

Select Board Meeting
Monday, August 26th 2019, 6:40 p.m.
Nowak Room, Town Office Building
10 Front Street, Exeter NH
Final Minutes

1. Call Meeting to Order

Members present: Anne Surman, Kathy Corson, Julie Gilman, Molly Cowan, and Russ Dean were present at this meeting. Niko Papakonstantis was not present. Ms. Corson called the meeting to order at 6:43 PM.

MOTION: Ms. Cowan moved to enter into non-public session pursuant to RSA 91A:c-2-a: compensation and hiring. Ms. Surman seconded. By a roll call vote, all were in favor.

The meeting was reconvened at 7:07 PM.

2. Public Comment

Don Clement of 5 Thelma Drive complained about the proliferation of blue directional signs in front of Gale Park, which detracts from the green space.

He would also like to put back the sign at String Bridge which marked the site of Wilson's Creek, the first mill at the falls at Exeter Squamscott in 1640. The sign was taken down temporarily two years ago. Ms. Corson said that she looked into this and discovered that the sign was on private property and the original sign is not in good shape. They could look into a new sign, but it would be \$2000 and is not in the budget yet. Mr. Clement said that he hopes that the property owners would have a sense of history and let the sign go back up. Ms. Surman asked if they'd talked to the property owners. Mr. Dean said he thinks the property owner has been asked but he will double check.

3. Proclamations/Recognitions

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

4. Approval of Minutes

- a. Regular Meeting: August 12th, 2019

Ms. Gilman said that on page 5, the motion to approve the Policy Governing the Use of Town Property should have been "withdrawn" rather than "rescinded." Ms. Surman said that on page 2 in the discussion about past fees, she meant that they should either go back and charge those who have not paid or refund those who paid.

MOTION: Ms. Cowan moved to approve the meeting minutes from August 12, 2019 as amended. Ms. Surman seconded. All were in favor.

- b. Special Meeting: August 19th, 2019

Ms. Surman said that on page 2, Mr. Papakonstantis's discussion of the purchasing agent should read "Partners," not "Harvard." Also, the speaker's name was "Zwaan," not "Zwann."

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to approve the meeting minutes of August 19th, 2019 as amended. Ms. Surman seconded. Ms. Cowan abstained as she was not present, and the minutes were approved 3-0-1.

5. Appointments

- a. There were no appointments at this meeting.

6. Discussion/Action Items

- a. Lincoln Street Project Updates and Parking

Jennifer Perry, the Public Works Director, said that the Lincoln Street project is substantially complete; it's paved and has new sidewalks. It hasn't been striped yet, but will be in the next week or so. There's some perennial planting to be done in September or early October. They've been getting good feedback, although there have been a few concerns about parking. They had a great team working on this. Mr. Dean recognized everyone who worked on the project, saying that it's a busy corridor and they did a great job throughout. He thanked the public for their patience. Ms. Corson thanked the business owners for their patience as well.

Dave Sharples, the Town Planner, gave an update about his exploration of paid parking on Lincoln Street. The logical system in the railroad lot would be a kiosk, rather than single or double meters. There are several options for a kiosk. You can pay by space, but the pavement markings will get covered up in the winter, and you must know your space and go back to your car. You can "pay and display," where you get a ticket and go back to your car. The third option, and in his opinion the best, is pay by plate. You pay at a kiosk or on an app, and you do not have to go back to your car; the payment is tied to your license plate. He spoke to two vendors, who said the town could get away with only one kiosk there, although it could be an issue at busy times. If they did a permit system or the app, it would alleviate that issue. The quote for one kiosk was \$9,000 from Westcorps, while Network Solutions was \$15,000 but theirs may last a little longer.

He looked at a permit system, but they would always need to have an available space for a permit holder, so he felt it might be best to just do daily fee. They're looking into the finance aspect of taking in parking revenue. Enforcement is key. Currently on Lincoln Street, there's a small section that's limited to two hour parking, while the rest is all-day parking. If they institute paid parking at the train station, they'll have to change most of the other spaces to two hour parking, which must be enforced. In addition to the kiosks, they would need a handheld or vehicle mounted device to scan the license plates.

