

Select Board Meeting
Monday September 9, 2019
Town Offices, Nowak Room
Final Minutes

1. Call Meeting to Order

Members present: Anne Surman, Kathy Corson, Julie Gilman, Niko Papakonstantis, and Russ Dean were present at this meeting. Molly Cowan was not present. The meeting was called to order by Ms. Corson at 7:03 PM.

2. Public Comment

- a. There was no public comment at this meeting.

3. Proclamations/Recognitions

- a. Proclamations/Recognitions – EV Week

Ms. Corson said that on July 24, 2017, the Select Board proclaimed a commitment to uphold the principles of the Paris Climate Accord, which corresponds with National Drive Electric Week. Ms. Corson read the 2017 proclamation:

The Exeter Board of Selectmen proclaims commitment to uphold the principles of the Paris Climate Accord to hold the increase of global temperature by reducing our greenhouse gas emissions.

Whereas, we will explore alternative renewable energy sources; and

Whereas, we will continue to seek investing in green building technology for our facilities where possible; and

Whereas, we will work to reduce our energy consumption; and

Whereas, we will invest in more fuel efficient vehicles; and

Whereas, we will work toward the adoption of a ‘complete streets’ policy that encourages alternative transportation; and

Whereas, we will enhance and maintain green forested natural resources;

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Exeter Selectboard, the governing body of the Town of Exeter, New Hampshire does hereby adopt this resolution in concert with the Paris Climate Accord. Exeter’s Master Plan speaks to the mission of adhering to, maintaining, and practicing environmental sustainability. We will work to accomplish this through various means and initiatives.

Mr. Papakonstantis read the proclamation for National Drive Electric Week:

Whereas, petroleum-fueled vehicles are responsible for over 50% of our local greenhouse gas emissions and are a contributing factor to air pollution and climate change, threatening the health of our citizens and the sustainability of our planet; and

Whereas, the imbalance between gasoline resources and worldwide demand is escalating gasoline prices to levels that overburden commerce, hurt economic growth and cause hardship to our citizens; and

Whereas, the transportation sector needs support to move toward adoption of clean energy technology, including plug-in electric vehicles, that reduces our dependence on foreign fuels and supports a healthy environment and economy; and

Whereas, Exeter is dedicated to being a leader in the use of clean energy, establishing policies and programs that conserve energy, and promote sustainability; and

Whereas, September 14-22, 2019 has been designated as National Drive Electric Week throughout the United States of America to educate our citizens about the benefits of plug-in electric vehicles and to promote their adoption;

Now, therefore, we the Select Board do hereby proclaim September 14-22, 2019 as "Drive Electric Week" in Exeter New Hampshire, and call upon all residents to join in supporting the aims and goals of this worthwhile effort.

Brianna Brand of the Energy Committee thanked the Select Board for issuing the proclamation for Drive Electric Week, and said that the Energy Committee is hosting a view and test drive event Sunday by the bandstand featuring 8 EV models and one zero emission motorcycle. The Energy Committee has also been looking for funding to install a commercial EV charging station in Exeter, potentially from the Volkswagen settlement fund.

Bev Tappan, an Exeter resident and member of the Sustainability Committee, said that with the level of projected sea rise in Exeter they may want to think twice about whether to install Electric chargers downtown. Ms. Corson said parking is at a premium so they'd have to think carefully about where the parking spot will be.

4. Approval of Minutes

a. Regular Meeting: August 26th, 2019

Ms. Corson said that Mr. Papakonstantis was not present at the August 26th meeting but was listed with the attendees.

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to approve the minutes of August 26th, 2019 as amended. Ms. Surman seconded. Mr. Papakonstantis abstained and the motion passed 3-0-1.

5. Appointments

MOTION: Mr. Papakonstantis moved to appoint Bob Kelley as the representative to the Seacoast Drinking Water Commission, no term listed. Ms. Surman seconded. All were in favor.

MOTION: Mr. Papakonstantis moved to accept the resignation of Marcia Moreno-Baez from Planning Board, alternate position. Ms. Gilman seconded. All were in favor.

MOTION: Ms. Surman moved to appoint Steve Giger to the Recreation Advisory Board as an alternate, term to expire 4/30/21. Ms. Gilman seconded. Mr. Papakonstantis abstained and the motion passed 3-0-1.

