

Select Board Meeting  
Monday October 7, 2019 7 PM  
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 7 PM.

2. Public Comment

Bill Jordan of PEA brought his class in American Politics and Public Policy to the meeting.

Calitria Aguilar of Wheelwright Hall asked the Board if Exeter has trouble getting local engagement in politics. Ms. Cowan said that only a small percentage of Exeter residents actually vote. Decisions made at the Select Board affect voters more directly than State or Federal elections, but that's the area of least engagement, and it's frustrating. Those who show up can really affect policy. People engage on Facebook but don't come to the meetings.

Mr. Papakonstantis said that they're lucky if they get 200 people at the Deliberative Session, and it's down to 30 or 40 by the end of the day. If everyone on the Exeter Facebook group showed up, it would be a more robust election process.

Ms. Gilman added that Boards, Commissions, and Committees have a hard time finding members. The town doesn't provide childcare, so parents find it difficult to volunteer or attend.

Ms. Surman said she had heard the philosophy "learn earn and return," but she would still like to see young families and students involved. Voters can affect what money is being spent on. Local politics is the place where people have an impact. It's easy to talk to local officials. Impassioned people can make a difference.

Ms. Aguilar also asked the Board about Exeter's racial demographic and how are they engaging people of color. Ms. Cowan said NH is not a very diverse state, although Exeter is slightly more diverse. They try to make it a point to engage and involve people of color, minorities, LGBTQ, and people with disabilities. They're starting conversations at the BRC on recruiting and training a diverse staff for the town, and looking for a diverse volunteer population on the boards. Ms. Gilman added that there's a state commission on diversity and inclusion which will have listening sessions, and she will ask them to come to Exeter.

The Board agreed to let Kathleen Bailey, a nonresident, speak.

Ms. Bailey said that she's writing a book on Exeter then and now, and she's looking for stories and photographs. Any interested parties can contact the Town Manager for her email.

3. Proclamations/Recognitions

a. Fire Prevention Week

Mr. Papakonstantis read the proclamation:

*Whereas, the town of Exeter N.H. is committed to ensuring the safety and security of all those living in and visiting Exeter; and  
Whereas, fire is a serious public safety concern both locally and nationally, and homes are the locations where people are at greatest risk from fire; and*

*Whereas, home fires killed 2,630 people in the United States in 2017, according to the National Fire Protection Association, and fire departments in the United States responded to 357,000 home fires; and*

*Whereas, the majority of US fire deaths (4 out of 5) occur at home each year; and*

*Whereas, the fire death rate per 1,000 home fires reported to US fire departments was 4 percent higher in 2017 than in 1980; and*

*Whereas, when the smoke alarm sounds Exeter's residents may have less than two minutes to escape to safety; and*

*Whereas, Exeter's residents who have planned and practiced a home fire escape plan are more prepared and will therefore be more likely to survive a fire; and*

*Whereas, Exeter's residents should make a home escape plan, drawing a map of each level of the home, showing all doors and windows; and*

*Whereas, Exeter's residents should practice the home fire escape plan with everyone in the household, including visitors; and*

*Whereas, Exeter's residents should practice the home fire escape drill at least twice a year, during the day and night; and*

*Whereas, Exeter's residents should teach children to escape on their own in case adults can't help them; and*

*Whereas, Exeter's residents should make sure everyone in the home knows how to call 9-1-1 or the local emergency number from a cell phone or a neighbor's phone; and*

*Whereas, Exeter's residents should practice using different ways out; and*

*Whereas, Exeter's residents in a real emergency should get low and go under the smoke to get out quickly; and*

*Whereas, Exeter's residents should get out and stay out, never going back inside the home for people, pets, or things; and*

*Whereas, Exeter's residents are responsive to public education measures and are able to take action to increase their safety from fire, especially in their homes; and*

*Whereas, the 2019 Fire Prevention Week theme, "Not Every Hero Wears a Cape, Plan and Practice Your Escape!" effectively serves to remind us that we need to take personal steps to increase our safety from fire.*

*Therefore, we the Select Board do hereby proclaim October 6 - 12, 2019, as Fire Prevention Week throughout this town, and urge all the people of Exeter to be aware of their surroundings, look for available ways out in the event of a fire or other emergency, respond when the smoke alarm sounds by exiting the building immediately, and to support the many public safety activities and efforts of Exeter Fire and Emergency Services during Fire Prevention Week 2019.*

Chief Comeau said that this is National Fire Prevention Week in the US and Canada. The first week was in 1925, and it commemorates the Great Chicago Fire, which burned from Oct 8 through 10, 1871. Over the next two weeks there will be tours of the fire station by visiting schools. He added that the Fire Department appreciates the town's support.

- b. This is also Breast Cancer Awareness Month, and the Police are wearing pink badges.

