Select Board Meeting

Monday December 16, 2019

Town Offices, Nowak Room

Final Minutes

1. Call Meeting to Order

Members present: Anne Surman, Kathy Corson, Molly Cowan, Niko Papakonstantis, and Russ Dean were present at this meeting. Julie Gilman was not present.

The meeting was called to order by Ms. Corson at 6:40 PM.

1. Non Public Session - RSA 91a3:2(a)

**MOTION**: Mr. Papakonstantis moved to go into non public session under RSA 91a3:2(a). Ms. Surman seconded. By a roll call vote, all were in favor. The meeting went into non public session at 6:40 and reconvened at 7:07 PM.

Mr. Dean discussed the loss of Carl Robertson, who was a big member of the Exeter Community, a teacher, state rep, football coach, and mentor. He read from Mr. Robertson’s obituary. Ms. Corson asked for a moment of silence.

1. Bid Award - Water/Sewer Chemicals

**MOTION**: Mr. Papakonstantis moved to approve the award of Bid 1, Sodium Hypochlorite 15% solution, to Harcros Chemicals of Nashua, NH. Ms. Cowan seconded. All were in favor.

**MOTION**: Mr. Papakonstantis moved to approve the award of Bid 2, Activated Carbon, to George S. Coyne Chemical Co. of Croydon, PA. Ms. Cowan seconded. All were in favor.

**MOTION**: Mr. Papakonstantis moved to approve the award of Bid 3, Potassium Permanganate, to Harcros Chemicals. Ms. Cowan seconded. All were in favor.

**MOTION**: Mr. Papakonstantis moved to approve the award of Bid 4, Sodium Hydroxide, to Borden & Remington Corp of Fall River, MA. Ms. Cowan seconded. All were in favor.

1. Public Comment
   1. Jordan Dickenson of 3 Deerhaven Drive said that he spoke on behalf of Exeter residents concerned about climate change, plastics in our ecosystems, and other issues critical to the health of the community. He asked the Board to create a Sustainability Coordinator position so that one person can coordinate the different stakeholders. He read a petition stating that Exeter residents continue to believe in Article 31.
   2. Herb Moyer of 51 Westside Drive said he hopes and expects the Select Board to require measurable and sustainable practices from every town department.
2. Proclamations/Recognitions
   1. Ms. Corson recognized Christopher McConnell, the Water/Sewer Heavy Equipment Systems Operator who was named employee of the fall quarter.
   2. Ms. Cowan recognized the joint effort to put on the Holiday Parade.
3. Approval of Minutes
   1. Regular Meeting: December 4th, 2019

Mr. Papakonstantis said that in the correspondence section, the letter authors included “Erin,” not “Aaron,” Steckler. Ms. Surman said that in her comments about Duncan Robinson, he did a post graduate year at PEA, not a semester.

**MOTION**: Mr. Papakonstantis moved to approve the revised minutes of the Select Board meeting of December 4, 2019. Ms. Cowan seconded. All were in favor.

1. Appointments

**MOTION**: Mr. Papakonstantis moved to appoint Don Clement to the Conservation Commission as an alternate, with a term to expire April 30, 2021. Ms. Surman seconded. All were in favor.

**MOTION**: Mr. Papakonstantis moved to appoint Amanda Kelly to the Facilities Committee, with a term to end April 30, 2020. Ms. Surman seconded. All were in favor.

1. Discussion/Action Items
   1. Richard Perrin, US Census Bureau re: 2020 Census

Mr. Perrin, a Partnership Specialist with the US Census Bureau, gave a presentation on the 2020 Census, which determines the allocation of $675 billion in Federal funding. This year, there will be four ways to respond: online, phone, paper, or with an in-person visit. The response period begins in mid-March; April 1 is Census Day, and census takers will go door-to-door from Mid-May to July 2020.

