bill on time and then have the money refunded if the abatement was granted. Mr. Dean said interest is a shared risk. When the Select Board grants a tax abatement, the town pays the money back to the ratepayer with interest. Ms. Corson pointed out that the bills used to be a much smaller amount, and that at 12% the interest now could be significant. Mr. Dean said they

could direct the deputy collector to waive the interest on denied abatements, and suggested the wording "Interest will be considered waived until final action of the Select Board." Mr. Dean will look into how the billing system could handle such a waiver.

Mr. Clement said that they are considering making the "one time in 10 years" abatement the norm, but it was not intended to be the norm, rather the odd exception. He felt that the Select Board is not required to play detective, since the Water and Sewer department gives them a thorough report on each abatement request. Mr. Dean responded that with this draft Mr. Kelly was trying to give the board flexibility, a "get out of jail free" card, to give the ratepayer back a fixed amount of up to \$500.

The Board made a few more edits. Ms. Gilman suggested giving a definite time frame for taking the "above normal average," such as three years. Ms. Corson suggested "not to exceed three years." Ms. Surman said they should be consistent in the calculation. Ms. Corson also said that for clarity, that the language "customer" and "you" should be changed to "ratepayer," and "Reviewing Party" should be changed to "The Water/Sewer Department."

Ms. Cowan said she'd bring the suggestions to the Water and Sewer Advisory Committee, and Ms. Corson asked for a fresh draft next time. Ms. Cowan also asked Mr. Dean to determine how many ratepayers entering the abatement process pay their water bills up front as opposed to waiting until the abatement process is complete.

#### c. Economic Development

Ms. Gilman mentioned that the Board had received a letter from the Economic Development director, Darren Winham, asking for the authority to write a letter to DOT regarding funding opportunities to rectify the exit from the 101 onto Route 27. Mr. Winham explained that there is an unspecified company considering a 400,000 square foot building on Continental Drive, but the company has concerns about the northern intersection where the 27 meets the 101. Vehicles taking a left and traffic backing up onto the highway there are a big problem, especially in the morning. He added that Chief Shupe identified 58 accidents in this area over the last 10 years.

Mr. Winham said that sending a letter to NHDOT would be a first step. They will then look to get EDA money for this project. He believes this project would be well received by CEDS [Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy], which is key to EDA projects, but said that the EDA will not put money forward until the company in question commits to the site. However, if the company pulls out after the EDA disburses the money, that's ok.

Mr. Clement said that since this is a state road and a major thoroughfare, there are good reasons to make improvements there, adding that they've been reviewing Epping Road since 2015.

**MOTION:** Ms. Cowan moved to give authority to the Town Manager and the Town Chair to work with the Economic Development Director to contact the state DOT about this intersection. Ms. Corson seconded. All were in favor.

### 10. Regular Business

#### a. Tax, Water/Sewer Abatements and Exemptions

**MOTION:** Ms. Cowan moved to approve a Veterans Credit of \$500 for 68/6/112 and 62/56. Ms. Corson seconded. All were in favor.

**MOTION:** Ms. Cowan moved to approve an Elderly Exemption of \$152,251 for 74/127. Ms. Corson seconded. All were in favor.

**MOTION:** Ms. Cowan moved to approve an abatement of \$110 for 63/253. Ms. Corson seconded. All were in favor.

**MOTION:** Ms. Cowan moved to approve an abatement of \$13,535.50 for 72/9. Ms. Corson seconded. Mr. Clement voted nay, and the motion passed 4-1-0.

b. Permits & Approvals

The Board considered the applications for the Nowak Room and the Town Hall by the Womens' Club/Exeter TV for a Select Board Candidates Forum. Ms. Gilman said that it is not appropriate for town government to present a Candidates Forum. Mr. Clement said they'd done these for a long time, but Ms. Gilman countered that they were not done by EXTV, and insisted that a town department hosting a discussion for town office is a conflict. Ms. Cowan argued that they're hosting, not endorsing. Mr. Dean said he thinks the transfer of the application from the Women's Club to EXTV is about the fee, \$40 for the Nowak Room or \$75 for the Town Hall, but free to EXTV. Mr. Clement said they should vote to approve or not approve the applications in front of them, but they could make the approval contingent that the application be resubmitted to Town Manager's office by the Exeter Area GFWC.

**MOTION:** Mr. Clement moved to approve the permit for the Nowak Room for a candidate's forum on March 5th 2019 for the Exeter Area General Federation of Women's Club. Ms. Surman seconded. Ms. Gilman abstained and the motion passed 4-0-1.

**MOTION:** Mr. Clement moved to approve the Town Hall for a Candidates Forum on March 5th 2019, contingent on the application being submitted by the Exeter Area General Federation of Women's Club no later than close of business tomorrow. Ms. Cowan seconded. Ms. Gilman abstained and the motion passed 4-0-1.

**MOTION:** Ms. Corson moved to approve the Town Hall for Gloria Everett of Extreme Air for jump rope practice on March 23<sup>rd</sup> and March 30th. Ms. Surman seconded. All were in favor.

**MOTION:** Ms. Corson moved to approve the Town Energy Committee on Wednesday, March 27<sup>th</sup> for a public information session and Clean Energy Panel. Ms. Cowan seconded. All were in favor.

**MOTION:** Ms. Corson moved to approve the Pine Street Players "Fame" for October 19th - Nov 3 2019, 9 AM to 11 PM. Ms. Surman seconded. All were in favor.