- c. Ms. Corson congratulated the Public Works employee of the summer/Q2, Tim Childers, Custodian, who according to the department always comes to work with a good attitude and completes tasks beyond what's expected.
4. Board Interviews
  - a. There were no board interviews at this meeting.
5. Approval of Minutes
  - a. Regular Meeting: September 23rd, 2019

**MOTION:** Ms. Gilman moved to approve the minutes of September 23rd as presented. Mr. Papakonstantis seconded. All were in favor.

6. Appointments
  - a. There were no appointments at this meeting.
7. Discussion/Action Items

- a. Herb Moyer -- Offsite Radiological Monitoring; Town Emergency Plan  
State Rep Peter Somssich discussed the outdated radiological monitoring in NH for the nuclear plant. NH processes the monitors every 3 - 5 months, whereas Massachusetts is monitoring in real time. Senator Sherman proposed a bill to upgrade the monitoring, and Mr. Somssich launched a citizen's initiative in support. He's raising pledges from citizens and organizations for the \$60,000 needed to implement this plan, and he's looking for each town to contribute \$1,000. This is not primarily about money, but leverage and a show of support for the bill.

Ms. Surman asked why the monitoring is not the responsibility of the plant. Mr. Somssich countered, why not the state? They currently have a \$3 million emergency planning budget, already used for these purposes.

Mr. Papakonstantis asked if he'd spoken with the other 16 towns. Mr. Somssich said Portsmouth has already signed on, and he has a pending date to speak with Hampton Falls.

Mr. Dean said that Exeter has an emergency management budget of about \$40,000 per year. Ms. Corson said this request should go before the Budget Recommendations Committee.

Herb Moyer, an Exeter resident, asked about the current status of the town's emergency response evacuation plan; which town employees play a role in the plan; and whether they have been made to sign any documents saying they will stay to assist during an emergency. Mr. Dean responded that the town has an emergency evacuation plan under state guidelines, specifically related to the Seabrook plant. Representatives from the town government, town employees, SAU16, PEA, and the Hospital drill every 18 months on that plan, and are graded by the state. He recognized the dedicated people on our team, who do not sign anything but would stay in an emergency.

Chief Comeau added that this year is one of the cycles of the three different drills. The last one was a graded one by FEMA. They're always reevaluating the details, such as traffic management. The hurricane evacuation plan is based on the Seabrook model. He invited Mr. Moyer to come to the department and review the plans.

Ms. Corson said the Select Board has participated in the drills. Exeter is ahead of the curve because of the work they'd done for the nuclear plant.

Mr. Moyer said that some towns implement more realistic evacuation testing scenarios where the public is mobilized.

Beth Tappan of RiverWoods said that Newburyport makes Potassium Iodide (KI) available to residents. Ms. Gilman said there is an optional supply of it for students at the schools. Mr. Comeau added that KI is available at the state level, and they're looking at moving caches of it into the communities.

b. Emergency Operations Plan Update Grant Acceptance - \$5,000

Chief Comeau proposed an agreement with Hubbard Associates to update Exeter's local emergency operations plan. Our plan was written and adopted in 2006; it has been updated since, but must be rewritten to bring it up to current standards. The \$5,000 is a "soft match" from Exeter, comprising the staff wages involved in the work.

**MOTION:** Mr. Papakonstantis moved that the Select Board accept the terms of the Emergency Management Performance Grant as presented in the amount of \$5,000.00 to update the Local Emergency Operations Plan (LEOP), using the vendor Hubbard Consulting LLC. Furthermore, the Board acknowledges that the total cost of this project will be \$10,000.00, in which the town will be responsible for a 50% match (\$5,000.00). Ms. Gilman seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed by a majority vote of 5-0-0.

c. Lincoln Street Updates and Parking Plan

Mr. Dean said that the group discussing paid parking on Lincoln Street came to the conclusion that it's in the town's interest to bring in a parking-specific consultant. This neutral third-party could give the town both a perspective and recommendation that's relevant to mixed use and the different elements in play. They could use the 2019 Planning budget and Police budget to hire a consultant, but they're looking for general Board support. Mr. Sharples said that hiring a consultant seems to be the norm among other towns. Ms. Corson agreed that the perspective of a professional is important, since parking is a critical issue for people.

Mr. Sharples said he asked for three quotes, two of which are pending, so he didn't want to specify a dollar amount for this consulting. Ms. Gilman asked if it's under the limit of the purchasing policy where over a certain amount requires approval of the Board; Mr. Sharples said it's under that number.

Ms. Surman said that if they're looking at paid parking, it should be for downtown as well as Lincoln Street. Ms. Corson countered that the immediate need is at Lincoln Street. Mr. Sharples added that the consultants he spoke to thought a phased approach was appropriate, as Lincoln Street is very contained. Ms. Surman reiterated that she would like to see a more holistic report from the consultant. Ms. Corson said she prefers to get Lincoln Street done. Ms. Cowan there are pending questions for downtown parking, such as the potential High Street lot, whereas Lincoln Street is a need they can address now. Ms. Gilman said she agreed that they need to look at the whole town's parking situation, but Lincoln Street is a distinct area.

