

Select Board Meeting
Monday September 23, 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. The meeting was called to order by Ms. Corson at 6:58 PM.

2. Public Comment

a. There was no public comment at this meeting.

3. Proclamations/Recognitions

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

4. Approval of Minutes

a. Regular Meeting: September 9th, 2019

MOTION: Ms. Surman moved to approve the minutes of September 9, 2019 as submitted. Mr. Papakonstantis seconded. Ms. Cowan abstained, and the motion passed 4-0-1.

5. Appointments

a. There were no appointments at this meeting.

6. Discussion/Action Items

a. Natural Resources Planner re: UNH Cooperative Extension Outreach Program on Climate Impacts

Kristen Murphy, the Town Natural Resources Planner, discussed the Cooperative Extension Coastal Sea Grant to provide climate education and outreach, which Exeter was selected to receive. She and members of the Conservation Commission met with Amanda Stone and Lisa Wise of the program and decided that the best approach would be to educate Board members, then have the members educate the public. They have a list of documents that provide climate-related planning resources, and intend to distill them into one page summaries and present those summaries to the Boards at an all-Board meeting, potentially in the spring. The Conservation Commission thought this could be a good first partnership project to work on with the Sustainability Advisory Committee. Ms. Murphy asked for the Select Board's support in moving forward.

Ms. Gilman said this is a good opportunity for learning, and she would include members of all the Boards in the meeting. Mr. Papakonstantis suggested adding other staff members or departments, such as Parks and Rec and Public Safety. Ms. Cowan suggested also including Exeter's delegation to Concord.

Ms. Surman asked why it must be only one meeting, and Ms. Murphy said funds for this project are limited, but there should be products from this meeting that will be of continuing use.

Ms. Corson suggested they have a workshop where attendees could come and go, or offer food and childcare. She also asked if Ms. Murphy could put the list of documents on the website. Ms. Murphy suggested it could be part of a sustainability webpage.

Ms. Corson opened the discussion to public comment, but there was none. Ms. Murphy said she was just looking for feedback, so no motion was made.

b. Map 65, Lot 147 Property Sale - Select Board vote

Ms. Corson said they'd previously held two public hearings on selling a piece of property between the Hospital and Seacoast Mental Health to the Hospital; tonight is just a Board vote. **MOTION:** Mr. Papakonstantis moved that the Select Board approve the sale of Map 65 Lot 147 to Exeter Hospital pursuant to RSA 41-14-a in the amount of \$50,000, with the understanding that the easement between Seacoast Mental Health and the town for access be rescinded so as not to negatively impact any involved property owners, and authorize the Town Manager to sign any documents required to complete the sale. Ms. Gilman seconded. All were in favor.

c. ADA self-evaluation and transition plan

Dave Sharples, the Town Planner, discussed the Master Plan action item to complete a self-evaluation and transition plan regarding ADA compliance for town facilities. There was a Warrant Article passed last year which approved \$35,000 to conduct the study. Eight firms responded to their RFP; the bids ranged from \$19,400 to \$75,740. All but the low bidder were engineering, architecture, or planning firms, but the lowest bidder was a Chicago company which only does these studies, called Disability Access Consultants. Mr. Sharples looked into it and found them to be well qualified; he called their references and they were very positive. They do this work all over the country. In addition to doing the study, they provide a software called DACTrak, which is free for the first year and renewable at \$500 annually, that tracks all items and progress on compliance. They would create a transition plan, identify improvements needed, and give a cost estimate, and the town could use that information to move forward, perhaps creating a "mini CIP" for improvements.

Ms. Gilman observed that the list of buildings to be reviewed doesn't include the Historical Society at 47 Front Street. Mr. Sharples said it was on the list initially but that an evaluation and improvements had recently been done on the property. He suggested they revisit that and other excluded buildings at a later date.

MOTION: Mr. Papakonstantis moved that the Town Manager be authorized to expend up to \$19,400 to execute any documents or agreements and take any and all such actions on behalf of the town to complete an ADA self-evaluation and transition plan with Disability Access Consultants. Ms. Gilman seconded. All were in favor.

d. FY20 Preliminary Town Budget & Warrant Articles

Mr. Dean said he'd been working on the FY20 budget and meeting with departments over the last month. There is a BRC meeting Wednesday night.