Ms. Corson began to approve the Prescott Park Arts Festival Winter Show 11/4 - 12/18 2019, but Mr. Dean said that this is the complete application for the approved event including the one-

day alcohol license, which came in after the approval. He added that most of this time is rehearsal, and that alcohol would be served on the dates December 6, 7, 8, 13, 14, and 15 only.

**MOTION:** Ms. Corson moved to approve a special one-day malt and wine license application for December 6, 7, 8 and 13, 14, 15 of 2019 for the Prescott Park Arts Festival Winter Show. Ms. Surman seconded. Mr. Clement voted nay, and the motion passed 4-1-0.

**MOTION:** Ms. Corson moved to approve a special one-day malt and wine license for the Prescott Parks Arts Festival and the Word Barn for March 2nd 2019 from 6:30 PM – 10 PM. Ms. Surman seconded. Mr. Clement voted nay, and the motion passed 4-1-0.

Ms. Gilman pointed out that for the March 2<sup>nd</sup> event, people will be walking through the bar area to get to the seating, but she thought that a one-day license requires a restricted area for the bar. She asked Mr. Dean to follow up with the applicant on this plan.

**MOTION:** Ms. Corson moved to approve Swag on Swasey for 4/27, 5/25, 6/22, 7/27/2019 from 6 AM to 5 PM on Swasey Parkway. Ms. Surman seconded. All were in favor.

**MOTION:** Ms. Corson moved to approve Swag on Swasey for 8/24, 9/28 and 10/12/2019 from 6 AM to 5 PM on Swasey Parkway. Ms. Surman seconded.

Ms. Corson began to approve the Swag on Swasey Craft Fair for July 13th, but Ms. Gilman said that the American Independence Festival has already reserved Swasey Parkway for that date, and asked for clarification on the scheduling.

**MOTION:** Ms. Corson moved to approve the Swag on Swasey Craft Fair 9/14/2019, 8:30 AM to 6 PM on Swasey Parkway. Ms. Surman seconded. All were in favor.

**MOTION:** Ms. Corson moved to approve the Town Hall Gallery use by the Seacoast Artist's Association on October 30<sup>th</sup> for set-up and November 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, and 10<sup>th</sup> for a reception. Ms. Surman seconded. All were in favor.

c. Town Manager's Report

Mr. Dean said that there are three bills in play at the state level that could have an effect on the town. These are a bill to restore general revenue sharing; a bill on 15% of retirement contributions; and a bill to restore the state wastewater aid program, which would go from 5% debt forgiveness on the Wastewater Plant to 20%. This last bill could make an \$8 million difference to the town.

Mr. Dean added that Chief Shupe has informed them that he is retiring effective March 8th. Mr. Dean regrets this decision, saying that Chief Shupe has made a significant amount of positive change as a community-based chief who cares deeply about the people of Exeter.

d. Select Board Committee Reports

- i. Mr. Clement attended a Planning Board meeting where they approved a 9 unit condo on Main Street at the former Brad's Auto. The Conservation Commission had a dredge and fill hearing for Unitil's proposed operations center on Continental Drive. At the River Advisory Committee meeting, Rob Roseen of Waterstone Engineering did a presentation on a review of the Lincoln Street subwatershed, considering different ways they could improve stormwater quality and reduce flooding. The town didn't have enough money to implement the plan for Lincoln Street but this was a very good report. Mr. Clement added that he wishes Chief Shupe the best in his future endeavors.
  - ii. Ms. Cowan said that the Communications Committee has been meeting frequently, and has been tasking members with creating short synopses of the warrant articles for social media.
  - iii. Ms. Gilman is going to attend a meeting of the yet-to-be-named senior activities board. One thing they're looking at is an elder volunteer tax abatement; residents over 65 would be able to volunteer a certain number of hours at the Town Offices or the schools to qualify for an abatement. The Historic District Commission hasn't met this month because of a change on how projects of minimal impact such as signs are handled.
  - iv. Ms. Corson attended an advocacy training by New Futures. She is also doing a tour with the library to inform people about warrant article 6; they already visited the Rotary, and will continue on to RiverWoods and the Mill.
  - v. Ms. Surman had no update, but thanked Chief Shupe for his years of service. Ms. Gilman and Ms. Cowan concurred.
- e. Correspondence
- i. A notice that NH Seacoast Rotary Club is presenting an educational awareness forum on recovery with hope and dignity, March 5th at Exeter HS from 6 - 8 PM.
  - ii. A letter from Paul Royal discussing the events of the last Select Board meeting.
  - iii. A letter from William Baptiste, regarding Meals on Wheels and charging for the Senior Center. Mr. Dean said they are in the process of getting Meals on Wheels agreements from other communities for review. Mr. Clement said that civic organizations like the Garden Club, which has donated over \$5,000 to Exeter beautification efforts over the years, should not be charged for use of the Senior Center.
  - iv. A letter from the NH Department of Environmental Services on AOC, in response to the Public Works Director notifying them that Exeter will start using chloramines for water sanitizing. This will go online April 15th 2019.
  - v. A notice from Comcast Xfinity regarding channels they're offering or not offering. A standard policy is being sent to customers. Mr. Dean added

that Xfinity has a new store in Seabrook; if you want to stream cable only, you can bring them your cable box to save around \$14/month.

11. Review Board Calendar

The Select Board will meet March 4th, 18th, and 25th, not March 11th or April 1st.

12. Non-Public Session

- a. There was no nonpublic session at this meeting.

13. Adjournment

**MOTION:** Ms. Surman moved to adjourn. Ms. Corson seconded. All were in favor and the meeting adjourned at 8:46 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Joanna Bartell  
Recording Secretary