

Select Board Meeting
Monday July 18, 2022
6:30 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, and Town Manager Russ Dean were present at this meeting. The meeting was called to order by Mr. Papakonstantis at 6:30 PM.

2. Non-Public Session

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to enter into non-public session under RSA 91-A:3II(a). Ms. Cowan seconded. In a roll-call vote, all were in favor and the meeting entered non-public session at 6:33 PM. The Board went downstairs to the Wheelwright Room. The Board emerged from non public session.

3. Board Interviews

- a. Dan Chartrand for the Planning Board
- b. Joanne Petito for the Zoning Board of Adjustment

The Board reconvened in the Nowak Room at 6:49 PM.

4. Public Officer Swearing In - Carlos Garcia

- a. Deputy Police Chief Josh McCain introduced Carlos Garcia, and Town Clerk Andie Kohler swore Mr. Garcia in as a Police Officer.

5. Public Comment

- a. Bill Murphy of 18 Oak Street expressed his concern about road widening in the repaving project on Oak Street and Salem Street. The work will shorten his driveway, which he already has trouble fitting his vehicles onto. He found that it would cost \$25,000 - \$50,000 to relocate or rebuild his garage structure to make his driveway longer.

Ms. Oliff asked what distance we have to allow for space from someone's house to a road. Mr. Murphy said the setback is 15 feet from the property line for a house structure, but most houses in the neighborhood are non-conforming.

Paul Vlasich, the Town Engineer, said that a couple months ago, met with Mr. Murphy, who was concerned about the catch basin being installed there and about the road encroaching by an additional 1.5 feet. As part of this project, he [Mr. Vlasich] found that the road's average width was 23.69 feet, with a median of 24 feet, so we wanted to even out the streets throughout the neighborhood. To match the road coming from Salem and Oak Streets this side of the road needed an additional 1.5 feet to line up.

Ms. Oliff asked if the Board could see more of a schematic of the proposed changes next Monday. Mr. Papakonstantis asked if road widening is crucial in this project. Mr. Vlasich said no, but it would make sense to have a four way intersection that is T'd off correctly. This issue will be on the agenda for July 25.

6. Proclamations/Recognitions

Mr. Papakonstantis recognized the DPW Employees of the Quarter: Highway Heavy Equipment Operator Wayne Almon, for Summer 2021; Water/Sewer Maintenance Technician Larry Pond, for Fall 2021; and Highway Foreman Dan Morrow for Winter 2021; and Heavy Equipment Operator Scott Butler, for Spring 2022.

7. Approval of Minutes

a. Regular Meeting: June 27, 2022

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to approve the minutes of June 27, 2022 as presented. Ms. Gilman seconded. Ms. Oliff abstained, as she had not been present June 27. The motion passed 4-0-1.

8. Appointments

a. Kyle Welch, Conservation Commission full member

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to change Kyle Welch from an alternate to a full voting member of the Conservation Commission, term to expire April 2024. Ms. Cowan seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

b. Dan Chartrand, Planning Board alternate

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to appoint Dan Chartrand as a Planning Board alternate member, term to expire April 2025. Ms. Cowan seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

c. Joanne Petito, ZBA alternate

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to appoint Joanne Petito as a ZBA alternate member, term to expire April 2024. Ms. Cowan seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

9. Discussion/Action Items

a. Sewer Lateral Program

Mr. Vlasich presented a proposal for homeowners who will be getting new sewer line in the Salem and Park Street Utility Project. Those residents can opt into a replacement of their sewer service from the main line until five feet from the house. This was done previously in the Jady Hill project, and was very successful. 52 parcels are eligible for this service replacement program. It would cost the town \$95 a foot to replace the service line from the right of way in; the Water/Sewer Advisory Committee recommended the homeowner pay the first \$1,000 over a 10 year period at 0% interest. The warranty for sewer service replacement would be for one year after overall project completion. The contractor will loam and seed, but not replace driveways, flowerbeds, etc. The

cost to the town with 100% participation would be \$99,418, but homeowners would pay back \$48,000 of that. Through Town Warrant vote, there's still a Sewer Fund balance of \$365,000 that could be used for this project.

