

Select Board Meeting
Monday March 28, 2022
7 PM
Nowak Room, Town Offices
Final Minutes

1. Call Meeting to Order

Members present: Julie Gilman, Molly Cowan, Lovey Roundtree Oliff, Niko Papakonstantis, Nancy Belanger, Town Manager Russ Dean, and Assistant Town Manager Melissa Roy were present at this meeting. The meeting was called to order by Mr. Papakonstantis at 7 PM.

2. Public Comment

- a. Mr. Papakonstantis asked for a moment of silence for Chick MacDougall. Mr. MacDougall gave decades of his time to the town of Exeter, between Junior Baseball, Swasey Parkway, and the brass band, of which he was the longest continuous member.

3. Proclamations/Recognitions

- a. Mr. Papakonstantis said Public Works Director Jen Perry was awarded the honor of being one of the top 20 Public Works leaders for 2022 by the American Public Works association; she is the only Director from Exeter and the only woman in New England to ever win this award.

4. Approval of Minutes

- a. Regular Meeting: March 14, 2022

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to accept the minutes of March 14, 2022 as submitted. Ms. Gilman seconded. Ms. Oliff abstained, as she was not present at the March 14 meeting. The motion passed 4-0-1.

5. Appointments

- a. Resignation: Patrick Gordon, Chair of the HDC

Ms. Gilman said that Mr. Gordon had made important contributions, such as creating new applications for those coming into the Building Department for a new addition and obtaining a grant for new user-friendly Historic District guidelines.

MOTION: Ms. Oliff moved to accept the resignation of Patrick Gordon from the Historic District Commission. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

6. Discussion/Action Items

- a. Public Works Project Updates

Public Works Director Jennifer Perry was present to give updates on DPW projects. She said we have challenges with staffing in the Department, and there are currently 6 vacancies.

The Squamscott River Sewer Siphons design is essentially complete. We received the Army Corps of Engineers Permit and Section 408 permit, and we're

submitting for our shoreland permit. We anticipate going out to bid shortly. Construction should be beginning this summer. We're submitting a contingency/emergency response plan in case of a failure to DES for their approval.

The Webster Ave Sewer Pump Station project was approved at Town Meeting, with additional State and Federal Funding. We're moving forward with that design and should be in construction next year.

The Salem Street area utilities will be starting up again shortly, and should be done by early fall. This project includes Sewer, Water, Drainage, and road repairs.

The Wastewater Treatment Plant sludge removal should be complete this season.

On the Kingston Road shoulder and sidewalk project, we were too optimistic in thinking it would commence this year. State funding won't be available until October, and we need to do it all in one season, so we will defer to next year. There are also two outstanding easements we're working on with that project.

On Pickpocket Dam, the high hazard dam on the border with Brentwood, we're looking at the feasibility of alternatives. The dam must discharge 2.5x the 100 year flood level, according to the State. We asked for a proposal from VHB, the Engineers on the removal of Great Dam. We expect the feasibility study to take about 18 months. We're required to submit our preferred alternative to the Dam Bureau by June of 2024 and have it constructed by Dec 2027.

We just completed the conceptual work on the Westside Drive improvement project, which includes utilities, Water/Sewer, a "road diet," and sidewalk improvements. We're starting the final design with Underwood Engineers, and anticipate construction possibly next year.

We have been spending time on a groundwater search with Underwood Engineers, GZA, and Emery & Garrett. We've done test well drilling. We're waiting for the proceeds from the next bond issue in July to go further.

Mr. Papakonstantis asked if the Sewer Siphons project will impact Swasey Parkway. Ms. Perry said yes, there will be an area that is dug out. This work will be done mostly in summer and early fall. We will work with the Swasey Trustees and the Select Board. Mr. Bisson said we're already in discussion with those who have permitted events on the Parkway.

Mr. Papakonstantis asked how close we are to getting the two easements for Kingston Road. Ms. Perry said she heard two weeks ago that we made contact with those property owners, but hasn't had an update.

Laura Knott of 15 Tamarind Lane asked for the names of the owners of the pending easements for the Kingston Road project. Ms. Perry said the first parcel is just as you go over the bridge from Westside Drive; it's a cell tower property. The other is owned by an individual. It's not that they're a problem, it's just been difficult to make a connection. It should only be a few more weeks.

