

Select Board Meeting  
Monday December 21, 2020  
7 PM  
Remotely via Zoom  
Final Minutes

1. Call Meeting to Order

Members present: Julie Gilman, Molly Cowan, Lovey Roundtree Oliff, Niko Papakonstantis, and Russ Dean were present at this meeting. Daryl Browne was not present. The meeting was called to order by Mr. Papakonstantis at 7 PM.

Mr. Papakonstantis read a statement:

As Chair of the Select Board, I find that due to the State of Emergency declared by the Governor as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and in accordance with the Governor's Emergency Order #12 this public body is authorized to meet electronically.

Public notice of this meeting was posted on the town website and on the bulletin board of the town offices at 10 Front Street. As provided in that public notice, the public may access the meeting online and via phone.

Please note that all votes taken during this meeting shall be done by roll call vote. Let's start the meeting by taking a roll call attendance. When each member states their presence, please also state whether there is anyone in the room with you during this meeting and who that person is (son, daughter, spouse, etc...), which is required under the Right-to-Know law.

2. Board Interviews - Exeter Arts & Culture Commission

- a. Todd Hearon
- b. Bruce Jones
- c. Anthony Callendrello
- d. Scott Ruffner

3. Bid Award - Water/Sewer Chemicals

Mr. Dean said there is a \$2,200 savings on these chemicals compared to 2020.

**MOTION:** Ms. Oliff moved to approve the award of Bid Item #1, Sodium Hypochlorite 15% Solution, to Harcros Chemicals, Inc from Nashua NH at \$1.09 per gallon. Ms. Gilman seconded. By a roll call vote, all were in favor.

**MOTION:** Ms. Gilman moved to approve the award of Bid Item #2, Activated Carbon, to George S Coyne Chemical Co., Inc in Croyden PA at \$1.2045 per pound. Ms. Oliff seconded. By a roll call vote, all were in favor.

**MOTION:** Ms. Gilman moved to approve the award of Bid Item #3, Potassium Permanganate, to Marubeni America Corporation of Harrison NY at \$1.63 per pound. Ms. Cowan seconded. By a roll call vote, all were in favor.

**MOTION:** Ms. Oliff moved to approve the award of Bid Item #4, Sodium Hydroxide, to Univar Solutions USA in Morrisville PA, at 0.7899 cents per gallon. Ms. Gilman seconded. By a roll call vote, all were in favor.

4. Public Comment

There was no public comment at this meeting.

5. Proclamations/Recognitions

There were no proclamations/recognitions at this meeting.

6. Approval of Minutes

a. Regular Meeting: December 7, 2020

**MOTION:** Ms. Oliff moved to accept the minutes of December 7, 2020 as presented. Ms. Gilman seconded. By a roll call vote, all were in favor.

7. Appointments

There were no appointments at this meeting.

8. Discussion/Action Items

a. Mask Ordinance Updates

Health Officer James Murray reiterated the changes to the mask ordinance discussed at the last meeting, following the passing of the State-level ordinance. he removed the reference to NH not having a mask order; he also revised item 11 to include the State's exemption for the hearing impaired: *Any person who is deaf or hard of hearing, and any person while communicating with an individual who is deaf or hard of hearing or who has a disability, medical condition, or mental health condition that makes communication with that individual while wearing a mask or face covering difficult.* Finally, he changed the effective until date to February 22nd, keeping with the 61 day provision in the ordinance. If the State does expire the mandate January 15th, they can continue with the town version. Ms. Cowan asked about the major differences between the State ordinance and ours. Mr. Murray said the minimum age for wearing a mask, State is anyone 5 and up, ours is 10 and up. He reached out to the Attorney General to see which would take precedence. Otherwise they are similar. Ms. Cowan said regarding the age, she would be in favor of going with the state guideline. The Board agreed to incorporate that change into the approval motion.

**MOTION:** Ms. Cowan moved to approve the changes to the Exeter town mask ordinance as proposed by the Health Officer. Ms. Gilman seconded. By a roll call vote, all were in favor.

**MOTION:** Ms. Cowan moved to extend the mask ordinance to expire February 22, 2021. Ms. Gilman seconded. By a roll call vote, all were in favor.

b. COVID 19 Updates

- i. Chief Wilking said NH has seen another 6,000 people test positive, with 45 fatalities. Rockingham County was doing well, but lost people last week. Exeter is at 285 total cases, while communities of similar size are in the high 300s/low 400s. Regarding the vaccine, the NH National Guard and DHHS are setting up a regional vaccination space at the High School. This facility is still on track for December 28th for the first responder vaccinations. All of Exeter's first responders have been reported to the State for consideration for the vaccine. The PPE supply is doing well. There were 40 - 45 active Covid cases in Exeter; the State is

tracking these cases, and the Department is aware of the status if there is a call to those addresses. Chief Pizon received another delivery of gowns and masks. The rapid testing frequency has been changed from monthly to weekly for all personnel. The first day of each shift rotation is tested. Covid hit the Fire Department. The first employee tested positive on December 11th and immediately came off shift; they are doing well and have been cleared to return December 22. One other employee is under quarantine due to the exposure of a family member. 30 people applied for three open firefighter positions, and they have made offers of employment. The potential hires include the Department's second and third female firefighters.