Ms. Cowan asked what they can do as a town to make sure the count is accurate. Mr. Perrin said some communities form a Complete Count Committee to work towards that goal. There’s also a mapping function called ROAM on the Census.gov site that indicates low response neighborhoods, which he encouraged them to review.

* 1. UNH Sustainability Fellow Application

Dave Sharples, the Town Planner, discussed the UNH Sustainability Fellow project, which is offered through the UNH Sustainability Institute. Mr. Sharples’ idea was to have a fellow prepare a municipal operations Greenhouse Gas Emissions inventory and determine strategies to reduce these emissions. There would be a stipend of $11,500, with $6,500 paid by UNH and $5,000 paid by the town. The Sustainability Institute makes the project selections this week. Mr. Dean said this project would be looking only at town operations, and Mr. Sharples said they could consider having a fellow do a larger town-wide inventory in the future. Mr. Dean said in 2010 the town founded an Energy Capital Reserve Fund they can look at for the funding match.

Mr. Papakonstantis said that he would like to add more money for sustainability to the budget. He also suggested having Mr. Sharples assume the responsibility of a Sustainability Officer for 2020 as a bridge to the next step, whether that would be a new full time position or another option. Mr. Papakonstantis mentioned that other communities have regionally shared Sustainability Officers. Ms. Corson said she’d like to consider that when Julie Gilman is present and asked to add it to the next meeting’s agenda. Mr. Dean said he’s confident that Mr. Sharples would fill this role well, at least on an interim basis.

Renee Allen of 185 High Street, a member of the Energy Committee, said she’s in favor of the emissions inventory being conducted. The Energy Committee was trying to do a survey of energy usage in municipal buildings and it was a slow process. There was an energy audit done in 2009, but the information is outdated.

Jordan Dickenson asked what community groups can do, if anything, to help get the fellowship grant. Mr. Sharples said the institute didn’t ask for letters of support, but in the grant application he articulated that they have the full support of an active sustainability group and an engaged citizenry.

Robin Tyner of 9 Mill Stream Drive said the Sustainability Committee is in favor of the grant. Last spring, she talked to the person who runs this program, and heard that last year they had more fellows available than people applying for them. Mr. Sharples said he heard that this year it was very competitive.

* 1. Swasey Parkway/Property Use Updates & Report

Mr. Papakonstantis said that he and Ms. Surman met with Greg Bisson and Melissa Roy of Parks and Rec to discuss simplifying the Parkway rules. They broke it down by profit and non-profit, rather than considering resident/non-resident status. For non-profit groups, they suggested a fee of $100 per event, and for-profit groups $200 per event. They recommended that those seeking permits for events at the Parkway be restricted to no more than six events per year. They proposed grandfathering the Farmer’s Market, and otherwise offering no seasonal fee/discount for those having multiple events. Resident and non-resident status would not be considered in the interest of simplifying the fee schedule, but they would continue to offer residents an extra month to put in their permit. If the town wanted to differentiate between resident and non-resident, they could allow residents up to six events and non-residents up to four events. Mr. Papakonstantis said that by putting a cap on the number of events, they hoped to prevent anyone from monopolizing the Parkway. They can give residents the first crack at a permit and potentially an extra two events.

To keep the Swasey Parkway Trustees better informed, Parks and Rec has offered to send a weekly rather than a monthly spreadsheet to the Trustee chair. Mr. Papakonstantis said they talked about posting events on the town website calendar. They’re currently not able to do it, as it would be too much extra work for the Town Clerk. Mr. Bisson said IT is looking into it.

Ms. Surman said they updated bullet 9 of the Rules for Use of Swasey Parkway. It said that nothing was to be attached to trees or shrubs; they added to that list fences, railings, benches, or any permanent structure. They had no other use changes.

Ms. Surman suggested taking out the distinction of profit/non-profit entirely. Mr. Papakonstantis felt that they should continue to make the distinction of resident/non-resident, as resident non-profit organizations are giving something back to the community. ‘

Ms. Corson asked Mr. Bisson if they look at the non-profit documentation, and he said they’ve never been asked to collect the state-level non-profit certification, but he’s sure they can easily provide the paperwork.