Stephan Poulin, the Chief of Police, spoke about parking enforcement, which he said has been a dilemma since the court decision that chalking is a violation of the Fourth Amendment. The Exeter Police have suspended chalking and are researching other options, such as "e-chalking" which involves taking photos and GPS coordinates. If they purchase a license plate reader, it would work in conjunction with the kiosks. There are three major companies, and the cost is right around \$8,000. This can include cloud-based payment options for the public. The Police are in the process of hiring an enforcement officer, who will be unsworn. Ms. Corson asked if other towns do e-chalking. Chief Poulin said no, but Rye is looking into it.

Mr. Sharples said that following the Board's comments, Darren Winham visited with the business owners on Lincoln Street, who didn't have an issue with charging for

parking in the train station lot. As far as charging on Lincoln Street, that's different, and at least one business wasn't in favor of it. If you do it, he suggested they should have 15 or 30 minutes free. Everyone will still have to pay by plate, because if they don't, enforcement doesn't know how long they've been there. He will get a memo on that with more detail from Mr. Winham. One benefit of pay by plate is you can leave and come back within the time and you're covered.

Ms. Cowan asked Mr. Sharples to elaborate on the difference in cost and enforcement issues between pay by plate and pay and display. Mr. Sharples said there's no real cost difference, because the kiosks are the same. Both have paper, since you still get a receipt with pay by plate. With pay and display, you have to go back to the car. At the train station, the kiosk could be 200 feet away from your car. Enforcement has to go to the window and look in to read the display. With a pay by plate scan, they can walk by and it scans the plates.

Ms. Cowan asked if there are privacy concerns with pay by plate. Chief Poulin said he doesn't believe that license plate reader would be affiliated with other databases, only checking whether the car's time is up.

Ms. Surman said that it's not fair to have paid parking for businesses on Lincoln Street and not downtown. Ms. Corson said it's imperative to take care of Lincoln Street, since there is a crisis for businesses. She asked Ms. Surman if she wanted them both done at the same time. Ms. Surman said no, but she wouldn't want there to be too much time between.

Mr. Dean said they looked at a monthly permit vs a daily fee, and the daily fee made sense as a place to start. Otherwise they'd have to reserve spots, which will make the program untenable. Ms. Corson said she doesn't want the cost to be burdensome for the ridership. Mr. Dean said if they offered monthly passes, they would sell them all and have no spaces. He felt it was better to have everyone pay the daily fee and park there if the spaces are available. Ms. Corson said she likes the monthly pass, but agrees that it's cumbersome. She asked if the kiosk could allow a discount if a user parked five days in a row or spent more than a certain amount. Mr. Sharples said he will look into that.

Ms. Corson opened the discussion to the public.

Pat Yasha, an Exeter resident, said she wants good signage, as she's tried to find parking in Portsmouth that was not clearly marked. She received a citation for parking in an area that was illegal and could only pay online, there was no address to mail it to. She cautioned that some people don't have a computer, so she wants to be able to mail it in.

Herb Moyer of Westside Drive suggested that if they were to chalk the space behind the car, it wouldn't violate the decision. Chief Poulin said it's improbable that someone would park in exactly the same spot, but it could be challenged in court. Ms. Corson said it would involve a lot of chalk and would get confusing.

Ms. Corson thanked Mr. Sharples and Chief Poulin for their input on this issue. Mr. Dean encouraged the public to submit further comments.

b. HB495 Seacoast Drinking Water Commission

Mr. Dean said that HB495 establishes a commission on drinking water on the Seacoast, which will set long term goals and requirements for drinking water. Part of the legislation requires that each town have a representative at the table; they need to find a representative, who could be a citizen or employee. Ms. Cowan suggested Bob Kelly. Mr. Dean said they could see if there's interest from any of the Water/Sewer committee members. Ms. Cowan said she can take the issue to the next Water/Sewer Advisory Committee meeting. Mr. Dean said the representative should come back to the Select Board and report on the Commission's work.

c. Public Hearing: Map 65, Lot 147 Property Sale

MOTION: Ms. Surman moved to open the public hearing on the property sale of 65/147. Ms. Gilman seconded. All were in favor.