Ms. Cowan asked what happens if a resident opts to not participate. Mr. Vlasich said nothing would happen, it's optional to participate. In that case, the homeowner would be responsible for the service's eventual replacement, not the town.

Mr. Dean said if the Board has a consensus, they will move ahead with this proposal, and the Board agreed.

b. Sidewalk Construction Funding Request, Demolition of 149 Kingston Road Garage

Public Works Director Jennifer Perry said Linden Street is ready for paving and the sidewalk is in poor condition. This project did not make the cut for CDS funding, so DPW proposes to complete the sidewalk work of \$296,000, using \$49,600 from the 2017 Special Highway Block Grant, \$145,000 from the Sidewalk Capital Reserve Fund, and \$87,000 in money set aside for road paving. We are also looking to pave the sidewalk on Colonial Way and Heritage Way using \$52,000 from the paving program.

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to authorize Public Works to use the balance of the Sidewalk Capital Reserve Fund up to the amount of \$145,370 and the balance of the 2017 Highway Block Grant money of \$49,600 towards reconstruction of sidewalks on Linden Street. Ms. Cowan seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

Ms. Perry said 149 Kingston Road, which is owned by the town, has a single-car garage that is in very poor condition and has become a safety concern. We can do demolition with the Public Works workforce. Regarding the debris, the concrete will go into the pit; the wood may be burned, but not in place.

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to authorize Public Works to perform demolition and removal of the garage at 149 Kingston Road. Ms. Cowan seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

Ms. Perry said the State declared a moderate drought in this part of the State two weeks ago, on July 5. We didn't have a large snowpack over the winter, so the river and groundwater were low to start with. We only received moderate rainfall and are at a 5-6" deficit, even with today's rain. The flow of Exeter River is at the level "low," which is well below average for this time of year. The outlook is for continued higher than average temperatures. Public Works recommends a level 2 watering restriction, which is watering on an alternating day by even/odd house number. There is severe drought in Massachusetts and on the border, so we may have to come back and make a higher recommendation.

Mr. Papakonstantis said this is a chronic problem; do we anticipate that these limits could become permanent? Ms. Perry said maybe not permanent, but

perhaps a regular seasonal restriction. The state's aquifers are small and easily impacted by drought.

Ms. Belanger asked if we can use the town's sign trailers to communicate this. Mr. Dean said yes, as well as the website and social media. Ms. Perry said we will also publish a notice in the newspaper.

Mr. Papakonstantis asked how long the restriction would last. Ms. Perry said probably until winter.

Ms. Cowan asked if we can keep this restriction as a baseline. Ms. Perry said we have to be careful if we don't have a real need, since people will start to ignore the guidelines. There's an enforcement issue, and Public Works is short staffed. Ms. Oliff said it would be part of a shift in direction that's more globally conservative. We should change the message rather than be in crisis mode. Ms. Perry said if we're the only community doing this, it could become a development/business issue.

Ms. Cowan said it might help residents with planning plantings that can be supported. It should be part of a larger discussion regionally.

Ms. Belanger said the Planning Board talks a lot about plantings, so they should weigh in as well.

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to Implement a level 2 outdoor water use restriction in the town of Exeter to allow landscape watering every other day (even/odd usage) and not restrict other outdoor water use at this time. Water users are encouraged by the Select Board to practice effective water conservation. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

c. Community Power Aggregation Committee Plan Amendments

Lew Hitzrot and Cliff Sinnott of the Community Power Aggregation Committee were present to discuss updates; Henry Herndon was present via Zoom. Mr. Hitzrot said last month, he mentioned that there would be two amendments to approved documents. One amendment was to the Joint Power Agreement amending process. The original said that the Joint Power agreement could only be amended at the annual April meeting, but that seemed like a roadblock to any community that had a project needing a minor change at other times of the year.

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to approve the amendment to Article 16 section 2 of the Joint Power Agreement of the Community Power Coalition of NH as presented in the packet supplied for this meeting. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

Mr. Hitzrot said regarding the Electric Aggregation Plan, the PUC proposed two amendments that address concerns about how individual consumer data would be handled and how the plan would serve as a provider of electricity. The new rules were supposed to come out on July 5 but have been delayed; the earliest they could be released now is July 27 and there could be changes at that time. Waiting for them to be released would put us further behind

on our timeline. We should pass these amendments with the hope that the amended plan will meet the requirements of the PUC.