Ms. Cowan asked how many events they would be saying no to with the six per calendar year rule. Mr. Bisson said three or four. Ms. Cowan asked if they have a hierarchy to approve events, and Ms. Roy said residents get a 30 day head start but otherwise it’s first come first served.

Ms. Corson said the rest of the town has the resident/non-resident distinction. The public buildings are for the citizens. Mr. Bisson said the 30 day window was the key distinction. Ms. Surman said there are worthy organizations whose members happen not to be residents. Mr. Papakonstantis suggested removing that distinction from the town facilities use fees in general. Mr. Dean said they don’t want town facilities to be the preferred alternative for for-profit organizations. They allow them to use the facilities, but if their fee is less than appropriate, he’s concerned that the town will become a concierge service for for-profit organizations.

Mr. Papakonstantis said they were also concerned about a single organization monopolizing town hall with rehearsals. Mr. Bisson said he has suggestions to address that, and Ms. Corson said they could address it in January.

Ms. Corson opened the discussion to the public.

Florence Ruffner of 5 Pine Street brought up the idea of closing the Parkway once a month for residents to use it as a park, and Ms. Corson said she would like to see that. Ms. Ruffner said residents should have preferential treatment over non-residents, because residents pay for everything.

Robin Tyner of 9 Mill Stream Drive agreed that there should be a distinction between residents and non-residents. She pays property taxes and wants to see the community get the services. She added that it’s difficult for a non-profit organization to plan a year in advance, so allowing resident non-profits to reserve 30 days before non-residents may not be meaningful.

Ms. Corson said she does want a distinction in fee between resident and non-resident; it’s consistent with what they've done for the buildings. She wanted to discuss this further at a meeting in January.

* 1. Exeter Opt In Status re: Refugee Resettlement

Ms. Corson said they are not required to opt into accepting refugees, as it’s now a state-wide policy. Ms. Cowan asked if they could do it anyway to send a statement. Mr. Dean said a letter can be sent to Federal-level Senators and Congressmen to opt in, as well as to the Governor.

**MOTION**: Ms. Cowan moved to send an opt-in letter stating that Exeter is open to refugee resettlement to those appropriate to receive this letter, including the Governor’s office. Mr. Papakonstantis seconded. All were in favor.

* 1. FY20 Budget and Warrant Articles

Mr. Dean said there is a 3.27% increase over the original budget warrant article from last year, but compared to the adjusted budget it’s 3%, due to wage and benefit changes. There are no new positions proposed at this stage in the budget. For General Fund Budget notes, there are more elections in 2020, and they have the upgrade of the VISION software, an IT audit, and email filtering and archiving expenses. In DPW Admin and Engineering, they’re looking for $25,000 for DPW garage D&E. In Highways and Streets, there is the Tamarind Lane culvert replacement at $23,000, a one-time signalization improvement for Hampton Road, Solid Waste handling increases, Household Waste increases, Landfill Monitoring increases of $20,000, increases in the Snow Removal budget, a Recreation Senior Services program at $7,500, Contract Cleaning for the Parks and Rec building at $11,000, and a Workers Comp budget at $115,000. If all warrant articles pass, there would be a 50 cent per $1,000 increase overall. The budget articles last year had a tax impact of $488,451, and the proposed FY20 is $546,664.

For CIP items, they have a draft list of articles, including two potential bonds, a groundwater/surfacewater assessment program at $200,000, the Folsom Acres Pump Station Rehabilitation, Pickpocket Dam at $110,000, the Westside Drive Reconstruction D&E which has a partial grant, the Parks Improvement Fund for $100,000, the Communications Repeater site improvement, the Highway Trucks replacement, the Sidewalks Capital Reserve Fund, the mini-loader for Parks and Rec and Highway to share, the Conservation Fund, a Sedan replacement for Maintenance, and the two customary articles from Fund Balance for the Sick Leave Trust and Snow and Ice Deficit. For the Epping Road TIF amendment, they will reserve a spot until Mr. Winham is ready with specifics.