6. Discussion/Action Items

a. Second Public Hearing: Sale of Map 65, Lot 147

Ms. Corson said that this is a hearing on the sale of land to Exeter Hospital.

MOTION: Ms. Surman moved to open the public hearing for the sale of Map 65 Lot 147. Mr. Papakonstantis seconded. All were in favor.

Mr. Dean said that the initial public hearing was at the Board's meeting of August 26th. This is surplus property near the hospital, and the town is entertaining an offer for \$50,000. He added that the correct assessment for this property is \$14,700, not \$108,000 as stated at the last meeting.

Darren Winham, the Economic Development Officer, spoke about the proposal. At the last hearing, the concern was the easement on the property from Seacoast Mental Health to the town. He spoke to the lawyer, and the easement does transfer to the new property owner if we leave it as-is, but the town can put in the deed that there is no longer an easement and the hospital would be fine with that. Doug Eastman spoke to an attorney with SMH, and they had no objections to the sale. Ms. Surman asked them to make the sale contingent on cancelling the easement.

Aaron Garganta, Senior Director of Facilities Operations for Exeter Hospital, spoke about the proposal. The Hospital is on board with erasing that easement, and he affirms that they're planning to move forward with the purchase pending the outcome of the Select Board's vote.

Ms. Corson questioned their plan to build a maintenance building, since a lot of this parcel is setbacks/buffers and it would require a variance to build on. Mr. Garganta responded that they're trying to keep flexibility in a future Master Plan for the Hospital campus. They would ask for some relief on one or both of the setback conditions that exist. Ms. Corson said that is not in the Select Board's purview, as it would require a variance from the land use boards.

Ms. Corson opened the discussion to the public, but there was no comment.

MOTION: Ms. Surman moved to close the public hearing on Map 65, Lot 147. Mr. Papakonstantis seconded. All were in favor.

Mr. Dean said their waiting period to vote following the public hearing is no sooner than 7 days and no later than 14 days from when the hearing was held. They should vote at the September 23rd meeting.

b. Q2 Financial Report – Finance Department

Doreen Chester, the Town Finance Director, discussed the Q2 financial report.

In the General Fund, they are done with the first half of property taxes estimated, \$6.7 million so far. The tax rate is set by the state in the fall. Motor Vehicle revenues saw a 5% increase. Building permit fees were more than expected at \$211,000. There was an increase in Income from Departments of \$42,000, including \$32,000 in blue bag revenue. There was a sale of town property, specifically 18 Garrison Lane, estimated at \$132,000 but needs adjustment for legal bills. Interest income was \$28,000 over projected because of a new investment account with Citizens Bank at 2.35%.

In General Fund expenses: \$8.9 million vs \$8.4 million last year, a YOY increase of \$474,000. In General Government, 57% spent or \$508,000. There was an overage in the Select Board expenses of \$16,000 due to a return of laptops, but there will be a credit of \$3,200 in Q3 so they're not overspent.

In the Finance Group, Information Technology looks underspent now, but has some planned computer purchases later this year.

In the Police Department, 45% spent, \$1.69 million; Administration Wages increased with the retirement of the former Police Chief and the 2nd quarter retirement of the Police Department Office Manager. They're now seeing offsets due to two new employees in these positions. In Patrol and Communications, there are decreased wages due to new folks taking positions.

The Fire Department was flat YOY at \$1.76 million. Part time wages were not spent in the first half of the year, due to a slight delay in the hiring for a part time administrative position. There was a capital outlay for a new exhaust system at \$18,900.

In Public Works, they're at \$2.5 million or 47% spent. There's an overall net increase in expenses of \$517,000, mostly due to the timing of the paving program, which was done earlier this year. The Snow and Ice budget has \$22,800 for the rest of the year, 91% spent. Solid Waste, \$508,000 looks lower than prior year but that's due to the timing of billing and payments.

Welfare Department expenditures were at \$31,000, but there are offsets from the Wentworth Trust.

Under Parks and Rec, expenses were \$10,000 more than prior year, due to a part time person going full time in the Office Manager position.

The Water Enterprise Fund is at \$1.69 million, 51% collected. This is leveling off since the rate increase in 2017. Expenditures increased by \$160,000, mostly for the Washington street waterline debt, \$138,000 so far.