For the FY20 budget, there's a 4.49% increase request in the General Fund, to \$19,922,454, as compared to the budget of \$19,066,857 voted at the 2019 Town Meeting, which was a 2.25% increase over the previous year. During the Budget Process last year, they talked about including new position requests in the base budget, and decided to put it all in. The 2.25% didn't include the new positions; with them the increase was more like 4.2-4.3%, so the increases are actually similar.

There are proposed increases to cover new positions, such as a new firefighter/paramedic position and full time heavy equipment operator, as well as the part-time Sustainability Coordinator position request. Last year's budget was helped by a workers comp dividend from Primex at \$115,000, so we have to build that back into this year's budget; there will be a smaller dividend this year. Increases for the health insurance reserve are at 10% this year, since the trend line is moving up.

There will be an increase in the IT budget; that department is stretched thin, with only two people covering not just IT but also EXTV, social media, apps, and communications. The town must also address cybersecurity issues and Public Safety's IT. There are no proposed positions, but the IT department is looking for funding to do an audit in 2020 and find gaps, and Public Safety is looking for additional contract help in IT.

In Planning, they're proposing a study to update the town's impact fee ordinance.

In the Water and Sewer Budget, they need to look at System Development charges and Water/Sewer assessment fees. The Solid Waste budget is increasing due to contracts and enhanced monitoring requirements; they may want to create a capital reserve fund for the monitoring piece. This is also related to the Pickpocket Dam issue. They've added \$35,000 to the Snow and Ice budget, which is always on the cusp of going over. In Parks and Rec, they're adding \$7,500 for Melissa Roy's work on Senior Services.

For Warrant Articles, there are vehicle and equipment replacements, including a new dump truck in Public Works. Parks and Rec is looking for \$125,000 for their improvement fund, there's the Sidewalk Program Capital Reserve fund at \$120,000, and the Conservation Commission has requested \$100,000 for the Conservation Fund, for grant-matching and land purchase funds. The Westside Drive reconstruction project is at \$100,000 for design and engineering. There's a new DPW facility garage design. The Pickpocket Dam letter of deficiency has been revised and now has milestones; phase 1 will cost \$90,000. In the Public Safety improvements project, there are repeater site improvements and work on the Fuller Lane water tank.

In all, there's an \$805,000 budget increase and Warrant Articles for \$1.22 million, for a total of \$21,145,629 if everything is funded. This is \$1.5 million more; the total appropriation delta is 7.85%. They'll have firmer numbers when they get the health insurance rating in October.

Projected revenues look consistent over FY19. There was the sale of property at 18 Garrison Lane, and fewer excess bond proceeds this year. They typically apply \$600,000 to the Fund Balance, as opposed to \$900,000 this year. It's worth considering holding back \$300,000 to apply next year. They anticipate a drop in the town's share of the tax rate. The DRA has not set the utility values.

Mr. Papakonstantis asked about the timing of the Insurance Casualty rewards. Mr. Dean said that last year it came in at the end of December, after the BRC process. Mr. Papakonstantis asked if Primex could help address their IT needs, and Mr. Dean said he can engage with them about it. Some of the proposed improvements are an email filtering system and increased security. Ms. Surman asked if Primex could actually do the IT audit, and Mr. Dean said that he can ask them.

Ms. Gilman asked if he thought there would be sticker shock the next year if the tax rate comes down this year. Mr. Dean said that the town's share of the tax bill is only 24-25%; most of

what people see in their tax bill is the schools. The impact would be 89 cents more per thousand with everything approved. He added that they don't know whether people will see an increase or decrease until they set the rate.

Ms. Cowan asked how many unknowns they're dealing with because there's no state budget. Mr. Dean said that when they project revenue with the state, they're mostly talking about Meals and Rooms Tax and State Highway Block Grant revenue. The Sewer State Aid Grant of \$700,000 would make a big difference to the Sewer Budget, but not the General Fund. If there's no state budget, they risk not getting the tax bills out on time, which becomes a cash flow issue. Ms. Gilman said there have been negotiations between the House and Senate leadership with the governor, and the main sticking point seems to be the Business Profits tax and Business Enterprise tax, not the state aid to municipalities.

For Bond Articles, the Rec Park is TBD, as Tighe and Bond is working with them on a proposal.

The Water Fund budget is up 15.6%, or \$90,000, in the capital outlay area, water treatment, and debt service.