Ms. Surman asked if they had done a projection on contracting for plowing on Lincoln Street vs the town purchasing the right type of plow. Ms. Corson pointed out that if they make similar improvements elsewhere, they will need the plow service there too. Bob Kelly, chair of the Budget Recommendations Committee, said the BRC discussed that. Because of the timing, they needed to do something quickly with the contract, but after a year they will have a better idea of the costs.

Ms. Surman asked if there is room to delay the Pickpocket Dam project. Mr. Papakonstantis said the BRC discussed it at length, and he ended up being ok with the money they put aside for it this year. Mr. Kelly said there was interest in delaying it, but they have a Letter of Deficiency, so they’re on the hook to do it, even if not this year. The costs aren’t going to go down. He doesn’t think they’ll get in severe trouble if they delay, but next year other things will come up and they’ll probably have the same conversation. Mr. Dean said the CIP identifies the tasks that DES and the town have agreed to, but they did attempt to push some tasks further down the road.

Mr. Papakonstantis said he would like to get the budget down below 3%, although he’d also like to add to the Sustainability budget. The BRC did a very thorough job of trimming the budget. He has no specific recommendations for cuts at the moment.

Ms. Cowan said she wanted to wait to have a bigger conversation when Ms. Gilman is present. Pickpocket Dam seems easy, but they have to look at their liability, considering that they know it’s deficient.

Mr. Kelly said there were some big ticket items that could be trimmed or removed, but they’re related to planning for the town, specifically Public Works. There’s an investment in what will happen in the next 30 - 50 years, such as with the water supply. He would hate to cut that even more, since they have to keep moving forward with diversifying the water supply. They cut the CIP budget by about 30%, but they have to keep moving forward with the fleet.

Ms. Surman said that the BRC didn’t get time to look closely at the Parks and Rec presentation, and that project is estimated at double what it was a year ago. It’s a lot of money and she’s not prepared to support it this year. Mr. Papakonstantis said the scope of the project changed, and the presentation that was given to the BRC, Select Board, and Facilities Committee answered those questions. A project like this should go before the voters. Ms. Surman said last year, they funded a Public Safety study, and the town should look at those answers before doing this. Mr. Papakonstantis said the voters should determine what’s of value to the community.

Mr. Kelly asked about the status of the Public Safety report. Mr. Dean said the consultants are here this week, and are in the process of working the data. The Police have signed off on the data. They’re looking at getting a draft in early January.

Mr. Dean said Chief Poulin will relook at the prosecution, as they may be able to do more in-house and adjust the budget accordingly.

* 1. FY 19 Encumbrances

Mr. Dean said the Board must approve the list of encumbrances, which are funds that will not be spent before year end but which the departments would like to encumber because they’re associated with signed contracts.

**MOTION**: Ms. Surman moved to approve $160,769.24 in Encumbrances for FY19. Mr. Papakonstantis seconded. All were in favor.

**MOTION**: Mr. Papakonstantis moved to encumber the following Special Articles from the 2019 Town Meeting in accordance with RSA 32:7: Article 18, Public Safety Dispatch Upgrades at $153,451; Article 21, the Public Safety Department’s Facility Data Staffing Analysis at $50,000; Article 22, ADA Funding at $35,000; Article 23, Intersection Improvements, at $50,000; and Article 24, the Pickpocket Dam Study, at $40,000. Ms. Surman seconded. All were in favor.

1. Regular Business
   1. Tax, Water/Sewer Abatements and Exemptions

**MOTION:** Mr. Papakonstantis moved to approve a Veteran’s Credit for 103/13/13 in the amount of $500. Ms. Surman seconded. All were in favor.