The Sewer Fund Revenues are higher, with the increase in rates of March 2018 which drives the \$95,000 increase year over year. Expenses were \$1 million this year versus \$873,000 last year, due to the new wastewater treatment plant, which resulted in operation and sewer treatment increases.

The EMS Revolving Fund revenue is slightly higher by \$7,000. This depends on collections at ComStar. There was increased overtime due to more call volume so there's more to collect. General Expenses in the EMS fund are \$82,000, vs \$110,000 in the prior year, due to the purchase lease of the new ambulance in the third quarter, versus the payment on the old ambulance in Q2 of last year, which is now paid off.

Cable TV Revolving Fund revenues are one quarter of Comcast revenues, because Comcast does not pay in sync with our quarters. General expenses were \$68,000, up over \$25,000 last year, because they invested in new equipment.

The Recreation Revolving Fund had revenue of \$446,000, a 70% increase, due to expanded programming and the summer camps. The impact fees were \$24,000, used for new infrastructure at the Rec Park. General Expenses were \$217,000 versus \$153,000 last year, due to pool and tennis court improvements, irrigation, and a new fence at Gilman Park.

Ms. Corson asked if the public had questions, but there were none. She thanked Ms. Chester for her report.

c. Conflict Of Interest Policy

Ms. Corson suggested the Board wait to vote until Ms. Cowan is present.

Ms. Surman said she'd done research on various conflict of interest policies, with the intention of adopting a policy for Exeter by putting an ordinance put on the warrant and having

it voted on. She thought that it could be voted on in a general way, but found that they must put the specific policy on the warrant. Most of the language in her draft policy is used by other towns. It's mainly about the perception that the town boards and committees are transparent and above board. The Town has its own policies; this is more to what Board members do. She added that they should have legal counsel review it.

Mr. Dean said that if "public servant" is meant to cover the Select Board, all town employees, and all members of commissions and committees, it will be including 230 or more people. They already address conflict of interest in the personnel policy for the town. He doesn't want the policy to limit employees, especially those who are part time, from having other employment. Ms. Surman said it was not intended to include employees, and suggested they redefine public servants to be only members of the Boards.

Ms. Corson asked Ms. Surman to define direct and indirect financial interest, since it could be interpreted that any work that came to them through the publicity of their Board membership was in violation of the policy. Ms. Gilman suggested they use the word "solicit" business to limit it to actions taken by the members. Ms. Corson said that town counsel should look at this concern. Ms. Surman asked if they were equating being a subject matter expert with financial gain. She doesn't feel that such matters affect the work they're doing on the Board.

Ms. Corson and Ms. Gilman said they'd like to clean up the section on duty to disclose, and suggested Ms. Surman and Mr. Dean work on it further.

MOTION: Ms. Surman moved to move forward the draft code of ethics/conflict of interest policy as amended to Town Counsel for review with the condition that any changes should be brought back to the Select Board for final review and approval before inclusion on the March Town Warrant. Ms. Gilman seconded. All were in favor.

d. Sustainability Committee Update

Chetana Parmar, the Chair of the Sustainability Advisory Committee, presented the committee's proposed amendments to their charge. Ms. Corson asked why they felt the original charge was lacking. Ms. Parmar said that it was put together before the Sustainability Advisory Committee was formed, and many items in the charge have already been completed.

Ms. Gilman asked about the gap analysis of what Exeter has accomplished and what needs to be accomplished, which had been removed from the charge. Ms. Parmar responded that it would be the job of the Sustainability Coordinator to create the baseline. Also, the original presentation did show some sustainability work that had been completed. Ms. Surman said they need a starting point, but Ms. Parmar insisted that this is not the committee's responsibility. Ms. Corson said that they put in a grant with a goal of creating a gap analysis, and if they take the gap analysis out of the Committee charge, they may not get the grant.

Mr. Dean said that benchmarking is an important piece of what gets done. Ms. Corson added that the Warrant said "\$45,000, anticipated to be recouped through cost savings to the town," which is why people voted for it. This savings must be demonstrated using the gap analysis.

Robin Tyner of the Sustainability Committee said that most of the charge has been done. It's not appropriate for a committee of volunteers to go further. She wants the grant to go through, and doesn't think this creates a problem with it.