Ms. Knott asked if we will have to reapply for 2023 funding for this project. Ms. Perry said no, the State's fiscal year '23 runs from Oct 22 - Sept 2023, and the project can be completed through Dec of 2024.

b. Police Department Update - Second Lieutenant

Police Chief Stephan Poulin said we're continuing to implement the recommendations from the CPSM Police Operations and Data report from June 2020. Many of the remaining objectives can be addressed by adding a Second Lieutenant. Many agencies of our size have this role. The Police Union agreed to remove the Animal Control Officer [ACO] position, which has been vacant, and reclassify it as a Second Lieutenant. One Lieutenant would be in Operations, and the second would work on professional standards, accreditation and training, internal affairs, recruitment, and 'use of force' reviews. We're looking to fill this position in July 2022. The ACO salary was budgeted for, but we need \$9000 more for the Second Lieutenant position, which will come from an open patrol position. In 2023, we will budget for the Second Lieutenant and not an ACO. We would fill this position with an existing Sergeant and backfill that position. Mr. Dean said this position is already in our classification plan, at a Grade 13. The Board agreed to this proposal.

c. Fire Department - Engine 5 Replacement

Chief Wilking said for the Engine 5 bids, we sent 10 bid requests to 11 different manufacturers, but only got 1 bid back. He reached out to some who didn't bid, and heard that it takes 80 - 100 hours of their time just to bid, and we already have a pattern of buying from Greenwood/ E1, who have sold us our last three pump trucks. Greenwood Emergency Vehicles has offered a \$15,000 pre-payment bonus. He recommends moving forward with Greenwood Emergency Vehicles at \$650,000, which will be \$635,000 if we can get financing.

MOTION: Ms. Oliff moved to approve the proposal submitted by Greenwood Emergency Vehicles for the purchase of the Engine 5 replacement, an E1 vehicle, in the amount of \$650,000, and authorize the Town Manager to sign the contract. Ms. Belanger seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

d. Fire Department - SCBA

Chief Wilking said we currently have 45 units, but we only need 36 going forward. Two bids were received. The first was from Firematic Supply at \$374,308, which was \$25,900 more than the town approved. We reached out, and the company was aware of the voted amount, but they had a price increase through the Spring and could no longer be competitive. Industrial Protection Services put in a bid for \$269,843, which was very low, but it was for the bare bones breathing apparatus, with extra options. To comply with our bid spec, the final cost is \$328,835. This is \$19,000 less than what was approved by the voters. They can deliver in about 8 weeks.

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to approve the bid of \$328,835 provided by Industrial Protection Services for the Breathing Apparatus, and authorize the Town Manager to sign the contract. Ms. Belanger seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

e. Selectwoman Gilman Legislative Updates

Ms. Gilman discussed updates at the State Legislature. The two default budget bills both failed. The bill on four housing units per residential property was tabled, and can only come off the table with a $\frac{2}{3}$ majority vote. A bill allowing towns to provide composting and recycling services did pass. The Tax credit bills were tabled or failed.

f. Select Board Representatives to Boards/Committees/Commissions

Planning Board: Ms. Belanger, with Ms. Cowan as the alternate.

Rec Advisory Board: Ms. Cowan, with Ms. Oliff as the alternate.

Arts and Culture: Ms. Oliff.

Conservation Commission: Ms. Belanger, with Mr. Papakonstantis as the alternate.

Heritage Commission: Ms. Gilman

HDC: Ms. Gilman

Swasey Parkway Trustees - Ms. Oliff, with Mr. Papakonstantis as the alternate.

Communications Advisory Committee: Ms. Cowan

Energy Committee: Ms. Gilman, with Mr. Papakonstantis as the alternate.

Facilities Advisory Committee: Ms. Gilman.

Housing Advisory Committee: Ms. Belanger, with Ms. Oliff as the alternate.

River Advisory Committee: Mr. Papakonstantis.

Mr. Papakonstantis said these River Advisory meetings only take about 20 minutes, and it's mostly the Town Engineer giving an update. The meetings are scheduled every month but are taking place every two or three months. Could we make the River Advisory Committee a subcommittee to the Conservation Commission, like the Tree Committee? Or Mr. Vlasich could give an update quarterly to the Select Board.

Sustainability Advisory Committee: Mr. Papakonstantis

Water/Sewer Advisory Committee: Ms. Cowan

g. Schedule Select Board Goal Setting Meeting

Mr. Dean said Rick Alpers from Primex could facilitate the meeting on Saturday April 16 or April 23, but he can ask if Mr. Alpers is available in the evening. Mr. Papakonstantis would like him to consider Monday April 18 or 19 in the evening.

7. Regular Business

a. Tax Abatements, Veterans Credits and Exemptions

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to accept a yield tax for 5/1 in the amount of \$339.46 for FY 2021. Ms. Belanger seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to deny an Elderly Exemption for 104/79/132 for FY 2022. Ms. Belanger seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to approve an Elderly Exemption for 104/79/709 in the amount of \$152,251 for FY 2022. Ms. Belanger seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to approve a Tax Abatement for 52/112 in the amount of \$16,462.66 for FY 2021. Ms. Belanger seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

b. Permits & Approvals

Greg Bisson, the Parks and Rec Director, discussed the proposed pickleball conversion. The pickleball players asked the town to convert the top three tennis courts into 8 pickleball courts; the players raised \$35,400 towards the conversion. Friends of Recreation was used to accept the funds, so the donations are tax-deductible. The players plan to start an Exeter Pickleball Club for further fundraising for windscreens and fencing. The players put in a \$10,000 deposit with Vermont Tennis, and are just waiting for Select Board approval and better weather to move forward.

