

Select Board Meeting
Monday June 3rd, 2019
Town Offices, Nowak Room
Final Minutes

1. Call Meeting to Order

Members present: Anne Surman, Kathy Corson, Julie Gilman, Molly Cowan, Niko Papakonstantis, and Russ Dean were present at this meeting.

2. Swearing In Ceremony - Police Chief (Town Hall, 9 Front Street, 6 PM)

The Board went across the street for the swearing in of Stephan Poulin as Exeter's Police Chief. The Board reconvened and Ms. Corson called the meeting to order at 6:40 PM.

Ms. Corson dedicated a moment of silence to the 12 people killed in the Virginia Beach shooting.

MOTION: Mr. Papakonstantis moved to enter into non-public session pursuant to RSA 91:A 3 2 L, discussion of a property under tax abatements. Ms. Cowan seconded. By a roll call vote, all were in favor, and the meeting went into non-public session. The meeting reconvened at 7 PM.

3. Bid Openings/Bid Awards

Ms. Corson discussed the bids for the wastewater treatment plant for beneficial use or treatment of dewatered biosolids. Of the three bids, Waste Management was the apparent low bidder at \$134.40 per wet tonnage per year for first 3 years, with a 5% increase per year after the third year. The total cost would be around \$336,000 depending on amount of biosolids. The Town of Exeter has worked with Waste Management previously, and Wright-Pierce recommended Waste Management. The \$52 million wastewater treatment plant will be live before June 15, and biosolids handling will need to be in place

Jennifer Perry, the Public Works director, said that they will be seeding the new plant with sludge from Hampton's Wastewater facility starting on Monday, which acclimates the bacteria. Biosolids handling is an expensive part of their sewer operation, and it will cost \$340,000 per year for sludge treatment. Waste Management will haul the sludge to Turnkey in Rochester, where it will generate methane that gets cleaned, treated, and piped through the EcoLine project to UNH at Durham; it provides heat and hot water to the campus. To set up this system, UNH spent \$52 million and Waste Management spent \$30 million, so it's not feasible in Exeter, but the town is part of the process.

MOTION: Ms. Cowan moved to award the beneficial use or disposal of municipal biosolids to Waste Management for \$134.40 for wet tonnage with the increase of 5% per year after the first three years. Ms. Surman seconded. All were in favor.

4. Public Comment

a. There was no public comment at this meeting.

5. Proclamations/Recognitions

a. There were no proclamations/recognitions at this meeting.

6. Approval of Minutes

a. Regular Meeting: May 20th, 2019

MOTION: Ms. Surman moved to approve the minutes of Monday, May 20th as written. Mr. Papakonstantis seconded. All were in favor.

7. Board/Committee Appointments & Resignations

- a. There were no appointments/resignations at this meeting.

8. Discussion/Action Items

- a. Sustainability Office Advocates (SOA) presentation

Terry Harmon, who was a co-founder of the SOA group, said they'd done extensive research and planning over the last couple months, and the team donated hundreds of hours. Warrant Article 31 called on the Town of Exeter to allocate up to \$45,000 to form a Sustainability Office; 62% of Exeter voters approved this warrant article, and they expect the town to act on its spirit and intent.

Bev Tappan, another member of the group, said that according to the EPA, sustainability "creates and maintains the conditions under which humans and nature can exist, fulfilling the social, economic, and other requirements of present and future generations."

Ms. Harmon said that at the March 18th 2019 Select Board meeting, they were asked to determine what the sustainability office would look like, and they found four paths: a part time position, a full time position, a pro-tem position, or reliance on volunteers and consultants. They were also asked to determine which other warrant articles had sustainability implications.

Robin Tyner of 9 Mill Street Drive, another member of the group, read the draft mission of the Exeter Sustainability Office: *To guide the development of policies and practices that simultaneously promote a healthy environment, strong community connections, and economic vitality; to ensure that water and energy resources, uses, quality, and impacts are considered in decision-making processes that impact the town and its people; and to achieve this in concert with the Master Plan, coordinating across all town departments, boards, committees, and commissions to ensure long-term sustainability of natural resources.*

Ms. Tyner said that Exeter could benefit by incorporating sustainability earlier in the decision making processes. This position could function in three ways: 1. To serve as a cross-functional team leader of a sustainability team that includes all department heads; 2. To develop initiatives and structures to address sustainability concerns and climate impacts as outlined in the Master Plan; and 3. To provide education and support for Exeter citizens and promote a culture of sustainability.