Bev Tappan, a member of the committee, suggested that the words “progress report” may be less daunting to include than “gap analysis.”

Ms. Gilman asked about the difference between the original and revised charge. Ms. Parmar said that the charge didn’t capture the main goal of the committee when it was established. Once items on this list are achieved, they can be removed. She read the proposed Sustainability Committee mission:

To guide the development of sustainability policies and practices for the Town of Exeter that simultaneously promote a healthy environment, strong community connections, and economic vitality; including the establishment of the Town of Exeter Sustainability Office.

Committee Charge:

- 1. Advise and assist the Select Board on the establishment of a formal Sustainability office pursuant to Exeter Town Warrant 2019, article 31.*
- 2. Advise and support the Sustainability Office.*
- 3. Define and publicize “Sustainability” within the context of current town operations.*
- 4. Review and recommend sustainability related priorities and initiatives on proposed Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) projects and warrant articles.*
- 5. Advise and coordinate with Select Board, Town Manager, and all relevant town departments and committees in pursuit of grants, and state and federal funds for sustainability initiatives.*
- 6. Identify priority community partners and stakeholders in sustainability efforts, so the Sustainability Office/Coordinator and town officials can engage most effectively.*
- 7. Establish communication plan to coordinate and engage with community partners and stakeholders in all sustainability needs and initiatives.*

Mr. Dean said that much of the sustainability conversation is about renewable energy, but he doesn’t see that in this charge. Ms. Tyner said that the Energy Committee is handling that piece. The Sustainability Coordinator is supposed to coordinate between those committees and departments.

Herb Moyer, an Exeter Resident, said that they need to move forward quickly. This work will be looked at favorably by the EPA and grant agencies. He’s impressed with what the group has done so far.

Mr. Papakonstantis said that this isn’t about pushback or problems, it’s about defining what the committee is trying to accomplish. Their presentation was robust and detailed, but he’s trying to define a mission, charge, and goals and objectives. The revision needs to include some of the work from the original and define the committee’s parameters.

Ms. Parmar asked if they will approve this proposal now. Ms. Corson said if they wait, it’s not changing that the Committee is meeting and doing great work. Ms. Parmar said they added agenda items for 6 - 9 months for transparency. Mr. Papakonstantis said that the meetings are transparent anyway; they agenda is published, minutes are taken, and lots of people are watching the meetings.

Ms. Gilman said she has no problem with goals being set, once they’re done it can be revised. Everything the Board is asking for is in there, other than the words “gap analysis,” but all committees are supposed to submit an annual report to the Board anyway.

Ms. Parmar said that when there is turnover in the committee, the mission statement or charge will change. Ms. Corson said they haven’t done that in the past, but that doesn’t mean that can’t happen. However, she’s concerned that they’re not listening to the advice of the

Board. She felt that the gap analysis being in there is part of the grant, and they don't want that to go away. They're trying to interject what they as leaders of the community feel. Ms. Gilman said Ms. Corson had a valid point about the grant. The expectation from the application is creating the gap analysis.

Ultima Gruder of Los Angeles, a student at Phillips Exeter Academy, asked to speak.

The Select Board gave her permission to speak.

Ms. Gruder said that this will take time, but they should put something on record and then add this piece in later. Ms. Corson responded that the Committee already has a charge that has that in it. All she wants to do is take what they've done and put that back in.

Ms. Gilman suggested keep that part until they hear about this grant. That was the job of this committee according to their application, and changing it may harm our chances. Ms. Corson said the interview in the next two weeks. She added that the Facilities Committee came to the Board twice, they are just being thorough. Ms. Parmar said that there's a lack of time. She's passionate about sustainability, and wants to see this town move forward.

Liuxi Sun of New York, a student member of the Committee, requested to speak.

The Board gave Ms. Sun permission to speak

Ms. Sun said they'd worked hard on the language of the charge. She suggested that for the next meeting, they add in the language about the gap analysis, and also present the job description. Ms. Corson said yes, they will have revised version for quick discussion and also address the proposed job description.

7. Regular Business

a. Tax, Water/Sewer Abatements and Exemptions

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

b. Permits & Approvals

- i. A license agreement between the Town and Ray Farm, LLC, that will allow snow plows on TIF road and use the access area to turn around. Mr. Dean added that this has been reviewed by counsel and there were no issues.