**MOTION**: Mr. Papakonstantis moved to approve a Veteran’s Credit for 104/78 in the amount of $500. Ms. Cowan seconded. All were in favor.

* 1. Permits & Approvals

Mr. Dean presented the case of a resident who has an issue with their tax bill. They made an online payment from Citizens Bank, and they got confirmation that it was sent. However, the money wasn’t withdrawn, and the town marked it as never being paid, so interest accrued in the amount of $215.24. The resident asked that this amount be waived.

Ms. Corson asked what would happen if the check were lost in the mail. Mr. Dean said the bottom line is if you are a taxpayer and have a bill you have to make sure it’s getting paid. Mr. Papakonstantis said there’s written documentation that she made an effort to make this payment. Ms. Corson and Ms. Surman felt that the bank should address the issue, not the town. Ms. Cowan said they should at least find out the bank’s response. Mr. Dean will follow up with the resident.

* 1. Town Manager’s Report
     1. Mr. Dean said the CDBG Grant for Icey Hill was successful, at the full amount.
     2. He thanked the organizers of the Holiday Parade and the Open House. He also recognized Donna Cisewski and Pam McElroy, who pulled together the Service Award Luncheon and Holiday Drop-in event.
     3. He attended Wreaths Across America, which had bad weather but was a very nice event.
     4. He and Ms. Gilman met with the Coalition Against Bigger Trucks, an interest group concerned with maintaining truck sizes at reasonable levels. It was an interesting meeting, and they learned that at the Federal level this issue warrants a consistent eye.
     5. He attended the Police swearing-in on December 9th for Officer Ryiah Khan and ACO Julia Doane.
     6. He attended the Energy Committee meeting on December 11th and the Facilities Committee meeting last Friday.
     7. He recognized Jay Perkins of Public Works, who helped to quickly resolve a resident issue with basement flooding on Court Street.
  2. Select Board Committee Reports
     1. Mr. Papakonstantis attended the holiday gathering, which was a well-done event. The Planning Board meeting was an administrative work session for potential zoning amendments for the 2020 Town Meeting, which was continued to this Thursday. The first public hearing on these proposals must be prior to January 13th. He met with the Facilities Committee Friday morning, where Parks and Rec, Tighe and Bond, and Banwell answered questions about the Rec project.
     2. Ms. Cowan had no meetings.
     3. Ms. Surman had no meetings, but enjoyed the holiday event and the parade. She asked whether there were no CSO [Combined Sewer Overflow] events on Saturday, as she would like to hear how much better the new treatment plant is doing. Mr. Dean said there was some flooding at Swasey Parkway, but he hasn’t heard whether there was a CSO or SSO.
     4. Ms. Corson had no meetings.
  3. Correspondence
     1. An announcement from Public Works on the Employee of the Fall Quarter, Christopher McConnell.
     2. An email from Eileen Flockhart saying that Exeter got the Tree City USA designation.
     3. A letter from four residents of 277 Water Street in support of the Rec Park project, due to the walking track and paths.
     4. The proposed bigger truck configuration information.
     5. The Land Resources management file on 75 Linden Street. There was a complaint of dredging in a wetland, but they found that was not the case. Mr. Dean said a deeper assessment will be performed by DES.
     6. A notification of the deactivation of the well at the DPW yard. With the new water main, it can be deactivated.
     7. The agenda for the Exeter Squamscott Local River Advisory Committee meeting.
     8. Notices from the Rye Planning and Zoning Board and the Pelham Planning Department regarding cell tower hearings.

1. Review Board Calendar
   1. December 30th [subsequently cancelled], January 6th for budget discussions, January 21 for the Bond and Budget hearing, and January 27th.
2. Non-Public Session
   1. There was no non-public session at this time.
3. Adjournment

**MOTION:** Mr. Papakonstantis moved to adjourn. Ms. Surman seconded. All were in favor, and the meeting was adjourned at 9:50 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Joanna Bartell

Recording Secretary