Chetana Parmar, another member of the group, presented a summary of sustainability lessons learned in other towns/cities. She said that they all had similar takeaways: where sustainability efforts were volunteer or an add-on to an existing position, it was soon realized that a dedicated town employee was necessary. There is a cultural shift required to do projects in a sustainable manner. Volunteers are not enough, they can't represent the town and work efficiently across departments. Consultants cannot replace a sustainability coordinator because they cost more, lack continuity, can't perform key functions, and can't serve as representatives in state/regional/national forums. Sustainability coordinators need to report to the Town Manager; those aligned within departments were less effective.

Jennifer Brackett Piskovitz of 22 Forest Street, another member of the group, said that 17 Warrant Articles passed in March 2019 have sustainability linkages. In Articles 2 & 3, Zoning Amendments #1 and #2 relate to areas that are potentially impacted by fertilizer and shoreland

districts. In Article 6, the library renovations could be a model of sustainability practice and could use renewable options for the new HVAC. In Article 7, for the Recreation Park, the Sustainability Office could be involved in the design from the ground up. In Article 8, for Salem Street Water/Sewer/Drainage Improvements, this area is in the watershed. In Article 11 regarding the Water budget, there are lots of concerns, such as testing for PFAs. In Article 15, which appropriated to a capital reserve fund for sidewalks, the linkages were the potential for green building, the impact of additional paved surfaces, and smart stormwater drainage. In Article 16, replacing streetlights with LED lights, this is a sustainable project. In Article 19 for the Town Parks Improvement Capital Reserve Fund, they'd like to look at sustainability in town parks. In Article 23, Intersection Improvement Plan Funding, they'd like to see smarter stormwater planning. In Article 24 regarding the Pickpocket Dam study, they could look at the project's impact on connected watersheds. In Article 26, Snow and Ice Fund appropriation, they could look at the salt impact. In Article 27, Swasey Parkway maintenance fund, they'd like to see more green grounds care practices and minimize run-off to the river. The passage of Article 30, the Rights Based Ordinance, indicates widespread support for sustainability issues. Article 31 was the Sustainability Office itself. In the SAU16 School Ballot, Article 1 was the 20 year bond for CMS Addition and Renovation, where they'd like to see sustainability practice throughout the project. In Article 3, CRF for synthetic turf replacement for EHS, they suggest costing out green options and avoiding toxic turf.

Derek Haddad, another member of the group, presented their recommended actions in 2019 and 2020. Town officials or a committee must pursue these sustainability initiatives until an officer is in place. For 2019, the SOA recommend formalizing the Sustainability Committee as a Town committee, so that the Select Board can work with an official group to finalize the job description of the Sustainability Officer. The SOA members have reviewed or discussed dozens of job descriptions. The workload they've identified could easily be full-time position, but the voters have only supported enough for part-time, so they may need to scale back or reprioritize. For Article 6 and 7, they should incorporate green and renewable energy initiatives immediately. The town should pursue grant opportunities and apply for a 2020 UNH intern by December 2019. The committee could create proposals for a Sustainability Coordinator position for FY2020 to be presented to the Budget Recommendations Committee. They should draft an Exeter vision & goals statement, and collect data on 2018/2019 Town energy use for baseline emissions calculations. In 2020, they should formalize a Sustainability Office with the Coordinator reporting to the Select Board via the Town Manager. They should also provide public outreach and education about town initiatives, actions, and progress.

Sally Ward, another member of the group, said that a formal committee is a way forward. The SOA's research will make for a seamless launch for the committee and they can push things forward. The group is committed to Exeter and wants to guarantee it will remain a special place.

Mr. Papakonstantis said that it's clear that the SOA put in a lot of work, and their thinking has saturated into the community, social media and schools. The recommended actions for 2019 are well thought out, and he likes the idea of formalizing the committee. He questioned whether the goals are doable, looking at the calendar and the town's fiscal year 2020; if a Sustainability Office was put into the budget, the office would have to wait until the budget passed in March, and they wouldn't bring on someone until the 2nd half of 2020. Mr. Dean said

that one role of a Sustainability Committee could be to put together a more formal budget proposal for that office. Mr. Papakonstantis asked if they had information on salary structures for similar positions at part-time and full time in the state. Ms. Gilman said that such research would be the work of the formal committee. In 2019 there needs to be continued group research, with interactive individuals or subcommittees working with different projects. There's a lot of education work to do to get the budget for this passed in March 2020. She has no problem with setting up a committee to do these things. She pointed out that other towns, such as Hanover and Keene, are moving fast and getting Sustainability Offices set up.