The Sewer Fund is at \$4,231,871, an increase of \$1,384,981 over FY19. There was a recent sewer rate change, and there will be another increase in FY21. Treatment is most of the increase, for biosolids treatment and electricity, a \$512,000 overall increase. In Debt Service, there's an interest-only payment in FY20, \$279,709 of the budget. In FY21 the new facility debt will come online, and the payment is due January 1, 2021. The Sewer Capital Outlay is up \$504,000. In the CIP there's \$441,000 of new lagoon sludge removal for this year; the project has a \$2.8 million total cost. For Sewer Fund Bond Articles, the Squamscott River Sewer Siphons project will add a 12-14" siphon under the river to the main pump station, which will increase capacity and address overflow issues. There's a design fund for the Webster Ave Pump Station upgrade. There's also a rehab of the Folsom Pump Station, which serves Prentice Way off Drinkwater Road.

Mr. Dean thanked Finance for their work on the budget.

e. Sustainability Coordinator Proposal and Committee Charge

Ms. Corson said that they previously discussed the Committee charge and reinstated one item, doing a gap analysis.

MOTION: Mr. Papakonstantis moved to approve and adopt the revised Sustainability Advisory Committee mission and charge. Ms. Gilman seconded. Ms. Surman voted nay and the motion passed 4-1-0.

Ms. Corson said that regarding the Sustainability position, she's not saying they will approve or disapprove it, they're just moving it forward to the Budget Recommendations Committee. The budget process takes a couple months. Ultimately it comes back to the Board with the BRC's recommendations. They have to keep every budget request in mind.

Robin Paley, an Exeter resident, said this is something they voted on as a town. She asked if the work that the Sustainability Advisory Committee put together will be brought to the Budget Committee. Ms. Corson said that the subcommittees look closely at all items and report on them. They have to look at how it fits into the town's structure. Last year, nine part-time positions were proposed and only five were funded. Not everything is always moved forward.

The process is about due diligence. If the advocates feel like the position is not moving forward in December/January, they can come back to the Select Board.

Ms. Gilman added that at Deliberative Session, the voters can approve adding funds for that position. Ms. Corson said that the sustainability advocates should come to Deliberative Session and support the proposal. Sally Ward of Park Street said that the BRC recommendation includes money for the position. Ms. Corson clarified that they haven't made any recommendations, this is merely the draft budget put together by Mr. Dean. The Board is only talking about the language of the job description.

Ms. Cowan said she heard some concern that they voted for this last year and it's not happening, but the Warrant Article last year didn't provide any money. They would have to go through the BRC process with any new position. They formed a Sustainability Committee to get this process going.

Jen Brackett Piskovitz of 22 Forest Street asked why the amount in the line item was \$22,118, when the grade 9 scale is \$25-34,000. Mr. Dean said this position wouldn't be filled for a full year in the first year. It won't be approved until March, and the hiring process would likely take a month and a half.

Ms. Surman had edits to the text of the job summary. Ms. Corson asked if they had a synonym for "sustainable" that could make it less repetitive. She suggested that Mr. Dean be the hub for further suggestions on the language.

Mr. Dean said that he spoke with the Committee about aligning this position under Planning supervision. Ms. Corson agreed, saying that Dave Sharples is very attuned to sustainability and well educated in this area. The position should work alongside the Natural Resources Planner. The Board generally agreed. Ms. Surman felt that the position shouldn't exercise supervision at first, but that it could evolve. It would be a position of coordination, not supervision. Ms. Osterwood said they were thinking of the sustainability interns from UNH, who are always looking for people to work with. Mr. Dean added that Ms. Murphy has two interns and supervision is in her job description. Ms. Parmar said that they took the example job description from the town and Kristen Murphy's job description. They feel this position could supervise interns or volunteers on outreach and education.

Ms. Surman suggested combining duty 6 regarding communications into duty 10, and that in duty 9, the progress report should go to the Town Manager and the Select Board. Mr. Dean suggested adding the Town Planner as well.

Ms. Corson asked about the grade level at step 9. Mr. Dean said the town classification uses a factor evaluation system that takes into account different aspects of the position, such as level of responsibility, authority, and supervision given and received. This level is similar to the Natural Resources Planner position. Mr. Dean said much of the rest of the position description comes out of the classification guide so doesn't need editing.

Mr. Papakonstantis suggested they cut the education requirement from 3 - 5 years to 2 - 5, since it's part time and a new position. Ms. Gilman countered that she would like to see someone who's been working in an administrative position already. Ms. Cowan said they could count a degree towards the experience level. Ms. Corson agreed with 2 - 5 years.