Mr. Dean said that several years ago the town adopted the RSA that allows the Select Board to buy and sell land and buildings. As part of the process, the Conservation Commission and the Planning Board give recommendations, and the Select Board are required to hold a public hearing and vote at a subsequent meeting to execute the sale or not. In this case, Exeter Hospital is interested in purchasing a piece of property from the town, and Darren Winham has been working with Hospital Facilities Manager Phil Shaput on the proposal. Both the Planning Board and Conservation Commission recommended the sale.

Darren Winham said the Hospital offered the town \$50,000 for this property. The former Exeter Waterworks bought this parcel from the Hospital for \$1 to build a water tower, and the Hospital put a deed restriction on it so that only a water tower could go there. The Hospital is now interested in buying back the property. Because that deed restriction is in place, there will not be much other interest in buying this property. The Conservation Commission voted unanimously in favor, except for one abstention due to that member's place on the Hospital Board. The property's value on the town website is \$108,000.

At the Planning Board meeting, Gerry Hamel pointed out that Seacoast Mental Health gave an easement to Exeter for this property, which is currently being used as parking by Seacoast Mental Health. The Hospital has agreed to take that easement out; they don't need it, since they can access from their side. Ms. Surman asked if Seacoast Mental Health knew about the right of way. Mr. Winham said he doesn't think they did, since abutters don't have to be notified. Ms. Surman said they must be clear about the right of way in their decision.

Ms. Corson asked if this property in the hospital zone, and Mr. Winham said yes, in March 2010 it went from R2 to H.

Mr. Winham said the Planning Board noted that there is a property at 110 High Street which the Hospital plans on demolishing, and the Planning Board recommended that the Select Board ask if they would do a land swap. However, the Hospital is not interested in a swap and wants to maintain this as a separate issue.

Phil Shaput, the Senior Director of Facilities Planning at the Hospital, spoke about the proposal. He said this land is $\frac{1}{3}$ of an acre, surrounded on three sides by the

Hospital. They would like to eventually build a facilities office on that site, but there's no timeline. He added that absent of the right of way, it's landlocked.

Ms. Gilman said this is a sensible thing to do, since the land is not much use to the town. Ms. Cowan said she is glad to hear that other Committees have signed off. Ms. Surman said she has raised her concerns, and expects they will be addressed by the next hearing.

Ms. Corson opened the discussion to the public.

Eileen Flockhart of 7 Jacks Court questioned why the property is valued at \$50,000 by the Hospital but it's worth \$100,000. Ms. Corson responded that it's assessed at \$100,000, but that's not an appraisal. Ms. Flockhart said it's worth more than that, so they could sell it for more and use the money elsewhere. Ms. Corson said that the Hospital only offered \$50,000. Mr. Winham said they would like to get as much as possible, but no one would buy it, since they could only put a water tower on it. Ms. Corson added that it's landlocked.

Ms. Corson said there will be another public hearing on this issue September 9th.

MOTION: Ms. Surman moved to close the public hearing on the property sale of Map 165 lot 47. Ms. Gilman seconded. All were in favor.

d. Exeter Hospital Merger Letter

Ms. Corson said that at the last meeting they had Tom Donovan, director of Charitable Trusts from Attorney General's office, discuss the proposed Hospital merger with Wentworth Douglass and Mass General. She presented a draft of a letter to Mr. Donovan from the Board. There will be a hearing at the Exeter High School auditorium on September 9th from 4 - 6 PM.

Ms. Cowan said it's a comprehensive letter and seems to encompass what the Board talked about. She asked about the plan to demolish a property on 110 High Street mentioned in the letter. Ms. Corson said the Hospital has owned this property for 10 or 15 years (Ms. Surman thought 30 years), that no one has lived there for some time, and the Hospital would like to demolish it. Ms. Gilman added that the Heritage Commission recommended preserving it. Ms. Corson said that the Hospital has owned it since 2006. She suggested that they can strike that portion from the letter if the Board is not comfortable with it. Ms. Gilman said she likes the sense of community they're presenting but they could avoid mentioning the property specifically. Ms. Corson said she wants the large organization to realize that they are part of the town.