Ms. Cowan said she loves it all, and would be interested in hearing other comments. Ms. Surman said the next step is to focus on the committee, before the work of how this office fits in and what it does.

Ms. Corson opened the discussion to the public.

June Fabre, an Exeter resident, said that they should follow the Master Plan and preserve the river and work to improve its condition. The watershed health is in decline. They need to work with other towns, and a Sustainability Office is the best way to achieve these goals.

Luke Tyner of 9 Mill Stream Drive said that he'd talked to some of his fellow students at PEA about this, and they're rooting for this office to come into play because it's important.

Anna Stockman, an Exeter resident, said that the establishment of a Sustainability Committee is important now and for generations to come. Focusing on sustainability would inspire young residents to stay and raise families in Exeter.

Mary Hanson of 5 Walnut Street read a statement by Lori Robert, which said that residents are lacking an education on how to recycle properly and she would like to see compost done townwide. It's easy to feel overwhelmed when trying to change behavior, and having a department would help.

Bev Tappan of 7 RiverWoods Drive said that she attended a UNH-sponsored meeting where they projected sea level rise as it would affect Exeter. In the final projection, flood waters would reach the PEA campus. This scenario needs to be kept in mind.

Sally Ward read a statement by Brianna Brand in support of the creation of a Town Sustainability Office. This office would have the capacity and dedicated staff to work with groups pursuing ways for the town to improve wellbeing. Actions should not be unduly siloed. This has a potential to pay for itself and save the taxpayers money.

Sara Dewitt, an Exeter resident, said she has just started working with the schools on a green committee, and Maine and Portsmouth are banning plastic bags, so things are coming together for sustainability initiatives.

Marta Moreno of 48 Watson Road said that residents need to work together and have the support of the Select Board. Sometimes people feel reluctant to accept new things, but we need to be open to change. She told an anecdote about a Mexican fishing community having to leave fishing behind and making a living scuba diving, and they are thriving.

Eileen Flockhart of Jacks Court said that we need to be more careful about resources and see beyond now to the time of our children and grandchildren. We should look at what it will cost to *not* do something.

Jennifer Brackett Piskovitz, a member of the SOA group, read a statement from Kristen Osterwood, another member. Ms. Osterwood wrote that she worked with several communities

which had created an office. It will make Exeter a better place to live and ensure that people want to move to this community.

David Wilson of 7 Mill Stream Drive said that the Town has been through a lot of environmental issues, and they should have an office that residents can go to before getting into situations with years of debates because environmental issues came up. He understands they're trying to bring in businesses and industry but wants them to do it smartly.

Gwen English, a member of the SOA, read a letter from Heather and Jonathan Flewelling of 6 Wentworth Street. They support the Sustainability Office, and recognize the role these practices play in present and future. This will show how seriously the Town takes the stewardship of land, water, and wildlife.

Ms. Tyner said that she had a ballpark of salary numbers for a Sustainability Officer: full-time is in the \$75-85,000 range, and part-time in the \$30-40,000 range, depending on how part-time is defined. She added that a dedicated person can go out and get grant money, and there are lots of things you can do without spending money. Ms. Surman said the job description should include not just knowing about sustainability but also about working within an organization.

b. Sustainability Committee Discussion

Ms. Corson said she and Mr. Dean put together a mission statement and committee charge for a formal Sustainability Committee. This doesn't mean it's set in stone; they have had committees come back to change their charge, like the Facilities Committee at the last meeting. Ms. Corson said that the Sustainability Committee should have seven at-large members.

Ms. Corson read the mission statement for this committee:

"The Sustainability Advisory Committee's role is to advise the Select Board on sustainable practices within the Town of Exeter and benchmark community progress in areas of sustainability."