Mr. Dean discussed the proposed budget. The expense lines for Kristen Murphy relate to the Planning budget and Conservation budget; this is more like the Economic Development budget. Ms. Corson suggested letting the BRC hash out the numbers.

Ms. Corson said the job description suggested a potential location at Parks and Rec, but she is concerned that this new hire would be too removed. She observed that Mr. Sharples has a space in the Planning Office. Mr. Dean said the location is a work in progress. Ms. Parmar said she was told that the Town Office is too full. Mr. Papakonstantis agreed that the coordinator need to be in closer proximity.

Ms. Corson suggested that the sustainability advocates come back after the budget process. Ms. Parmar asked if their slides could be sent to the BRC as well. Ms. Corson said the subcommittee will meet with them and look at their material.

Ms. Brackett Piskovitz pointed out that the Economic Development director is not under anyone, and asked if this new position needs to be under something. They found that in other towns, sitting under a department has been problematic. Ms. Gilman said that if it's just getting started and the scope is so broad, there needs to be some supervision. It could eventually go off on its own once the mechanics are worked out. Ms. Cowan said she wants this position to have autonomy, but it sounds like the Board is in support of it being under Planning. They could discuss it further at the BRC. Mr. Dean observed that having a director-level position changes the economics of the job.

Ms. Parmar read a statement from Herb Moyer of Westside Drive, urging the Board to include the Sustainability Coordinator in the FY20 budget. Exeter should be a leader in sustainability concepts.

Sarah Dewitt of 4 Sentra Farm Lane asked which meeting the advocates should come to. Ms. Corson said the next relevant public meeting is the all-day meeting in October. Ms. Gilman added that the Sustainability Advisory Committee will meet with the BRC Subcommittee prior to that, and that's also public. She suggested the SAC let people know when that will take place.

7. Regular Business

a. Tax, Water/Sewer Abatements and Exemptions

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

b. Permits & Approvals

Mr. Dean said that the Exeter Police Association is increasing its private detail fee. They're also requesting that the Board approve an increase of \$5 an hour in the administrative fee, as the detail fund is running a deficit. The administrative fee pays for retirement, and it's above and beyond the \$50 fee. The administrative fee would increase from \$10 to \$15 overall. Other towns have an administration fee of well above \$15.

MOTION: Mr. Papakonstantis moved to authorize adding \$5 to the current administrative fee, for a total of \$15 per hour, added to the Police Detail Fees. Ms. Surman seconded. All were in favor.

Mr. Dean discussed the CAP agreements for 2020-2022 for property and liability insurance as well as workers comp. Signing on for another three years keeps things stable. The rate is not to exceed 6%, and it's sometimes better. Primex is more than property insurance, workers comp, and unemployment insurance, they also offer training and services. If they don't do this with Primex, they would need to put out an RFP, but the NH market is limited and they

may get a firm not as well versed in a specialty category of insurance. With Primex the town gets it all, and they do a good job.

Mr. Papakonstantis read the resolution to enter the Primex Property & Liability Contribution Assurance Program:

Resolved: to hereby accept the offer of the New Hampshire Public Risk Management Exchange (Primex) to enter into its Property & Liability Contribution Assurance Program (CAP) as of the date of adoption of this resolution, and to be contractually bound to all of the terms and conditions of Primex risk management pool membership during the term of the Property & Liability Contribution Assurance Program (CAP). The coverage provided by Primex in each year of membership shall be as then set forth in the Coverage Documents of Primex.

I attest that the foregoing is a true copy of the Resolution of the Governing Board of the Town of Exeter adopted on September 23 2019.

MOTION (retracted): Ms. Surman moved to accept the Primex Workers Comp Assurance Program and to authorize the Town Manager to sign all related documents. Mr. Papakonstantis seconded. Ms. Corson pointed out that this was related to the second resolution, which they had not yet read. Ms. Surman and Mr. Papakonstantis retracted the motion and second.

MOTION: Ms. Surman moved to approve the Property & Liability Contribution Assurance Program (CAP) agreement, and to authorize the Town Manager to sign all related documents. Mr. Papakonstantis seconded. All were in favor.