Mr. Papakonstantis asked if a holistic approach would be included in the bid, and Mr. Sharples said no, just Lincoln Street. The full plan is not in this year's budget, but he can get a number for downtown for future budget years. He added that they're not implementing anything, just answering these questions. They could budget for downtown later and implement both plans at the same time.

Mr. Dean said no motion was necessary; as long as the Board would generally like them to move forward they could proceed.

d. Bench Program and Policy -- Town Property and Parks

Greg Bisson, the Parks and Rec Director, discussed the Memorial Bench program. Since he last spoke on this topic, he looked at a more casual bench at the suggestion of a resident. They were nice benches, but not heavy enough, so they would be too easy to steal. The bench proposed is 225 pounds and can be bolted to the ground. The benches would cost families \$2,400, plus \$100-200 for shipping, plus a one-time "maintenance fee" of \$500. Ms. Gilman suggested calling this fee an installation fee instead.

He's working with Mr. Sharples to come up with a maximum number, as they don't want to overbench. He's also going to be reaching out to previous Memorial Bench families for replacement of the old benches.

Mr. Bisson asked if this program should include Swasey Parkway. Mr. Dean said that currently Swasey is individualized, with the people paying for it deciding which bench to use. Consistency is an issue. The Board could make a determination, since the Parkway is town property.

Ms. Gilman said she would like to see the Swasey Parkway Trustees come forward with a plan. Mr. Bisson said he'd spoken with two of the Trustees, who suggested the Parks and Rec plan come first and then the Trustees will model their own plan on it.

Ms. Corson said she has consistently said that the Trustees need a Master Plan. There are many benches there, and it affects the way the Parkway is maintained and mowed. She suggested that the Trustees could hire someone to create a Master Plan. Ms. Corson and Mr. Bisson will bring it to the next Trustees meeting.

Mr. Bisson added that Parks and Rec has officially formed their 501C:3 "Friends" group, so benches could now could be tax deductible.

**MOTION:** Ms. Gilman moved to approve the Public Memorial Bench policy as presented with the application and fees that apply. Mr. Papakonstantis seconded. Ms. Surman voted nay and the motion passed 4-1-0.

e. Conflict of Interest Policy

Ms. Surman said she'd made some edits based on feedback from town counsel. The Board reviewed the draft. Mr. Dean said they need to talk about the Public Servant definition, as in his reading it still includes employees. It should only apply to Board, Committee, or Commission members.

Ms. Surman said she was disappointed that she hadn't gotten more input from the other Board members. Ms. Cowan said she had been waiting for the attorney to weigh in. Mr. Papakonstantis said this is the discussion, which they would have in public.

Ms. Corson pointed out Attorney Mitchell's comment that everything should be given further thought, and thought they should talk about the proposal as a whole. She would like to have him come in person and give his advice. Ms. Surman agreed that she'd like to hear more from Attorney Mitchell and potentially have him rewrite it.

Mr. Dean said that there is no appeal procedure described, and he asked the Board to focus on that aspect. He added that once the ordinance is adopted, it would have to go back to Town Meeting to change.

Mr. Papakonstantis asked if the NHMA could find them a town that has adopted such a policy for advice or a model, and Mr. Dean said NHMA may be a resource in some way.

For next steps, Mr. Dean suggested getting it to an acceptable point and distribute to the other Boards for their review.

Ms. Corson was worried that people will read the ordinance and not want to volunteer for the town. Ms. Surman said that one outcome could be they don't go forward with the ordinance, or that it could be a policy, not an ordinance.

Assistant Fire Chief Munck said that at the Fire Station, there was concern that the language of the proposal was not clear. They consider themselves "Public Servants." He could have a problem hiring a firefighter to plow his driveway or the fire inspector could have a problem even dining in Exeter. He added that he'd just heard that it was not intended to apply to employees, so it may not be an issue.

Mr. Dean suggested getting feedback from the other Boards, but Ms. Cowan and Ms. Corson felt that it was still not ready for that step. Ms. Corson said she needed more input from Attorney Mitchell, perhaps a working session before an upcoming Select Board meeting. Mr. Dean will ask about his availability.

## 8. Regular Business

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

Mr. Dean said the Board needs to approve the standard tax agreements annually from RiverWoods. Assessing says this year's is SOP and hasn't changed. Ms. Corson recused herself from the vote on "The Woods," since her mother lives there.

**MOTION:** Ms. Cowan moved to approve the agreement between the town of Exeter and the RiverWoods Company for "The Boulders" tax agreement for 2019. Mr. Papakonstantis seconded. All were in favor.