She continued with the committee charge:

Define sustainability within the context of current town operations;

Review sustainable initiatives and progress in town departments and functions;

Identify and engage community partners and stakeholders in the sustainability efforts;

Explore and create core focus areas for sustainability efforts from the town government's perspective;

Perform a gap analysis of what Exeter has accomplished (both community and town government) regarding sustainability efforts, and recommend what needs to be accomplished;

Consider how the town will establish a formal Sustainability Office and what core tasks and functions will be part of the office's work, including budget, personnel, and expenses;

Advise the Select Board, Town Manager, Planning Board, Budget Recommendations Committee, and Public Works on available grants to support sustainability initiatives;

Advise the Select Board, Town Manager, Planning Board, Budget Recommendations Committee, and Public Works on sustainability priorities and initiatives within the town CIP process.

Include an annual report to the Select Board encompassing the areas above and progress in each of the areas.

Ms. Corson then discussed the makeup of the advisory board: one member of the Select Board, who is a non-voting member; seven at-large members appointed by the Select Board; and the Town Planner or their designee, also a non-voting member. The at large members will serve three year staggered terms, with initial one, two, and three year terms.

Ms. Cowan suggested adding Parks and Rec to the charges, and also adding "Have the Sustainability Advisory Committee review proposed CIP and warrant articles with an eye to sustainability." Ms. Corson said instead of specifying the BRC, they should say "the Public Works Department and other town departments and committees as applicable," and suggested adding the library too.

MOTION: Mr. Papakonstantis moved to establish, effective immediately, a Sustainability Advisory Committee as per the mission statement and committee charge as described tonight. Ms. Cowan seconded. Ms. Surman asked if they could include a definition of sustainability in the charge. Ms. Corson said finding a shared definition of sustainability is one of the committee's charges. All were in favor.

Ms. Corson suggested the SOA group members apply immediately for the committee, and the Select Board will hold interviews in two weeks so the committee can start meeting in July.

While on the subject of sustainability, Ms. Gilman added that at the state level they're voting on municipal aggregation of the electrical supply. Right now the town purchases energy through a broker, but with aggregation, the town can purchase a supply for the whole town at a lower rate. There's also a proposal for multi-town bonding for infrastructure projects; for example, if they wanted to put in a new sewer line into Stratham, both towns could bond for it.

Ms. Corson suggested that the public look online for the report of sustainability initiatives the town had done already.

c. Classification Plan Amendments

Mr. Dean discussed additions to the classification plan for non-union employees. In Grade 3, the "Office Clerk, Parks and Rec" was changed to just "Office Clerk," since there is now a Grade 6 full-time Office Manager in Parks and Rec. They added a Grade 3 Office Clerk in Fire part time, the budget process to support that role is progressing. In Grade 5, they added Human Resources Assistant, which is a new part-time position. The IT Tech position is at Grade 7. In Grade 11, they took "Town" out of "Assistant Town Engineer."

MOTION: Ms. Cowan moved to adopt the classification plan presented on June 3, 2019 as listed. Mr. Papakonstantis seconded. All were in favor.

Mr. Dean then invited Chief Poulin to address the structural changes in the Police Department which the Chief will bring forward formally at the next meeting.

Chief Poulin said that they are transforming the rank structure at the Police Department. They will take the current two captain positions, reduce one to Lieutenant, and move one up to Deputy Chief, to create a more clear line of command. They'll be redoing the job descriptions. There's an opening in one of the captain positions, so there will be no demotion. Mr. Dean said next time there will be a formal plan change.

Mr. Dean said that with the new HR assistant coming on board, they are working on some wage proposals. The latest union contracts have adjusted the steps in each band from 2.23% to 2.5%, and they are working on a revised table for nonunion employees as well.

9. Regular Business

a. Tax, Water/Sewer Abatements and Exemptions

MOTION: Mr. Papakonstantis moved to approve a timber tax of \$8.92 for 101/32. Ms. Cowan seconded. All were in favor.