Ms. Cowan said she would rather ask for forgiveness than permission. If we have to change the plan again, we can.

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to approve the amendments to the Electric Aggregation Plan for Exeter Community Power as presented in the agenda packet for this meeting which includes the July 12, 2022 memo from Community Power Coalition of NH Director Nick Devonshire as well as the Exeter Community Power Aggregation Plan with draft amendments from 7/12/2022. Ms. Cowan seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

d. CDBG Public Hearing on 10 Hampton Road

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to open the public hearing on the proposed Hampton Road Community Center Community Block Grant Application. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

Donna Lane, Grant writer, noted that there were informational documents available at the meeting. She read the public hearing information:
Community Development Block Grant funds are available to municipalities through the NH Community Development Finance Authority. Up to \$500,000 annually is available for Economic Development Projects, up to \$500,000 for Housing Projects, up to \$500,000 for Public Facility Projects, up to \$500,000 in Emergency Funds, and up to \$25,000 per Planning Study Grant. Also, up to \$750,000 is available per public facility project under CDBG-Covid (CDBG-CV) funding. All projects must directly benefit a majority of low and moderate income persons.

This public hearing is on the proposed application to the New Hampshire Community Development Finance Authority for up to \$750,000 in CDBG-CV, up to \$500,000 in CDBG Public Facilities Funds towards the rehabilitation of 10 Hampton Road into an ADA accessible community center that would serve the aging population of the Greater Exeter Community. The town will collaborate with various non-profit agencies to expand upon its senior services which follow the six dimensions of wellness, focusing on occupational, physical, social, intellectual, spiritual, and emotional programming. For example, some additional services would be a Meals on Wheels lunch site, social services such as mental health and wellness classes, and tax assistance. The public hearing notice that was in the newspaper and posted referenced childcare and other activities. The majority of people expected to be served at the center will be of low- or moderate-income. Seniors are a HUD presumed low- and moderate-income group.

This project conforms with Exeter's proposed Housing and Community Development Plan's goal of: Evaluate the needs of all residents, including seniors and children today and in the future. Determine if existing programs and services in the community and around the region (public private, and non-profit) are meeting/will meet those needs. Consider needs around housing, day care, lifelong learning, recreation, social interaction and stimulation, and health and wellness, among other issues (short term).

Mr. Papakonstantis asked for public comment, but there was none.

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to close the public hearing. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to open the public hearing on the Housing and Community Development Plan. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

Ms. Lane read the public hearing information:

The Housing and Community Development Plan was last adopted in 2019. Day care has been added to goals. CDFA has requested the HCDDP plans include the national and State objectives and include a CDBG Citizen Participation Plan outlining required public hearings to update the public on the progress of CDBG projects, so those have been added.

Mr. Papakonstantis asked for public comment, but there was none.

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to close the public hearing. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to open the public hearing on the Residential Antidisplacement and Relocation Assistance Plan. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

Ms. Lane read the public hearing information:

This plan outlines measures, under the Uniform Relocation Act, required for CDBG projects that involve any displacement or relocation of persons (or businesses), if the Town were to undertake a CDBG project which involved displacement or relocation they would follow this plan. The plan outlines the measures they would take to find comparable, suitable housing for persons (or businesses) displaced or relocated. This project does not anticipate displacement or relocation.

Mr. Papakonstantis asked for public comment, but there was none.

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to close the public hearing. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to open the public hearing on the Progress of the Icey Hill Cooperative CDBG Project. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

Ms. Lane read the report:

This is a project progress update on the tying in of the water and septic systems into the municipal systems at Icey Hill Cooperative, a 15 unit manufactured housing park located at 55 Deep Meadows Road in Exeter. Construction started in April. The water main, sewer main, sewer lift station, valve vault, sewer services, water services, expansion tanks, blowoffs, and fire hydrant are all installed. The project is substantially complete.

Mr. Papakonstantis asked for public comment, but there was none.

