

Select Board Meeting
Monday September 14, 2020
6:30 PM
Remotely via Zoom
Final Minutes

1. Call Meeting to Order

Members present: Julie Gilman, Molly Cowan, Lovey Roundtree Oliff, Daryl Browne, Niko Papakonstantis, and Russ Dean were present at this meeting. The meeting was called to order by Mr. Papakonstantis at 6:30 PM.

Mr. Papakonstantis said that gatherings of 10 or more people currently pose a risk to our community. The Select Board meeting is imperative to maintaining the Town of Exeter public services, so per RSA 91-A:2(3)b, this meeting will be conducted without a quorum of this body being physically present in one location. He welcomed the members of the public attending remotely, and said the usual rules of conduct and decorum will apply. All votes will require a roll call vote.

2. Board Interviews - Exeter Police Stakeholders Commission

- a. Andrew Rocco
- b. Katie Adams
- c. Anne Surman
- d. Matt Carbone

3. Public Comment

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

4. Proclamations/Recognitions

- a. Mr. Papakonstantis congratulated Eric Wilking on being named Fire Chief, which was announced last Friday.

5. Approval of Minutes

- a. Regular Meeting: August 31, 2020

MOTION: Ms. Oliff moved to approve the minutes of August 31, 2020 as presented. Ms. Cowan seconded. By a roll call vote, all were in favor.

- b. Special Meeting, September 3, 2020

MOTION: Ms. Cowan moved to approve the minutes of September 3, 2020 as presented. Mr. Browne seconded. By a roll call vote, all were in favor.

6. Appointments

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to appoint Kathy Corson to the Budget Recommendations Committee for the 2020 budget year. Ms. Oliff seconded. By a roll call vote, all were in favor.

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to appoint Bill Campbell to the Heritage Commission, term to expire 4/30/22. Ms. Cowan seconded. By a roll call vote, all were in favor.

MOTION: Mr. Browne moved to appoint Bevin Kennedy to the Communications Advisory Committee, term to expire 4/30/22. Ms. Cowan seconded. By a roll call vote, all were in favor.

7. Town Moderator and Supervisor of the Checklist Updates

Paul Scafidi, the Town Moderator, said that the election of September 8th went smoothly. Over 2,000 people came in to vote, and the town also processed about that many absentee ballots. They anticipate up to 4,000 absentee ballots for the Presidential Election. They only had eight people come in to vote without a mask and four drive-up voters dropping off their absentee ballots. There was a Police and Fire presence there all day. Ms. Oliff asked how people can volunteer for the elections, and Mr. Scafidi said everything goes through the Town Clerk's office. Ms. Cowan asked about the date to register to vote, and Mr. Scafidi said the registration is closed, but residents can register on voting day. Ms. Oliff said she wanted voters to be aware that they can't wear political outfits or promotional items. Mr. Scafidi said this is called "electioneering," and there's a State law against it. Voters will have to cover it up or remove any political items. He added that they can't stop anyone from voting.

8. Discussion/Action Items

a. Arts & Culture Commission Discussion

Mr. Papakonstantis said that when he was running for the Select Board, many residents had mentioned an interest in an Arts and Culture Commission. It's timely because businesses are reopening and artists are looking for help. For the past two or three years, there has not been any type of Arts Committee. He wants to encompass more than just arts, to include all culture. Ms. Oliff said she would be interested in helping with the committee. Ms. Cowan gave the example of Renay Allen's proposal for a Pocket Park, which had no obvious committee to go to. Mr. Papakonstantis said once Parks and Rec are handling permitting again, this committee can be the liaison there. It will cross-pollinate with other committees.

Mr. Dean said crafting the charge clearly is important, so the committee members will know what to do right out of the gate. One prior problem was deciding what was the best and highest use of the 2nd floor of Town Hall.

Ms. Gilman said if they're trying to promote arts in the community, they should make clear whether this is promotional for private companies or just events at municipal properties. Mr. Papakonstantis suggested that Board members make revisions to his draft and they can vote on September 28th. Ms. Cowan pointed out that they don't have the capacity to do member interviews until after the Police Stakeholders Committee is complete.

b. Communications Committee Discussion

Connor Barry, Chair of the Communications Committee, provided an update on the committee's progress and asked for insight into the charge of the committee. They're looking at developing a survey on how existing

communication channels can be improved, although not all committee members think a survey is a good idea. Creating a Communications Master Plan is one of their long-term goals. Many town announcements are written internally by staff and posted on social media and the town website. Is there a way that the committee could be helpful to the Select Board? There's no workflow in place to have documents like a mask ordinance communication approved.