Ms. Surman said that the letter covers everything, but she wants to make it more concise and clear what the main concerns are. Ms. Corson suggested that the Board members individually send edits and she will work with Ms. Cowan as the Vice Chair to create a final version.

Ms. Gilman said that the September 9th hearing is a public hearing and they want public input. A panel of experts as well as Hospital administrators will be there.

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved that a letter to Tom Donovan from the State Attorney General's Office be written by the Chair and Vice Chair to be submitted as they finalize it. Ms. Surman seconded. All were in favor.

7. Regular Business

a. Tax Abatements, Veterans Credits & Exemptions

- i. There were no abatements or exemptions at this meeting.

b. Permits & Approvals

i. Sustainability Grant Follow-up

Ms. Corson discussed the Coastal Resiliency Planning Grant application. The organization had questions for the Board, which Julie LaBranche has answered, and they are looking for any questions or changes to the response.

Mr. Dean said they are discussing the form of resources that would go into sustainability, and this grant has been tweaked to reflect some ideas on that. He met with the Chair of the Sustainability Advisory Committee last Thursday, walked her through the budget process and a chart of accounts, and discussed how a position is established. He added that the Committee is rewriting its mission and charge with input from the RPC and Dave Sharples.

Ms. Corson noted that the grant discussed specifics of the Sustainability Office getting through the budget process and on the warrant in 2020, and she doesn't want to include this in the application. One goal of the committee was to assess where the town is and where they need to be on sustainability, which the grant would help with. Ms. Gilman agreed, saying they can't guarantee it will be on the 2020 Warrant. The Sustainability Advisory Committee can work with the Budget Recommendation Committee, but they don't have organizational support or outreach from a department. The SAC should go to the Town Manager first.

Mr. Dean said that funding is up to the town as part of the budget process, but the establishment of an office or a department is under the purview of the Select Board and Town Manager. Ms. Gilman said that giving the Select Board the information to make that decision to go forward with the Sustainability Office was part of the Committee's mission. Ms. Cowan said she's concerned about putting something specific in the grant that they can't meet, whereas taking it out doesn't mean they can't do it. Ms. Corson clarified that the Select Board is in full support of the grant; the grantor asked questions, and they simply want to make sure they can answer the questions.

Ms. Corson opened the discussion to the public.

Herb Moyer of Westside Drive said he's happy to hear they support the concept of sustainability, since he feels it's a key issue in our country. He asked about the value of grant, and Ms. Corson said \$10,000, matched with \$2,500 plus volunteer in-kind hours. Mr. Moyer said they allocated \$45,000 for a Sustainability officer for the town, and asked if anything beyond the grant would be a budgeted item. Ms. Corson said the grant is not for a person, but for activities. A salary would have to go through the budget process separately. She knows that climate change is a real thing, but they need to know what to do and how Exeter can bring up the towns around them. She doesn't know whether this will be one person or a regional organization. Mr. Moyer asked what the public can do to help the process. Ms. Cowan said that the public voted, and that was a strong statement of commitment; now it must go through the process.

Mr. Dean said he's still trying to figure out what the task list is. The charge that was given to the Committee is being revised, and the Chair has been walked through the process of establishing positions and the compensation plan. He doesn't know if \$45,000 is the number, especially if it's full time with benefits, since that would be quite a bit more.

Eileen Flockhart of 7 Jacks Court said she's advocated for trees in town. She would like to explore the possibility of becoming a Tree City, which would help them go after other kinds of grants. It would make sense to bring this issue to the Sustainability Committee. There was a tree survey done two years ago which shows information about the benefits of trees and their positive impact on property values. There are lots of missing pieces to Exeter being a Tree City, and she's hoping that the Sustainability Committee would be a place to go to coordinate the big picture.