**MOTION:** Ms. Cowan moved to approve the tax agreement between the town of Exeter and the RiverWoods Company for "The Ridge" for 2019. Mr. Papakonstantis seconded. All were in favor.

**MOTION:** Ms. Cowan moved to approve the tax agreement between the town of Exeter and the RiverWoods Company for "The Woods" for 2019. Mr. Papakonstantis seconded. Ms. Corson abstained, and the motion passed 4-0-1.

### b. Permits & Approvals

Mr. Bisson discussed his memo on the future of the Court Street properties, which they are getting questions about from the public. Ms. Corson clarified that they are considering what will happen with 30 and 32 Court Street, the Senior Center and Parks and Rec offices, when the proposed Rec Park project is complete.

Mr. Bisson listed a number of options, but Ms. Gilman said they would need public input. Ms. Corson suggested the Facilities Committee should address it. Mr. Papakonstantis said they can't discuss it until the other pieces of the Rec Park plan are in place. Ms. Corson said she also wants to see what the Public Safety study says about that building's future.

Mr. Bisson then discussed the field drainage project phase II. UISA will cover half of the costs, so they only need \$4,230.40 from the Rec Revolving Fund. At the end of 2018, there was

\$76,837 in this fund. He doesn't have this year's total, but they sold \$20,000 more in tickets to Powderkeg than last year, so they're doing well.

**MOTION:** Mr. Papakonstantis moved to allow Parks and Rec to expend \$4,230.40 out of the Rec Revolving Fund for field drainage phase II. Ms. Gilman seconded. All were in favor.

c. Town Manager's Report

- i. Flushing of the water mains continues through October 22nd.
- ii. The line striping on Lincoln Street was completed October 6th, so the parking spaces are now outlined.
- iii. The Newfields Road paving begins soon. November 1 is the goal for finishing the project.
- iv. EPA is looking at issuing a new integrated permit. Exeter was approached by other towns for a letter of support for peer review.
- v. The High Street parking survey is on the website. There's a public meeting on this issue October 16th.
- vi. There's also a survey on older adult and senior services on the site.
- vii. There's a Benefits Fair at Town Hall Wednesday
- viii. At the Energy Committee meeting, they discussed the Dover HS solar project.
- ix. The Budget Subcommittee meetings are taking place. The all-day budget meeting is Friday October 18th.
- x. Household Hazardous waste day is October 19.
- xi. He's attending the ICMA conference in Nashville October 20 - 23.
- xii. Reps from Unutil invited him to their groundbreaking last week.
- xiii. They got the rate increase for health insurance. It's 8.7%, worse than the pool, which was 7.1%, because there were more adverse claims than normal. This is less than the budgeted 10%, but not by a lot.
- xiv. He thanked Jay Perkins, who worked with DOT regarding an issue with a vendor. Mr. Perkins convinced them to repaint all the lines at the company's cost.

d. Select Board Committee Reports

- i. Ms. Gilman attended the groundbreaking for Unutil and a Budget meeting. The state budget passed. There's a policy issue for land use boards, which she would like to get on their agendas or discuss at open comment. The Housing Appeals Board could override the decision of the land use boards. Also, the Commission for Coastal Resiliency needs members from the HDC and Heritage Commission.
- ii. Mr. Papakonstantis said that the Planning Board meeting was greatly attended. They discussed the application of design review for a proposed subdivision off Tamarind Lane and Cullen Way. The Planning Board did approve the design review to go forward, next the applicant will work with Mr. Sharples. The Sustainability Advisory Committee meeting is now monthly; they went over the budget process and Sustainability

Coordinator job description again, talked about the Coastal Resiliency grant, and discussed their future goals and objectives.

- iii. Ms. Cowan had a Parks and Rec Advisory meeting. They were disappointed by the attendance at the public hearing on the Rec Park proposal. They also took a deep dive on the Parks and Rec budget.
- iv. Ms. Surman met with the E911 committee. They are working on projects and will come to the Select Board soon.
- v. Ms. Corson went to a library building committee meeting instead of the Exeter River Advisory meeting. Unitil came and discussed opportunities for rebates. At the Swasey Parkway Trustees meeting, they had a sitewalk and a discussion of a Swasey Parkway Master Plan.

e. Correspondence

- i. No correspondence was discussed at this meeting.

9. Review Board Calendar

- a. Upcoming meetings are October 28th, November 12th (Tuesday), November 25th, December 2nd, December 16th, January 6th, and January 20th, plus the Tuesday budget hearing on January 14th.

10. Non-Public Session

- a. There was no non-public session at this meeting.

11. Adjournment

Mr. Papakonstantis moved to adjourn. Ms. Gilman seconded. All were in favor, and the meeting adjourned at 9:48 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Joanna Bartell  
Recording Secretary