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to close the public hearing. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to approve the submittal of the CDBG application and vote to allow the Town Manager to sign and submit the CDBG application, and upon approval of the CDBG application authorize the Town Manager to execute any documents that may be necessary to effect the CDBG contract and any amendments thereto. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

MOTION: Ms. Cowan moved to adopt the Housing and Community Development Plan. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to accept the Anti-displacement and Relocation Assistance Plan. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

e. Park Street Common Playground Update

Parks and Rec Director Greg Bisson said that the Park Street Common Playground project is almost complete. Construction began on June 6, with Public Works removing the old equipment. We could only salvage the rocker and the digger, which are being reinstalled. We put in fencing, which looks great. Due to delays, construction of the playground started June 27. Park and Play Structures sent the wrong posts, but now they're in.

Parks and Rec are asking for a change of funding. On March 28, approved Parks and Rec to expend \$4,000 from the Parks Improvement Fund for playground chips. At that time, we had 50 volunteers from Bauer Hockey to install them, but with the delay we had to re-assign that group. Also, the chips must be spread correctly and evenly. We found a vendor, ProTurf Landscaping, with a large capacity blower truck. This will save time and do it right. We're asking to allocate the funding from the Rec Impact fees for the purchase of chips and installation.

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to allow Parks and Rec to expend \$8,960 from the Recreation Impact Fees to purchase and install wood chips from ProTurf Landscaping for Park Street Common Playground, and to rescind the previously authorized \$4,000 to be expended from the Parks Improvement Fund for the same project. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

f. Emergency Management Performance Grant Acceptance

Chief Wilking was present to discuss this grant. The funds that were approved last year to do security upgrades at the Public Safety Complex fell short by \$7,300. We have the opportunity for grant funding; the Grant Administrator for EMPG is confident that the grant will fund the necessary \$7,300. According to Police CALEA guidelines, we should harden the fencing around the communication tower and add fencing to the backup power

generator. The best quote was \$5,982 for fencing, and all together \$13,300. Typically EMPG is a 50/50 split, which is referenced in the grant approval motion, but because we spent \$2,807 already, that should meet our part. There will be no additional cost to the town.

Chief Wilking added that the Fire Department is in full support of the garage demolition efforts at 149 Kingston Road, but the garage in its current location is too close to the road to burn, and would have to meet NHDES burn requirements by removing any treated or roofing material. The FD would not be opposed to the burning of unpainted and untreated materials, which would reduce the cost of demolition to the town.

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to accept the terms of the Emergency Management Performance Grant as presented in the amount of \$13,300 for purchasing and installation of equipment at the community's EOC. Further, the Board acknowledges that the total cost of this project will be \$13,300 of which the town will be responsible for a 50% match and also authorize the Town Manager to sign the grant application. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

Mr. Papakonstantis asked about the drought and its effect on those applying for permits to burn. Chief Wilking said the FD is still issuing permits to burn, and deals with the brush/leaf/limbs burning on a case by case basis. Right now the drought has not affected that.

g. Welfare Quarterly Report

Human Services and Welfare Administrator Pam McElroy presented a report comparing 2020, 2021, and 2022 through June, showing direct assistance, or the monetary amount paid by Exeter, as well as the assistance given by Human Service Agencies on our behalf. We are trending significantly higher this year. Rent assistance and mortgage assistance may end this calendar year. With inflation, many people have come in requesting assistance with electricity and household fuel. Ms. McElroy said that the Select Board previously asked why Human Services was underpaid in 2021, and the reason is that Crossroads did not invoice until 2022

Mr. Papakonstantis asked if Ms. McElroy has increased her hours on this work. Ms. McElroy said yes, it has increased. She's able to take care of both positions, but some days are spent entirely on welfare. That said, she's not working overtime other than on special projects such as annual reports. The time spent varies by season and other factors.

h. Select Board 2022 Goals Report

Mr. Papakonstantis introduced a report from the Primex rep that facilitated the Select Board goal setting session back in April. Many of the goals were consistent amongst the five Board members. Goals include studying reclassification to aid recruitment; consider the number of volunteers on Boards and Committees; look at affordable housing projects; work on following the Master Plan; improve communications and transparency; and consider the

parking question. The Board can use this report as a tool for the year as we set the agenda for meetings. Mr. Dean said we're looking at using ARPA funds for a study of reclassification. The all-Boards meeting is a matter of coordinating everyone for 1 - 2 hours. In the past, we used the library and the Town Hall as venues. Mr. Papakonstantis suggested early to mid-fall for the all-Boards meeting.