Mr. Dean said if the committee can recommend best practices to the town, but the Select Board or Town Manager put out the official content. This committee can play a great role in community outreach and determining what the public would like to see. Ms. Cowan suggested that when situations arise, they could look to the committee to create FAQs and give them to the Town Manager for approval. In the last two elections, the Communications Committee summarized the warrant articles. The committee could make the discussions that happen during budget season more robust, and counter information on social media that isn't true. Ms. Gilman said she didn't think content would be created by this group, it's more about recommendations on how to proceed when all departments have their own channels of communication. They could look at the consistency of logos and graphics and help with the town website. Mr. Browne said for security, they don't want a committee of unpaid members generating content, but they can curate and organize content. Mr. Dean said the committee could also look at the evolving legal concerns around social media. The town's social media policy from 2013 works well, but could use a refresher. They haven't upgraded the town website in three or four years. The vendor, Municode, may have some suggestions on that, and Mr. Glowacky can work with the committee to coordinate.

Mr. Barry said Nick Campion recently did a presentation on the town's communication policy, and members of the committee have reviewed it. They would like to do the survey and advertise it widely. Mr. Papakonstantis asked why other members had thought the survey was not valuable. Mr. Barry said there's concern that they may not get much of a response. Ms. Oliff said that's her experience as well. Mr. Barry said the committee can discuss it further at tomorrow's meeting. Ms. Cowan said the survey results may not be statistically accurate, but may give them some ideas. Mr. Glowacky said the parking survey was successful. Mr. Papakonstantis asked if the town has a list of resident email addresses. Mr. Glowacky said there are multiple lists for different purposes. He's looking to the committee's advice on the best way to get out the survey.

c. CATV Agreement Updates

Attorney Kate Miller of DTC said she has been doing special counsel work on the Cable Agreement. The agreement originally expired in 2017, but amendments extended the contract. There are some confusing new FCC rules, and DTC has put together guidance. They're looking for a Board member to take the next step. Mr. Browne volunteered, and Mr. Papakonstantis offered to serve

as backup. Mr. Dean said two members can serve and still be in accord with 91A.

Attorney Miller said they drafted a new franchise agreement in 2010, and made important changes, such as adding an emergency communication center. Technology has overtaken some aspects of the agreement, like the High School connectivity. They have three local access channels, which is unusual. They could do local access in HD by 2023. The FCC made a rule change in August of last year; they're no longer allowed to provide courtesy cable to schools and municipal facilities for free, but during the Covid crisis is not when they want to limit emergency management information. They should look at whether all existing facilities need to continue receiving cable TV. It's possible that the new rule could change with a court decision.

Attorney Miller said she recommends an amendment rather than a complete new agreement, as it's less expensive. They negotiated a good franchise agreement last time, and would have to work hard to retain the existing terms. They can ask for the local access channel in HD, and extend the contract to 2027. Mr. Dean said if they don't move forward with Comcast, there are no alternatives, so residents would be looking at a blackout.

d. Household Hazardous Waste Collection Discussion

Jennifer Perry, the Director of Public Works, and Tim Roache, the Executive Director of the Rockingham Planning Commission, spoke about the Household Hazardous Waste event, which is typically held the third Saturday in October. Ms. Perry said they are looking at changes to deal with Covid 19. They must have masks and hand sanitizer, and look at temperature checks, social distancing, and an online ticketing system. Mr. Papakonstantis asked about the volume at the transfer station over the last six months. Ms. Perry said there's been an increase of 5-7%, but it's not consistent. Other area household hazardous waste collection events have been higher than normal years. Mr. Roache said they can accommodate 75 cars per hour, or 375 over the course of the event. They're looking to limit cash transactions and reduce the number of volunteers needed. Mr. Papakonstantis asked about volunteers and liability. Mr. Dean said anyone who volunteers should sign a waiver.

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to approve the participation and hosting of a Household Hazardous Waste day on October 17, 2020. Ms. Oliff seconded. By a roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.

e. Classification Plan Update - Media Technician

Mr. Dean said the town has a non-union classification plan, which covers positions from custodians to the Town Manager, but EXTV personnel are not on the plan. EXTV is evolving to a multimedia platform. They would like to create the job title of part time Media Technician at grade 2, which starts at \$15.21 hour and goes up to \$20.97 hour. There are four employees this applies to at the moment. This will help with retention. Mr. Browne asked about turnover. Mr. Dean said

their turnover is fairly extensive, partly due to the part-time nature of the job. EXTV trains people and then they go and find a full time position. The town should try to be competitive with part-time people. They can work within the steps in the future. Ms. Gilman asked if these positions will stay part-time, or if they could make a full-time position in another grade. Mr. Dean said it depends on an employee's roles and responsibilities, such as supervising.