Mr. Papakonstantis asked how tennis fans will feel about losing three tennis courts and only having 5. Mr. Bisson said there are an abundance of tennis courts in town. There are some at EHS as well. Ms. Oliff said as pickleball numbers increased during Covid, so did tennis players. She's seen that the desire to access courts was pretty high and the number did not match up. She's worried about what will happen to tennis in the parks.

Mr. Papakonstantis said it's impressive they raised the money, but he's concerned that there would only be 5 courts available. Mr. Bisson said there are times in the summer where he's been up there that the tennis courts have been empty. Ms. Oliff added that she's concerned about those who raised money for the project feeling like they own it. Mr. Bisson said we've already attracted the NH Boys and Girls Clubs and the Senior Games Pickleball. We debated this at the Rec Advisory Board in October. Ms. Oliff said to take things away that people have gotten comfortable with is a problem. She would like to hear from more residents on this issue.

Ms. Belanger asked if we can use a scheduling software for the tennis courts. Mr. Bisson said the Rec software could handle that, but currently no. Ms. Oliff said the play is more of a spontaneous thing.

Ms. Cowan asked if we could convert fewer courts. Mr. Bisson said no, to do a permanent pickleball option it would require three courts.

The Board agreed to table the matter until the next meeting.

Mr. Bisson said to ensure softball player safety, we're looking at a portable fencing system called "Grand Slam Fencing." This would create a buffer

between the mowed area and the unmowed area with poison ivy. \$2,990 is the lowest estimate, from Pioneer Athletics. There are only two benches on the entire court system; we're looking at recycled plastic benches at a cost of \$4,691.31, from Belson Outdoors. We would like ADA compliant water fountains with water filling stations, at an estimate of \$15,550 for five benches. We're looking to rehab the pool slide, which was installed in 2005, for \$5,642.55. Last year, we found a leak in the pool, he's lined up two contractors, Advance Pool and Spa and Contrast Concrete LLC, to fix the leak and repair the pool deck for \$8,420.25. At Park Street Common, DPW will remove the existing playground. For Fencing AAA fencing came in at \$14,586, the only bid. At the Rec Park, we're looking to replace 3 picnic tables with recycled plastic ones from Belson. We're looking to improve the turf at townhouse common through irrigation from Day's Landscaping, at \$7,500.

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to allow Parks and Rec \$67,475.19 from the Parks Improvement Capital Reserve fund to complete the following projects: fencing at the Rec Park, benches and picnic tables for parks, water fountains for parks, pool slide rehabilitation, pool fix and concrete work, and renovation for Townhouse Common. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

Mr. Bisson said we're looking to add playground chips and an ADA compliant surfacing from US Playground Surfacing of Connecticut. This product uses rubber matting over playground chips. This project will cost \$16,755. If this product is successful, it will save substantially on costs in other playground renovations.

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to allow Parks and Rec to expend \$16,755 from the Parks Improvement Capital Reserve Fund to complete the following projects: purchase of all playground Chips from PR Russell and ADA surfacing from US Playground Surfacing. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

c. Town Manager's Report

- i. We heard that HB398, the Sewer State Aid Grant bill, passed both the House and Senate, and just needs to be signed by the Governor. This could be \$1M for Exeter. HB 1033, the Lobbying bill, was tabled by the House.
- ii. We're working on the closing for the 10 Hampton Road property.
- iii. We're pulling Documents for the bond issue and getting quotes for the lease purchases.
- iv. He and Pam McElroy met with the Richie McFarland Center and Waypoint, who merged, on how their merger will affect Human Services funding.
- v. We committed to celebrating Juneteenth in our Collective Bargaining this year. Since it falls on a Sunday, we will have it on the following Monday.
- vi. There's a proposal from the Inn by the Bandstand in the packets.

d. Select Board Committee Reports

- i. Ms. Belanger had no report.
- ii. Ms. Gilman had no report.
- iii. Ms. Cowan said that the Planning Board talked about changing the building placements at Ray Farm. For The Water/Sewer Advisory Board, we were able to get consensus from members on the votes, so there is unanimous support now.
- iv. Ms. Oliff had no report.
- v. Mr. Papakonstantis had a River Advisory meeting, but said he spoke about that previously.
- e. Correspondence
 - i. A letter from the Inn by the Bandstand regarding the shared space between that building and the Town Offices
 - ii. The annual report from the Exeter Sportsmans' Club
- 8. Review Board Calendar
 - a. The next meeting is April 11.
- 9. Non-Public Session

MOTION: Ms. Cowan Moved to enter into non-public session under RSA 91-A:3 II(a). Ms. Oliff seconded. In a roll call vote, all were in favor, and the meeting entered non-public at 8:42 PM.

- 10. Adjournment. Selectwoman Cowan moved to adjourn, seconded by Selectwoman Roundtree Oliff. The motion passed and the Board stood adjourned at 8:55 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Joanna Bartell
Recording Secretary