MOTION: Mr. Papakonstantis moved to approve an administrative processing abatement for 39/4 in the amount of \$3,956.17. Ms. Gilman seconded. Ms. Surman abstained, and the motion passed 4-0-1.

b. Permits & Approvals

i. There were no permits and approvals at this meeting.

c. Town Manager's Report

i. Mr. Dean thanked the organizers of the Memorial Day Parade committee, it was a nicely done ceremony.

ii. Construction season continues. Work is being done on Pine Street, Folsom Street, and Lincoln Street, as well as the water and sewer line work on Newfields Road.

iii. The new HR assistant had her first day today. Sheri Riffle's last day was Friday, and Bobbie Burgess started today. They'll be looking to replace Eve Quinn, the Assistant Town Clerk, whose last day was Friday.

d. Select Board Committee Reports

Ms. Gilman said that on the State level, there was a veto override for the repeal of the death penalty. They also voted to reverse last year's restrictive requirements for voter identification, so that all eligible voters will be able to register. The Town Moderator will now have the authority to reschedule a town meeting in case of weather. They're also changing absentee ballots, so that a reason will no longer be required. She met with the Executive Committee of the County Delegation to go over the county budget. She also met with Kristin Murphy to do four interviews for two Conservation Commission interns.

Mr. Papakonstantis had a Facilities Committee meeting last Thursday, and they almost finalized the RFP for a Facilities Condition Assessment which they will bring before the Select Board. They came close to finalizing the project scope and price. Three committee members

are industry experts, they think that \$40-50,00 is the low end, but more realistically \$60-70,000. They may decide to do the study over two years and spend \$50,000 each year. The scope of the study is to look at town buildings and facilities that will require work in the next few years. They will incorporate data from the 2015 study and the Public Safety Study this year, as well as any other study approved in the future. At the next meeting, they will centralize where the data will come from and finalize. DPW has a maintenance budget of \$100,000, but not a lot of that was spent last year or YTD, and one suggestion is to take the RFP funding from the maintenance money rather than put it back in the General Fund. Mr. Dean said he plans to check with Public Works to find out where they are in their process. Ms. Corson said this would be like the vehicles, where they have a list and their priorities are clear. Past facilities study fell short, and they need to look at it in a holistic way. Mr. Papakonstantis said he also had a Safety Committee meeting, the first since he's been on the board, and has suggestions for Mr. Dean on how to make this a more meaningful committee.

Ms. Cowan attended the Parks and Rec Advisory Committee, where they considered a vision statement. Several senior events are coming up. At the Housing Advisory Committee meeting, a subcommittee met to identify pictures to use to show what multifamily housing looks like in Exeter.

Ms. Surman has an E911 meeting tomorrow.

Ms. Corson attended meetings with the Communications Committee and the Swasey Parkway Trustees. She also met with Mr. Dean and Greg Bisson and Melissa Roy from Parks and Rec on how property use fees are going, and how they can work with the Swasey Trustees. Parks and Rec need to fix some issues and they will come back in July to discuss their suggestions. Then Ms. Cowan will go to the Swasey Trustees and if the Trustees felt they needed to come before the Board they can do so. Ms. Surman said the Trustees need to be more involved, they requested to come before the Board already. Ms. Gilman agreed, saying the Board needs the history of where the Swasey fees came from. Ms. Corson said the Trustees could come to the second meeting in July and have a public hearing if the Trustees felt it necessary. Mr. Papakonstantis likes Parks & Rec taking the permitting over because of their different perspective, without the emotional baggage.

e. Correspondence

- i. A collaboration proposal between Exeter Hospital and Seacoast Mental Health.
- ii. A notification of changes to Xfinity's Cinemax offering.
- iii. A Health Trust proposed service enhancement. Mr. Dean said this is information for the Board to look at regarding Health Plans and what is happening in the industry.
- iv. A letter from David Ahearn about the trash issue on Water Street. Mr. Dean, Jay Perkins, and Darren Winham worked hard to resolve this issue. Mr. Dean said the owner of the business suggested it would be a good idea to take the trash cans away, and they did that. The report today from Mr. Ahearn was that there were no trash overflow incidents over the weekend.

- v. A list of building permits issued YTD. Mr. Dean said that as of Friday, 18 Garrison Lane has closed. The site is getting cleared and should see construction activity in the next couple of months.

vi.

10. Review Board Calendar

- a. The next meeting is June 17th.

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to enter into Non-Public Session pursuant to 91A 3:2, exception D, consideration of the acquisition sale or lease of real personal property which if discussed in public would likely benefit a party or parties whose interests are adverse to those of the general community, and exception E, consideration of pending claims. Ms. Cowan seconded. By a roll call vote, all were in favor.

11. Adjournment

Respectfully Submitted,
Joanna Bartell
Recording Secretary