- ii. Mr. Murray said he's been working on the vaccine plans and doing compliance work for the State. The public is making calls to the Attorney General's office regarding behavior they're seeing at local businesses. He's also getting calls from businesses about their employees testing positive, and he's working with public health to give better advice to these businesses.

c. FY21 Budget Calendar & HB1129

Mr. Papakonstantis said they won't vote on the Deliberative Session plans tonight, as Mr. Browne is not present. They will have to vote on January 4th. Ms. Gilman said people are concerned that they won't get to interact as in a normal Deliberative Session. She suggested that they could use the chat function on a Zoom call to offer interaction. She's concerned that if the public doesn't accept the form of voting, it will invalidate the rest of the ballot. Mr. Dean said articles 1, 2, and 3 would also be on the initial ballot, not the alternative ballot, so would be voted on regardless. Ms. Gilman said it's an open question how half of the slate could be approved when the other half has been invalidated. Mr. Papakonstantis said he would like Attorney Mitchell to speak on the matter again. Mr. Dean said this is likely an issue that needs to be determined by the Legislature. Ms. Cowan said perhaps feedback could be submitted by the public before or during the session that could be shared in the meeting. She wants to invite as much participation as possible. She's also not sure that the number of participants can be supported by a Zoom call. Mr. Dean said he doesn't believe a Zoom call is an option; it's either the alternative process or an in-person meeting, although it's something they can lobby for over the next few weeks. Mr. Papakonstantis said what message they'll be sending to the public if they have the town meet in person [when Covid is an issue]. Ms. Gilman asked what the schools are doing, and Mr. Dean said they're starting those discussions. If the town felt strongly about having an in-person Deliberative Session, he thinks they will allow them to use the facilities. This issue will be discussed further at the January 4th meeting.

d. FY21 Budget and Warrant Articles

Mr. Papakonstantis asked if Board members had questions or comments on the FY21 Budget. Ms. Cowan said she's interested in hearing more about the IT situation. Mr. Papakonstantis said they should discuss bringing on an additional IT person. He's reluctant to add personnel in a tough year, but on November 30th, there were no services at the Town Clerk's Office because the IT mainframe was down. We're now in a society run on Zoom and a lot of the support staff are supporting those meetings instead of IT. Until we get back to normal, the Department, infrastructure, and resources will be stretched thin, and citizens need town services. Ms. Oliff said they should aim to have more services online rather than in person. Ms. Gilman said she's been saying for years that the Department is understaffed. Mr. Papakonstantis asked Mr. Dean to put together a proposal for a new IT position. The Budget Hearing will take place January 19th.

e. FY20 Encumbrances

Mr. Dean said the Board must vote to approve the encumbrances. There was a total amount of \$67,516 requested. The Planning Department was given a \$2,500 line item in supplies for Sustainability Purposes which was not spent, so they'd like to add that to the encumbrances list, for a total of \$70,016. There were also another several hundred thousand in Warrant Articles.

**MOTION:** Ms. Oliff moved to approve the encumbrance request for the year ending 12/31/20 for the General Budget, total amount requested \$70,016, plus the amount of \$598,109 for the total requested Warrant Articles. Ms. Gilman seconded. By a roll call vote, all were in favor.

f. COVID-19 updates

- i. Mr. Dean said they anticipate legislation passing at the Federal level tonight, including aid to businesses, housing relief and stability, etc, and they should have more information on that soon.

9. Regular Business

a. Tax Abatements, Veterans Credits and Exemptions

**MOTION:** Ms. Gilman moved to approve a Veterans Credit of \$500 for 95/64/131. Ms. Cowan seconded. By a roll call vote, all were in favor.

**MOTION:** Ms. Gilman moved to approve an abatement of \$168.98 for 110/2/103. Ms. Oliff seconded. By a roll call vote, all were in favor.

**MOTION:** Ms. Gilman moved to approve an abatement amount of \$121.26 for 110/2/103. Ms. Oliff seconded. By a roll call vote, all were in favor.

b. Permits & Approvals

There were no permits and approvals at this meeting.

c. Town Manager's Report

- i. Mr. Dean thanked the Board regarding the Town Office closure on Christmas Eve. They will be closed Friday for the holiday. New Year's Eve they will be open, and closed New Year's Day.
  - ii. The Epping Road/Spring Street sidewalk project is over the approved \$108,000 budget. They need \$41,000 to match more State money. They will make a presentation to the Board in January. They can use money from the Sidewalk Capital Reserve fund and the SB38 money from the Governor's Office in 2017, which has a balance of \$10,000 or so.
  - iii. Tax collection is steady. The online system is working well.
  - iv. Years of Service awards were last Thursday: Janet Whitten with 20 years in Finance, Andy Swanson with 15 years in IT, Laura Zagopolis with 10 years in Finance, Kathy Croteau with 5 years in Planning, and himself with 15 years as Town Manager.
- d. Select Board Committee Reports
  - i. Ms. Gilman Heritage Commission and HDC met but projects were minor.
  - ii. Ms. Oliff Housing Committee met, meeting again in Jan. Update from municipal technical assistance grant, tiny homes.
  - iii. Ms. Cowan Planning Board, discussed a plan on Hampton Road. Took up impact fees. Exeter Police Committee, first meeting, elected officers, Chief went over the parameters.
  - iv. Mr. Papakonstantis did not have an update. He thanked those who serve on committees and the town staff.
- e. Correspondence
  - i. A list of projects in the Transportation Improvement Program. Mr. Dean said questions about any projects can be addressed by Mr. Sharples.

10. Review Board Calendar

- a. The next meetings are January 4 and 25th. There's a public budget hearing January 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 8:39 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,  
 Joanna Bartell  
 Recording Secretary