MOTION: Ms. Surman moved to approve the license agreement between the Town of Exeter and Ray Farm LLC. Approval of this license would allow the Town to plow snow on the TIF Road and use the access area to turn around. Mr. Papakonstantis seconded. All were in favor.

MOTION: Ms. Surman moved to authorize the Town Manager to sign any and all documents associated with this license agreement. Mr. Papakonstantis seconded. All were in favor.

MOTION: Ms. Surman moved to approve acceptance of Ray Farmstead Road as a public way per the recommendation of Town Departments. This deed has been reviewed by counsel, and the Department of Public Works, and the road is ready for acceptance. Mr. Papakonstantis seconded. All were in favor.

MOTION: Ms. Surman moved to release \$39,500 to the Exeter School District and \$36,000 to the Exeter Cooperative School District. Mr. Papakonstantis seconded. All were in favor.

- ii. Mr. Dean said there is an MS535 Report to submit to the state; the Board needs to accept the report.

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to accept the MS535 form as submitted by the finance department for the Fiscal year ending December 31st, 2018. Mr. Papakonstantis seconded. All were in favor.

c. Town Manager's Report

- i. Chief Poulin sent him a memo regarding the LiveScan fingerprinting equipment they obtained through a \$26,000 grant. It had been a potential CIP item and they're glad they found alternate funding.
- ii. Lincoln Street Resident Greg Willette sent the Town Offices a message regarding the Lincoln Street project. He thanked the contractor and said there were courtesy and professionalism from all involved.
- iii. Mr. Dean is continuing to work on budgets, meeting with different departments.
- iv. There was a wall breach at Winter Street Cemetery, which is a police matter. A repair plan is coming soon.
- v. Mr. Dean thanked Rob DeMarco of Summer Wind Landscaping for the company's work at the Town Offices.
- vi. The Ikey Hill Community development block grant site walk is tomorrow.
- vii. He met with the Exeter River MHP Co-Op regarding the new sewer rates, and invited them to attend the Water/Sewer Advisory committee in November.
- viii. There is a 9/11 ceremony Wednesday morning at 8:30 at the Public Safety complex.
- ix. They're planning for the Household Hazardous waste collection in October. The donation request has been raised to \$10, as they're getting more volume and looking to offset some costs.

d. Select Board Committee Reports

- i. Ms. Gilman said she met with members of the Conservation Commission and the organization doing the Coastal Resiliency grant for outreach support, advertising and education.
- ii. Mr. Papakonstantis said the Planning Board meets this Thursday. The Facilities Committee is looking for a date to meet. The presentation from the Sustainability Committee speaks for itself.
- iii. Ms. Surman said that E911 will be bringing something to the Board in the next few weeks. The Hospital hearing very well attended and well

presented. Ms. Corson said the good attendance speaks about our community.

e. Correspondence

- i. A notification of payments of Highway Block Grants for July and October, a little over estimate which is good. Next year it should be \$94,000+.
- ii. A letter from the UNH Roads Scholar program, stating that Connor McCallum and Daniel Lewis of the Highway Department achieved Roads Scholar One.
- iii. A memorandum regarding the Coastal Resilience and Cultural and Historic Reserve District Commission. Ms. Gilman said that this is a State commission established this year to review and come up with plans for towns along the Great Bay Estuary for protections against storm surge and sea rise. They need a representative from each local historic district, so three from Exeter. Ms. Corson asked if the Historic District Commission and Heritage Commission could work on it.
- iv. A letter from the Town of Hampton, asking them to review and endorse the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act of 2019, HR763. Ms. Gilman said she was going to talk to people about whether they should endorse it.
- v. A statutory notice made to the Select Board as assessors on ownership of real estate, there needs to be notice given to the town when there is a sales
- vi. A bulletin about override the veto of HB365. Mr. Dean said that this would increase the net metering cap to allow bulk purchase of electricity. He added that the NHMA is very supportive.

8. Review Board Calendar

- a. The next meeting is September 23rd.

9. Non-Public Session

10. Adjournment

MOTION: Ms. Surman moved to adjourn. Mr. Papakonstantis seconded. All were in favor and the meeting stood adjourned at 9:20 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Joanna Bartell
Recording Secretary