Ms. Corson, Ms. Cowan, and Ms. Surman were ok with taking the details of the budget process out of the response. Ms. Corson said it's something they can't guarantee. Ms. Gilman wanted to make it clear that the process is for funding for the Sustainability Committee, not necessarily the Sustainability Office. Ms. Corson asked Mr. Dean to help them tweak the language.

ii. Grant application to the MBTE fund

Jennifer Perry discussed a grant application to the Drinking and Groundwater Trust Fund, which was spun off from MBTE and other settlements. The grant would allow for the acquisition of land off Drinkwater Road, in the cove aquifer, an area the town had tested in the 1980s as a potential groundwater supply. The commission that reviewed the application said money spent in the 1980s was speculative, but would still be considered a match. This parcel is in the Exeter River Watershed, and there are prime wetlands on the site. It's known that conservation of wetlands and groundwater are mutually beneficial. She needs a letter of support from the Board to support moving forward; the application is due September 13th. Ms. Corson asked if the land is for sale. Ms. Perry said she's talked to the owner in the past, and she believes it's potentially for sale. It's prime wetland, so the best use is not for a residential subdivision. The Board thought it was fine to go forward.

MOTION: Ms. Surman moved to write a support letter to the Drinking and Groundwater Trust Advisory Commission in support of the grant regarding the source water protection grant for the Drinkwater Road groundwater supply. Ms. Gilman seconded. All were in favor.

iii. Request from Parks and Rec

Mr. Dean said that he'd had a memo from Greg Bisson asking that Tighe and Bond be allowed to do additional work for the Rec Park. There are issues with the boundaries of adjacent parcels, so they will do survey work and settle the boundaries with the Registry of Deeds. They want to pin this down before they go further with the designs. They need \$15,100, which is within the project budget.

MOTION: Ms. Surman moved to allow the Parks and Rec Department to expend \$15,100 plus expenses out of the Recreation Park Design and Engineering account and to

authorize the Town Manager Russ Dean to be the signatory on the addendum. Ms. Cowan seconded. All were in favor.

c. Town Manager's Report

- i. The Town offices are closed Monday for the Labor Day holiday.
- ii. Railroad crossing reconstruction work begins tomorrow, initially on the Main Street railroad crossing, when the detour will be to Front Street. This will take about two days, then Main Street will reopen and the Main Street crossing will serve as the detour for Front Street. This is the railroad's scheduling, and the town has no control over that timing.
- iii. Earlier this year the town had a ceremony for the USS Thresher. There will now be a ceremony in Washington DC on September 26th, and he encouraged the public to go and honor these servicemen.
- iv. The Police and Fire Study has begun, and should last 135 days. They've already visited by a quantitative analyst.
- v. The Exeter UFO Festival is this weekend. Visit ufofestival.org for a list of events.
- vi. He's working on the FY20 budget now, going over preliminary numbers and requests.
- vii. The Planning Board did adopt the CIP last Thursday night.

d. Select Board Committee Reports

- i. Ms. Gilman said she met with the Conservation Committee, where they decided they had no concerns about a proposal for a property on Prospect Street; they also heard several matters of people abusing conservation properties. She had a Demolition Review Committee public hearing about 110 High Street, and there were several objectors from the public who said the demo would damage the streetscape. The Heritage Commission made the recommendation that it should be preserved, and gave suggestions to the property owners for alternatives to demolition. In State business, they passed a bill creating a Coastal Resilience and Cultural and Historic Reserve District Commission. They need a member from the Exeter Historic District Commission, and she has been put on it already. This lets towns join together for a shared conservation district.
- ii. Ms. Surman had no report.
- iii. Ms. Corson had an Exeter River Advisory Committee meeting, and they had just been on a Great Bay tour. They discussed what Mindy Mesmer said about PFOA and PFOS. At the Swasey Parkway Trustees meeting, they are working on keeping things going, talking about benches and trees and fences. At the Planning Board meeting, they went through each of the waivers on Rose Farm and discussed the reasoning behind them.
- iv. Ms. Cowan had no report.

- e. Correspondence
 - i. A notification from XFINITY that Turner Classic Movies is moving to a different package.
 - ii. A note from Kathleen Bailey, who is looking for historical photographs of Exeter for a book she's writing.
- 8. Review Board Calendar
 - a. The next meeting is September 9th.
- 9. Non-Public Session
 - a. There was no non-public session at this meeting.
- 10. Adjournment

MOTION: Ms. Surman moved to adjourn. Ms. Cowan seconded. All were in favor and the meeting adjourned at 9:26 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Joanna Bartell
Recording Secretary