10. Regular Business

a. Tax Abatements, Veterans Credits and Exemptions

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to approve a solar exemption for 70/37 in the amount of \$8,500 for tax year 2023. Ms. Belanger seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to accept a timber tax for 97/23 in the amount of \$491.13 for tax year 2022. Ms. Belanger seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

b. Permits & Approvals

- i. There were no permits or approvals considered at this meeting.

c. Town Manager's Report

- i. Mr. Dean recognized Renay Allen and Amy Farnham, who worked with Jeff Beck to insulate Town Hall.
- ii. We made it through the July 1 wage increase process, which was a challenge for HR and Finance.
- iii. We have two easements left to get on the Kingston Road project. We have not heard from either property owner. We're considering sending a letter talking about eminent domain, hoping that that will get a response.
- iv. We received Until's report on the Solar array project estimating the system upgrade at \$600,000. We're going to bring in a consultant to review their report and will engage with the Energy Committee.
- v. The CIP work continues. The Planning Board will review it Aug 11.
- vi. National Night Out for the Police Dept is Aug 2 at Swasey Parkway.

d. Select Board Committee Reports

- i. Ms. Belanger attended a Housing Advisory Committee meeting where they continued the conversation on regional housing. RPC has two events coming up. Town Planner Dave Sharples has been working on a draft map for possible zoning changes. The Housing Advisory Committee has a working session and walking tour on missing middle housing. The Conservation Commission met Tuesday but she was not present. Kyle whom we moved from alternate to full member did a Geocaching project Saturday morning. The Conservation Commission approved a wetland conditional use permit for Unitil and 19 Continental Drive. There was correspondence requesting a rehearing that they denied; the Chair went to the Planning Board meeting Thursday to be available for questions. At

- the Planning Board, the applicant at the last minute asked to table until Aug 25. A Wetlands conditional use permit was approved for Unitil.
- ii. Ms. Gilman said the Facilities Committee talked about reducing the scope of the Facilities Condition Assessment, as the money approved was \$45,000 and quotes came in over \$200,000. Jeff Beck from Maintenance will come in to talk about their list of ADA compliance projects. They discussed the Public Safety Complex and whether to go forward in the warrant with a new Police Station with Fire Station, as well as a study on how to use the Court Street property for the FD. Court Street will need a lot of upgrades, and it may turn out that demolition is the best approach. The Energy Committee heard that update from earlier in this meeting. The NH Rep has brought up a proposal on letting municipalities rent out basements and upper floors of buildings for housing.
 - iii. Ms. Cowan had no report.
 - iv. Ms. Oliff said the Tuesday meeting was canceled. The Board should discuss a summer hiatus for some groups, since some members are unavailable. There was a meeting on Wednesday for the Swasey Parkway Trustees.
 - v. Mr. Papakonstantis had no report, but thanked the Energy Committee for their work.
- e. Correspondence
- i. A quarterly update from Rockingham Nutrition Meals on Wheels
 - ii. An email from Renay Allen on the Pocket Park in Swasey Parkway. This project can't move forward until the Swasey warrant article has gone through probate and the Trust. Mr. Dean will call Attorney Mitchell for an update.
 - iii. A memo from the Town Manager's Office winter parking ban and the Pleasant Street winter parking permits.
 - iv. A report from DES on an alleged violation on 95/64.
 - v. A letter from a resident on Drinkwater Road. Mr. Papakonstantis said he has talked with the PD and the Town Manager, who reported they have spoken to this resident on multiple occasions. Mr. Dean said the PD issue citations when warranted. Regarding no parking signs, if we put them up in one particular spot, where will people park?
 - vi. A letter from a resident re obstructed parking. Mr. Dean said this is an old issue resurfacing. He had a meeting out there pre-Covid. There was an agreement between the two parties, but it seems to have gone by the wayside. He will follow up.

11. Review Board Calendar

- a. The next meetings are July 25, Aug 8, Aug 22, and Tuesday Sept 6.

12. Non-Public Session

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

13. Adjournment

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to adjourn, Ms. Gilman seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 9:09 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Joanna Bartell
Recording Secretary