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to create the position of part time Media Technician starting at grade 2. Mr. Browne seconded. By a roll call vote, all were in favor.

f. COVID 19 Updates

Chief Eric Wilking said that Exeter Covid cases remain steady. 10 new residents have tested positive since the last meeting two weeks ago. The mask ordinance and public awareness should pay dividends. Some of the increase is attributable to increased testing. They're seeing additional call volume at the FD, doing well on PPE.

Mr. Papakonstantis said that the Board voted in July to oversee the permitting process, but that authority ended August 31st. He asked Greg Bisson if the Board should continue. Mr. Bisson said yes, they should continue to weigh in on these requests. Mr. Browne said he would like to see the previous process reinstated as soon as possible, but he will vote on a defined term. Mr. Bisson said the State of Emergency runs through December 31st, so the vote could run until then or until the State of Emergency is lifted.

MOTION: Ms. Cowan moved that the Select Board oversee all permits and approvals until the State of Emergency is lifted by the Governor. Ms. Gilman seconded. Ms. Oliff said she thought it would end December 31st, and Ms. Cowan said that's when the order runs out. In a roll call vote, Ms. Cowan, Ms. Gilman, and Mr. Papakonstantis voted yay, and Mr. Browne and Ms. Oliff voted nay. The motion passed 3-2.

Mr. Bisson said the Parks and Rec fall programming has been a hit. Fall sports registration has closed, and they're organizing teams now. They've organized a Halloween parade that will go around town, like the Easter parade. They're also planning a Scarecrow contest, and families can get a kit from Parks and Rec.

Mr. Dean recognized Chief Wilking and Doreen Chester for working on election expenses for GOFER. He heard that FEMA is not going to reimburse school districts for PPE, gloves, etc, which they were expecting.

9. Regular Business

a. Tax Abatements, Veterans Credits and Exemptions

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to approve a Land Use Change tax of \$65,300. Mr. Browne seconded. By a roll call vote, all were in favor.

b. Permits & Approvals

Mr. Bisson said that Exeter Rotary Club submitted an application for their annual apple sale. This would take place in the parking spaces between Town Hall and the Town Offices. Mr. Murray has approved. They would get individual waivers

from those working the event. Only one person will be handling transactions, and they would be observing social distancing and other measures.

MOTION: Mr. Browne moved to approve the Exeter Rotary Club event of September 25, 2020, the Annual Apple Sale. Ms. Gilman seconded. By a roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Dean said the MS535, a report of revenues and expenses, is ready and needs Board signatures.

c. Town Manager's Report

- i. Following Chief Wilking's appointment, he'd like to present ideas about the department structure and other aspects of the department at an upcoming meeting.
- ii. He was able to attend the funeral of Amanda Renauro, and would like to send the town's condolences to Justin Renauro and his family. Ms. Oliff mentioned the Go Fund Me for his family; Mr. Dean said it's been successful, and further information can be found on social media. People can also donate at Service Credit Union.
- iii. The town opted out of the payroll tax deferral. Their choice was consistent with what many other communities have done.
- iv. The Parks and Rec Department needs to fill the pool at least to partial capacity to prevent structural damage. Last year, filling it cost over \$8,000.

d. Select Board Committee Reports

- i. Mr. Browne had no report.
- ii. Ms. Oliff said the Housing Advisory Committee met on Friday the 11th. Dave Sharples gave an update on the project presentation. The town is adopting MUND. They're discussing affordable housing.
- iii. Ms. Gilman said tomorrow is a Heritage Commission meeting. Tomorrow, the ZBA is hearing the appeal of the HDC's decision to keep the Ioka marquee in place. On Thursday, the HDC is meeting regarding the demolition and new building at 110 High Street. Ms. Gilman said she's concerned that the Planning Department doesn't share enough of the packet information with the public.
- iv. Ms. Cowan said she had a Planning Board meeting, where they finished the CIP presentation. The yield plan for the Grizet site was approved. They also approved the Tuck Realty Corp and the daycare school. They're caught up on cases.
- v. Mr. Papakonstantis had a Sustainability Committee meeting, where Mr. Sharples walked through the presentation from the UNH intern.

e. Correspondence

- i. A letter from Energy Committee Chair Renay Allen proposing changes to the committee. They're looking to partner with the Sustainability or Facilities Committee.
- ii. A letter from Jennifer Wheeler, thanking the Board for renewing the lease at 120 Water Street
- iii. An update from COAST saying that they finished the summer on a strong note. Ms. Gilman said the update is regarding the fixed routes, which don't serve Exeter. Mr. Dean said COAST is dropping its budget by 6% but their ask has remained consistent, so he was going to reach out.

10. Review Board Calendar

- a. The next meetings are September 28th, October 5, and October 19th.

11. Non-Public Session

There was no non-public session at this meeting.

12. Adjournment

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to adjourn. Ms. Cowan seconded. By a roll call vote, all were in favor and the meeting adjourned at 9:48 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Joanna Bartell
Recording Secretary