Mr. Papakonstantis read the resolution to enter into the Primex Workers Compensation Program:

Resolved: To hereby accept the offer of the New Hampshire Public Risk Management Exchange (Primex) to enter into its Workers' Compensation Contribution Assurance Program (CAP) as of the date of the adoption of this resolution, and to be contractually bound to all of the terms and conditions or Primex risk management pool membership during the term of the Workers' Compensation Contribution Assurance Program (CAP). The coverage provided by Primex in each year of membership shall be as then set forth in the Coverage Documents of Primex.

MOTION: Ms. Surman moved to accept the Primex Workers Comp Assurance Program and authorize the Town Manager to sign all related documents. Mr. Papakonstantis seconded. All were in favor.

c. Town Manager's Report

- i. Mr. Dean said that the flushing of water mains is starting this week and will continue through Oct 22.
- ii. He attended a Coastal Resiliency scoping meeting with the RPC and was notified that they did get the grant. That project will likely begin in January.

- iii. The Public Safety management study is continuing. Paul O'Connell is the firm's lead working with the Police side, and he's been impressed with our administrative people.
 - iv. The Facilities Committee met last Friday and discussed a condition assessment tool, FCA, which is still in progress.
 - v. Last week he attended the CDBG site visit at the Icey Hill Co-op.
 - vi. On Oct 2nd there will be a Housing Forum at Town Hall. From 12 PM to 6 PM there will be an open house, followed by a presentation from Horsley Witten and further discussion on Exeter's Housing Future.
 - vii. There's a Budget Committee meeting Wednesday at 6:30.
- d. Select Board Committee Reports
- i. Ms. Gilman said that the Heritage Commission discussed the budget. They also looked at the draft Park Street area survey, which will be published soon on the Heritage Commission's website.
 - ii. Mr. Papakonstantis said that at the Facilities Committee they appointed Kris Weeks as vice chair. They'll have a vacant position on this Committee and the HDC soon, as Greg Colling is moving out of the area. The Planning Board met September 12, where the application for Tamarind Lane and Cullen Way was rescheduled to September 26th. The Ellison Property case was tabled in order to go before the Zoning Board; there was an attempt at a compromise by the applicant. A subcommittee looking at the issue of significant trees made a presentation, and the Planning Board approved a language change, increasing the diameter of a significant tree, and requiring the applicant to ID significant trees only in the area of disturbance.
 - iii. Ms. Cowan attended the Housing Advisory Committee meeting, which Mr. Dean had described. At the Water and Sewer Committee meeting, they approved and denied new abatements. She wasn't present for most of the Parks and Rec proposal meeting. Mr. Papakonstantis said it wasn't well attended, with only about 30 people. Ms. Cowan has a Rec Advisory Committee meeting tomorrow.
 - iv. Ms. Surman had no report.
 - v. Ms. Corson attended a Library meeting, where things are moving along. They're having a person from Unutil in to help them get rebates on energy efficiency. They are losing Greg Colling from that committee as well. There was a Swasey Parkway Trustees meeting and sitewalk, looking at existing conditions. She suggested they need a capital improvements plan and a master plan for Swasey Parkway. She missed the River Advisory Committee meeting. At the Communications Committee meeting, they decided they will look at the town website and make suggestions on improvements.
- e. Correspondence

- i. The Town of Exeter Nitrogen Control Plan, with the EPA's comments on the plan and suggestions how to respond. Mr. Dean said that this is the result of an administrative consent order. Our engineering people are looking at what the EPA is asking us to do.
 - ii. A letter from Good Energy. Mr. Dean said that after talking about electricity aggregation, a visitor dropped off this info about a company that deals in electricity aggregation. He will send it to the Energy Committee.
 - iii. A letter from Matt Berube about water quality. They took water samples from strategic places in town, including residences. Ms. Surman asked if it would affect the results if the resident had a filter on their faucet, and Mr. Dean suggested that that was a factor that contributed to the randomness of the results.
 - iv. A letter from Mark Whitney regarding the proposed Exeter Hospital merger with Mass General and Wentworth Douglass, which has hit a bump in the road. Mr. Whitney is positive about moving forward.
8. Review Board Calendar
 - a. The Board will meet in two weeks, on October 7th, 2019.
9. Non-Public Session
 - a. There was no non-public session at this meeting.
10. Adjournment

MOTION: Mr. Papakonstantis moved to adjourn. Ms. Surman seconded. All were in favor and the meeting adjourned at 9:33 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Joanna Bartell
Recording Secretary